

2017 Re-inventing Japan Project (Short-term)

International Student Summit, RJP Program

Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture – USP * Plant Pathology and Nematology * 4^o
Year

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First, I am grateful to NODAI for this opportunity to participate in both the International Student Summit and the Re-inventing Japan Project (Short-term). Certainly these experiences will be with me forever. Since my first year at university, I have had an interest in contacting students from other countries and at USP I had this opportunity. Over the years I met the International Student Forum - Brazil, we had weekly meetings and we usually discussed about sustainable agriculture, politics and student's initiatives, later I had a better knowledge of ISS and RJP and I wanted to apply to this program.

Our group was around six people and we decided together what should be presented at the Summit, we thought about the University's extension role in order to promote sustainable agriculture, because at Brazil, the rural extension offered by the government wasn't enough, the private rural extension was too expensive to smallholders, consequently those who didn't have access to resources and knowledge would be at risk to inequality and also, the environment would be endangered because of the lack of sustainable techniques.

The Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture has several groups composed by students and professors where they offer the resources, knowledge and information to the communities. We have several methodology where it was possible to promote sustainable agriculture and to solve the inequality at the local community. So we decided to show those projects and the University's role at the ISS as a way to the student take action.

At the ISS, I was able to meet people from all over the world and learn from them not only about their agriculture but also about their histories, traditions and cultures. Throughout the week, we shared the problems and solutions we face in our countries and especially the student's role in this type of environment. The discussions held before the presentations cleared our minds and encouraged us to take action.

The first day in Taiwan was great! We visited the Sun Moon Lake, the antique Assam tea farm and the Huixun Forest station where we had an explanation about the Prototype Landslide Dam Overtopping Failure Experiment in Huisun Forest since Taiwan has a great problem with typhoons, this trip helped us to interact with each other and also to learn a bit more about Taiwan.

The next 2 days it was about a General discussion about what is ISS and the preparations for the event. We had a hard work all the days in order to make everything works perfectly. Our session was Education and we worked together with students from the University of Michigan, USA; Kasetsart University, Thailand; and University of the Philippines Los Baños, Philippines. We were asked to try to find the similarities and common problems in each country, we found that problems like: Risk of the agriculture, hard work, makes the youth to prefer to work in the cities this implies in the lack of the people to work in the farms, farmers have around 70 years in some countries or even more, also the financial support could be a barrier to a lot of projects, even for the universities and there is a big need of an easy access of resources and knowledge, and the University extension can provide that.

After the discussion our session concluded that there is a need of a better Interaction between students, farmers, and universities/extension. And the problems to address inequality among farmers and other agricultural communities are: The age of the farmers (The young people do not want to work in the farms), income and access to resources and knowledge should be the goal between the students.

We decided that the students and farmers need to interact more; usually the farmers are afraid of changes while the students promote innovation, and the farmers have experience while the students are eager to learn. Also It's difficult to spread information in conventional way due to language barriers, geography and politics. In order to achieve a global result we must first do local change; we need to make changes in our own "world" before changing the rest of the world

If you want to promote a sustainable agriculture and to solve inequality it's necessary to follow the Three Aspects of Sustainability: Environment, economic and ethical. You cannot change just one and hope to solve the problem, but all the three should be respected.

Each country of this session decided an individual future plans of project in order to solve those problems: Brazil will try to share with other universities the successful methodology of projects that were able to promote sustainable agriculture; the USA wants develop relationships to grow and sustain financial support to those projects; Thailand will try to create a further development in research with more cooperation and collaboration and the Philippines needs more research and collaboration with different organizations to provide financial support.

