



Australian High Commission
Solomon Islands

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia–SINU Research Partnership Advancing Local Feed Solutions for Food Security in Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands National University (SINU) and CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, have held a successful joint symposium at SINU's Ranadi Campus—marking an important milestone in an Australia–SINU research partnership focused on strengthening food security and livelihoods.

The collaboration is tackling a key challenge for Solomon Islands farmers: the high cost of imported animal feed. Through joint research, SINU and CSIRO are identifying affordable, locally-sourced and nutritious feed options for small livestock and tilapia—helping farmers reduce costs, boost productivity and increase resilience.

Opening the symposium, Dr Vaeno Vigulu, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (FAFF) at SINU, highlighted the importance of international research partnerships in building local capability.

“This partnership with Australia and CSIRO is strengthening SINU's research capacity and empowering us to deliver practical, locally relevant solutions for our agriculture and fisheries sectors,” said Dr Vigulu. “By focusing on homegrown feed options, we are supporting farmers to become more self-reliant and resilient.”

The symposium brought together researchers, practitioners and stakeholders to share early findings and explore how these can be translated into real-world impact—including expanding community-based tilapia farming initiatives.

Jennifer Kelly, CSIRO Senior Innovation Systems Broker, emphasised the value of collaboration in driving innovation.

“This partnership demonstrates the power of combining Australian research expertise with Solomon Islands knowledge and priorities,” said Ms Kelly. “By working together, we can co-design practical solutions that are affordable, scalable and grounded in local conditions—ensuring lasting impact for farmers and communities.”

With transport and import costs continuing to constrain agricultural productivity, the research is focused on identifying locally available feed ingredients and improving their nutritional value through scientific analysis.

The symposium concluded with strong agreement on the importance of ensuring research findings reach farmers and communities. Participants highlighted knowledge-sharing and extension as critical next steps.

As part of the ongoing partnership, three SINU researchers will travel to Australia for specialised training in nutrient analysis of key local crops used in animal feed, supported by the Crawford Fund. This capacity-building effort will further strengthen SINU's ability to lead locally driven research and innovation.

Australia's support for this initiative reflects its broader commitment to partnering with Solomon Islands to advance food security, economic growth and resilient communities.

Captions:

Photo 1 - Dr Vaeno Vigulu, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (FAFF) at SINU.

Photo 2 - Farming site at SINU.

Photo 3 - Farmers interaction at the symposium.

Photo 4 - Participants highlighted knowledge - sharing and extension as critical next steps.

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