



Seeds of Life
Fini ba Moris



REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE **MINISTÉRIO DE AGRICULTURA E PESCAS**

Direcção Nacional da Agricultura & Horticultura &
Direcção Nacional de Pesquisa & Serviços Especializados
Fini ba Moris - PO Box 221, Dili Timor-Leste

Introducing Ai-luka 2 and 4

The East Timor Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) is pleased to announce the release of two new high-yielding, sweet cassava varieties, named Ai-luka 2 and Ai-luka 4.

The name Ai-luka was chosen by His Excellency Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and comes from the Tetum Terik word for cassava. The even numbers indicate that they are sweet cassava varieties, suitable for eating. Odd numbers are used to name bitter varieties, which are for industrial use only.

The release of Ai-luka 2 and 4 is based on the results of extensive research conducted by the Seeds of Life program within the Division of Research and Specialised Services. More than 60 varieties of cassava were trialled throughout East Timor from 2001-2008.

These two new varieties of cassava came from Malang, Indonesia through cooperation with the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), and were trialled under the names Ca15 and Ca26.

Ai-luka 2 and 4 were chosen because of their high yield and good flavour, and the positive response from farmers. They produce a yield 51-65% higher than local varieties, based on replicated and on-farm trials.

The release of Ai-luka 2 and 4 gives farmers throughout East Timor greater access to the varieties, helping farmers to increase their production and become more food secure on their own land.

MAF has now released nine new staple food crops through the Seeds of Life program. In March 2007 the Ministry launched a new variety of rice called Nakroma; three new varieties of sweet potato with the names Hohrae 1, 2 and 3; a new variety of peanut with the name Utamua; and two new varieties of maize with the names Sele and Suwan 5.

The release under this local name was approved with permission from the Research Institute for Legumes and Root Crops (RILET/BALITKABI) in Malang, Indonesia. Representatives from RILET/BALITKABI came to Dili to participate in the cassava release program, which included an official launch at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries on 27 August 2009.

Seeds of Life (SoL) is a food security program funded jointly by the East Timor Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), AusAID and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). Seeds of Life aims to reduce hunger by improving crop yield, through the use of improved varieties of staple food crops.

For more information about the program, please visit the Seeds of Life website:

www.seedsoflifetimor.org

For more information about the release of Ai-luka 2 and Ai-luka 4, please contact Sally Bolton, Seeds of Life Communications Officer:

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His Excellency Mariano Assanami Sabino, East Timor Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, announces the launch of Ai-luka 2 and Ai-luka 4 on 27 August 2009



Members of the cassava release committee sign the official release documents



Guests at the cassava variety launch enjoy delicious sweet and savoury snacks made from Ai-luka 2 and 4



The cassava release committee included MAF directors and researchers, local cassava farmers involved in the on-farm trials, and representatives from Balitkabi.



Seeds of Life Seed Production Officer Rafael Feliciano, pictured with an Ai-luka 4 cassava plant. Rafael was involved in the cassava trials at the Betano Research Station in Manufahi district.



Asep Setawian, Seeds of Life Seed Production Advisor, is interviewed about Ai-luka 2 and 4 at the launch ceremony.