Then we shared those ideas with the others ISS presenters and they shared their ideas. One day before the ISS we had a meeting with everyone of the event and we tried to make a new theme for the next ISS. We tried to find something related with what we discussed in each session and we finally entered in agreement of the next theme: Students taking action to increase youth involvement in sustainable agriculture and to close the gap between actors in the food system. At everyone country we will try to apply the new ideas that we get on this ISS and we are looking forward in what the next ISS's presenters will be bringing in such important event. I would love to participate again on this event, what I have learned there and the friends I have made gave me an unique experience. I hope that one day, Brazil hosts this event if that happens I would gladly help in anything that I can because now I know how this International Student Summit can impact a student's life, and make the real change starts there.



At Japan, I was able to understand a little of Japanese culture, its agriculture, and also its great investment in projects with other countries. In a class I found it very interesting to be with students from different countries. And now I am interested in doing the Long Term RJP, because I want to know more about Japan's agriculture and maybe in doing some internship.

Participating in the Global Festa was an incredible experience, an event so great and so diverse and even free seems even that is not true when compared to the reality of my country. We saw many projects there, usually related to other country. For me the students were taking action because many of those projects the students were participating, even the projects in other countries. NGO's, corporation and other initiatives were working a lot on those projects, and they weren't only related to Asian countries, we saw groups working even in the Latin America! And from what the people there told me, they have a great interest in do more projects in Brazil; we shared our contact because what we discussed was just the same thing that we discussed at ISS.

There we met ERECON where we were explained about the event and what we would do in the next few days. In two days we had the opportunity to meet various organizations, NGOs where they developed several projects.



What impressed me most it was that they were projects related to reducing inequality, promoting sustainable agriculture and care for the environment. However, many of them were not made in Japan but in other countries. And it was great to know that some of the projects had been running for a long time. And the best part is that many of them the students (universities, high school) were the ones who carried out such projects. After these days, ERECON asked that each of the countries: Brazil, Peru and Mexico, try to make a project that would suit their respective country, and that it would be focused on sustainable agriculture, reduction of inequality, and protection of the environment. And how would be the procedures to carry out this project.

For Brazil, we were two universities: University of São Paulo and Universidade Federal Rural da Amazônia. So we tried to find a project that could be applied in every part of the country. We came to the conclusion that: Brazil is the first in the list of agrochemical consumers. Virtually most of the country consumes some type of agrochemical. This implies a diversity of damages such as: Contamination of the environment, increase resistance of pests and diseases, contamination of human beings, increase of social inequality

But how could we reduce the use of these agrochemicals and still be able to increase our production? The response we obtained was the use of sustainable techniques such as biological control, crop rotation, no-till and so on. But to promote such changes we would have to conduct experiments, presentations, in order to prove that they were sustainable and economically profitable.

We thought about the influence of the university and the access to resources and information that we students have in it. So the main idea would be to involve the student in this project so that he could pass on these new techniques and apply them to farms. In this way we would not only be promoting sustainable agriculture but we would also be adding more knowledge in the students' lives. Again, as in the ISS, students would be taking action.

The initial ideas that would not require much financial investment would be the use of biological control (a technique that is being studied in Brazil), and the use of bio-fertilizers, in this case, a fungus that, in addition to functioning as a bio fertilizer acts as a fungicide. These practices would be applied and taught on the farms that would accept these innovations, and be accompanied by the students.

Both ISS and RJP have helped me get new ideas about how much a student has the potential to make significant changes. That together they can not only change their city, country but also other countries. As students of agricultural universities, we know that we have a very large role not only in the production of food but also in the promotion of sustainable agriculture. We have the opportunity to do differently from past generations and we certainly have the potential for it.

This experience added new ideas, innovations and techniques that could be applied in my country as well. I intend to convey these ideas to my colleagues, family and others so that we can gradually change our reality too. I hope that soon we will not only practice this in Brazil but also in neighboring countries as well.

Again, I commend Tokyo University of Agriculture (Tokyo NODAI) for this opportunity and this unique experience. They were both excellent projects and I believe that each year they are getting better and better. As a suggestion I would just say that more interaction events between NODAI students and RJP students would be welcomed as we could exchange more experiences and ideas as students.

Thank you very much, obrigado, どうもありがとう!!

