



Asia Network News

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2012 ECHO Myanmar Agriculture Workshop



The 2012 ECHO Myanmar Agriculture workshop was held in Yangon during Oct. 30–Nov. 2. With 66 registrants, over 25 Myanmar-based organizations were represented, making this the largest ECHO Asia event offered outside of Chiang Mai thus far.

Topics and activities included Agricultural Responses to Climate Change, An Introduction to Biochar, Natural Farming and Alternative Fuels/Stoves as well as four post-workshop tour options around Yangon.

A seed exchange was also held with representatives from nine Myanmar organizations bringing plant materials for 38 crop varieties. Crop seeds and cuttings brought for exchange included green mung, peanut, grain sorghum, pigeon pea, pearl millet, *Hesperethusa crenulata* (tanaka), bitter eggplant, taro, black mung, broad bean, bush okra, chaya (plant material originally from ECHO but introduced and propagated in Myanmar) and Napier grass.

Many thanks to the Myanmar Baptist Convention's CSSDD team for co-hosting this event.



Changes Ahead for the ECHO Asia Impact Center



After 19 years of work in Thailand, in July 2013, ECHO Asia Regional Impact Center Director, Rick Burnette, will be taking on a new position at the ECHO Global Farm (and ECHO headquarters) in North Ft. Myers, Florida as Agriculture Director. His responsibilities will be to provide day-to-day management of the various agricultural components and divisions on the ECHO farm facilities.

Responsibilities will include the annual agricultural conference and various other training events as well as coordinating the involvement of student visitors and interns. Management of the Global Farm's operations will be another responsibility, which includes the seed bank and plant propagation nursery that benefits thousands of clientele each year. Additionally, there will be significant involvement in ECHO's agricultural technical and research services that ensures that ECHO partners are receiving relevant and reliable technical information.

After wrapping up her current job at the ECHO Asia Office this coming June, Ellen Burnette's current plans are a less certain. However, she expects to be spending considerable time assisting with family needs as well as settling into a new home.

Introducing Dr. Abram Bicksler, ECHO Asia's next Director



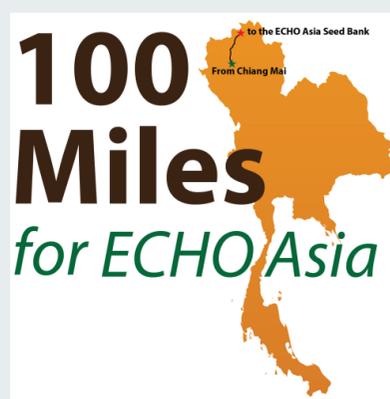
Dr. Abram Bicksler, who has served in a volunteer capacity as Research and Programming Advisor for ECHO Asia for the past three years, was invited to take on the role of Director at the ECHO Asia Regional Impact Center. Abram, married to Becca and father to Ellie (three years old) and Benjamin (almost one year old), has a PhD. in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of Illinois, Urbana. Since 2009, Abram has served as an instructor and Director of Sustainability Research at the International Sustainable Development Studies Institute (ISDSI) in Chiang Mai. Over this period, Abram has played a significant role in helping to develop the ECHO Asia Seed Bank, carrying out research and field trials for ECHO Asia, writing technical articles and participating in regional training events.

Boonsong Thansritong – ECHO Asia's Manager of Agricultural Operations



Boonsong Thansritong was recently hired as ECHO Asia's Manager of Agricultural Operations. A native of Thailand's Tak Province, Boonsong studied at Mae Jo University and is currently working on a PhD. at Chiang Mai University. He has many years of experience with agriculture and community development projects. Prior to accepting his current position, Boonsong was already a huge asset to ECHO Asia, taking a leading role in trainings and workshops in Thailand and Cambodia.

100 Mile Walk for ECHO Asia



ECHO Asia Director, Rick Burnette and friends (including Bunsak Tongdee, Director of the Upland Holistic Development Project), will embark on a 100 mile (161 km) walk over six days, departing from the Burnette's home in Chiang Mai on Sunday, December 9, expecting to arrive at the ECHO Asia Seed Bank on the UHDP Campus in the Mae Ai District of Chiang Mai on Friday, December 14.

The purpose of the walk is to:

- Raise awareness of the efforts of ECHO Asia and ECHO to alleviate hunger and poverty around the world
- Encourage support for ECHO Asia's ongoing efforts in the region

- Celebrate the Burnette's 18 years of work in northern Thailand
- Express solidarity with other regional poverty-alleviation organizations, such as UHDP

We would like to request that you consider sponsoring Rick on the 100 Miles for ECHO Asia walk with an overall goal of \$50,000 of funds to be pledged for ECHO Asia's work. To donate click [here](#).

The team will provide daily photos and updates during the walk. Keep up with progress of the hike by logging onto our special [Facebook](#) page, **100 Miles for ECHO Asia**.

Also, dedicated web page, http://asia.echonet.org/content/100_Miles, includes detailed information regarding the walk. And, check out the map route here: [100 Miles for ECHO Asia](#).

ECHO Asia Alternative Energy and Appropriate Technology Symposium

Alternative Energy and Appropriate Technology for Community Development: What Really Works?

Dates: January 22-24, 2013

Location: Holiday Garden Hotel & Resort, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Program and topics: The symposium will include three morning plenary sessions offered by professional development workers, researchers and business persons related to the following topics:

- Small-scale gasifier stove technology using agricultural by-products as fuel
- Biochar production for water filtration, amending soils and carbon sequestration
- Community-level solar energy technology
- Micro-hydro generation of electricity
- Biogas
- Improved production and utilization of charcoal fuel

To register or to receive more information about the symposium follow this [link](#).

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2013 ECHO Asia Agriculture and Food Production Workshop – Philippines

Dates: March 5-7, 2013

Location: Aloha Farm, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

Description: Co-hosted by Aloha Farm and the ECHO Asia Impact Center, this workshop will offer practical learning opportunities related to:

- Small-scale livestock production
- Improvement and maintenance of soil fertility
- Production and application of natural foliar fertilizers
- Production and application of bokashi (fertilizer/soil amendment made from kitchen waste)
- An introduction to Asian perennial vegetables
- Agroforestry systems for the production of non-timber forest products
- Intensive nursery management
- Value-added natural processing of farm products.

To register or to receive more information about the workshop follow this [link](#).

The ECHO Asia Impact Center operates under ECHO, a non-profit Christian organization that helps you help the poor to produce food in the developing world.

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