



## Success Story

### Yap Island Market: Where Fresh Produce Meets Local Spirit

Immerse yourself in the sights, sounds, and flavors of the Yap Island Market, a vibrant celebration of local produce, community spirit, and the unseen force that nourishes it all: Yap Cooperative Research and Extension (Yap CRE).

#### From Humble Beginnings to Thriving Market Place

Traditionally, market activity on Yap Island was sporadic, limited to special occasions. Now, a dedicated space on the last Friday of the month ensures consistency for vendors and visitors alike. This has led to a surge in participation, with more farmers bringing their fresh produce for sale.



#### Supporting Local Businesses and Farmers

The Yap Island Market empowers local businesses by effectively providing valuable marketing product training, thanks to a collaborative effort between the Yap Visitor's Bureau and the Yap Small Business Development Center (YSBDC). This partnership fosters the market's continued growth and ensures success for all involved.





Step back in time and immerse yourself in Yapese culture at the Yap Living History Museum. This open-air museum features traditional thatched-roof buildings like men's houses and meeting halls. It's not just about artifacts; the museum comes alive on Fridays with the Yap Island monthly market. Wander through the stalls, browse local crafts, and chat with vendors about their creations. It's a vibrant atmosphere that perfectly blends Yap's rich heritage with the energy of a local market.

### **More Than Just Shopping**

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of local food production. The Yap Island Market emerged as a vital source of income, food security, and cultural exchange in the face of reduced imports and travel restrictions.

The unwavering support for local producers is at the heart of the market's success. Despite their modest means, small-scale farmers play a pivotal role, offering an array of fresh fruits, vegetables, and artisanal creations directly to consumers. For these farmers, the market is a means of income generation, community engagement, and cultural preservation.



## A Feast for All Senses

While fresh fruits and vegetables take center stage, the market caters to all your senses. Visitors can find unique handi-crafts, souvenirs, and textiles, indulge in delicious barbeque and traditional dishes, and soak in the vibrant atmosphere.



## A Model for Sustainable Future

The Island Market promotes a sustainable food system. Raising awareness of local produce and supporting family members contributes to food security and well-being. This aligns perfectly with the UN's Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028), which emphasizes the crucial role of small-scale farmers in global food security and a sustainable future.



## Celebrating Family Farmers

The Island Market highlights the essential role of Yap's small-scale family farmers, who produce food for consumption and significantly contribute to the island's food security and economic well-being. Their success is bolstered by Yap CRE's extension training and support (see Box).

## A Space for Community and Culture

Beyond buying and selling, the market fosters a sense of community. It's a space where communities connect, share cultural experiences, and celebrate the spirit of Yap.

## Experience the Heart of Yap

Yap CRE's active presence at the market, showcasing locally grown produce from extension program clients, exemplifies a collaborative spirit and impact of extension services. Visit the Yap Island Market on the last Friday of every month to support local farmers and experience the heart of Yap!

**You won't be disappointed!**

**Y**ap CRE plays a vital role in the success of the Yap Island Market, fostering a vibrant space that benefits both farmers and the community. Yap CRE provides the most reliable and relevant research-based information on vegetable gardening, extending the knowledge and expertise into communities. It builds healthy communities through extensive outreach programs, technical sessions, and extension training activities on climate-smart and alternative food production systems.

**Supporting Market Champions:** Monica Rogon and Mark Googag, full-time CRE staff and dedicated part-time farmers, are familiar sights at the market. They consistently sell their family-grown produce alongside farm products from other community members and provide a vital platform, empowering local farmers to become leaders and connectors within the market.



*"The Yap Island Market is a vital source of income for my family,"* says Monica. *"Last year, I brought in around \$8,000, which makes a big difference. But the real reward is seeing happy customers and knowing I contribute to fresh, local food."* Mark echoes this sentiment, highlighting the market's social aspects: *"I also make around \$500 every month. But it's more than just income. It's a chance to connect with friends, neighbors, and visitors. I enjoy helping other farmers, and there's always something new to learn about running a successful*



*agro-business."*

**Building Capacity for All:** Yap CRE's impact extends beyond individual farmers by connecting more farmers with the market, increasing the variety and availability of local produce, and strengthening the market's appeal to the community.

**Investing in the Community's Future:** Yap CRE's commitment goes beyond the market day. Yap CRE's agricultural extension services are the unseen roots that nourish the Yap Island Market. The program empowers farmers, fosters a vibrant community, and sows the seeds for a brighter, more food-secure future.

The extension programs are available to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, gender, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. For questions, contact: Office of the Vice President, Cooperative Research and Extension, College of Micronesia-FSM at: (691) 350 2325.



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