



Chengdu's famous Pierre de Coubertin-designed Modern Pentathlon Center in Shuangliu county.

ZHU QINGUI / FOR CHINA DAILY

## County stays active through fun and games

By ZHANG ZHAO  
AND HAN GUOLIANG

Located no more than 10 kilometers southwest of Chengdu, capital city of Sichuan province, Shuangliu county's economy ranks number one among all the counties in West China, and is one of the top 30 nationwide.

The sports industry has contributed greatly to the economic development of Shuangliu, as the county has hosted a number of influential sporting events.

One of the most recent events, the 2011 Modern Pentathlon World Cup, held in Chengdu's famous Pierre de Coubertin Modern Pentathlon Center, which was held on May 26-29, attracted more than 300 athletes from around 30 countries and regions.

Aside from the world-class modern pentathlon center, Shuangliu boasts many other high-end, large-scale sports facilities, including the best-equipped international tennis center in Asia, golf courses and a football park.

These stadiums and facilities have attracted many large-scale

sport events in the recent years, such as the 2011 Chinese Tennis Amateur Open and International Men's Tennis Tour sponsored by the International Tennis Federation, the ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals) Champions Tour Event and the 2010 Women's Asian Cup sponsored by Asian Football Confederation.

In all, eight world and national-scale events were held in Shuangliu last year, along with more than 30 smaller-scale games.

And there are more to come this year: A Latin dance contest sponsored by the International Dance Sport Federation will start in July, and the National Rope Skipping Open takes place in August, with 1,200 participants from more than 30 countries and regions.

According to a government document outlining the proposed development of the region's sports industry over the next 10 years, Shuangliu plans a cluster of sports fields to host top-class events.

There are ambitious plans for a number of additional facilities, including a national badminton training base, a chess and cards

contests center and a roller-skating center.

With the slogan "County of Sports", the government of Shuangliu has made short, middle and long term plans to develop the sports industry in the county.

"One high level event can greatly boost the development of many sport-related industries," said He Min, head of the county's publicity department.

He said that the many top-class sporting events in the county have become "a beautiful name card for the town and have lifted the quality of our county, making the county dynamic and fashionable".

### Sports for all

Alongside the high-profile sporting events, there are also many free sports facilities for local residents.

Sport-themed parks have been built to accommodate joggers, football matches and people flying kites and squares have been made accessible so people can practice tai chi. Special roads have been created for cyclists.

Traditional sports, such as the waist drum dance and baba dance, a

free-style dance that combines folk dance and broadcast exercises, are also being encouraged in residential communities and the countryside.

"People can easily exercise near their homes," said officials of the county's sports bureau. "They may do different activities, but the charm of any sport is the same."

The local authority is making great efforts to improve the sports infrastructure. In last year alone, they built nearly 200 sports facilities and cycle routes, and trained 120 coaches.

They also gave free physical examinations to 200 people aged above 60 and 400 children aged between three and six and based on this data they are making scientific sports plans for local residents.

"High-profile sporting events, infrastructure and facilities to enable different sports and popular sporting activities are the three pillars of Shuangliu's sports industry," said He Min.

The local authority plans to introduce more high-level sporting events, and develop new sport resources such as stadiums and fields over the next decade.



ZHONG JIAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Participants in the Combined Running and Shooting event.

## Harmonious combination of modernity and heritage

By HAO NAN

The Wenjiang district, which lies to the west of downtown Chengdu, Sichuan province's capital, is seen by locals as a model of how to build a new socialist countryside.

"The local government places a lot of importance on modern agriculture to benefit farmers," one government official said.

Over past three years, the value of agricultural produce has increased by more than 4 percent, and the average net income of farmers has gone up 15 percent.

### Modern agriculture

Specialized cooperatives are what the local government wants to use to help industrial development.

In 2009, they set up a vegetable cooperative in the town of Yongning town.

"The cooperative includes 32 farm households with nearly 27 hectares of land," said Yin Huaijun, head of the cooperative.



Large potted-flower production base in the Wenjiang district.

"We plant garlic, organic rice and organic vegetables and this has brought remarkable profits."

Their garlic has a geographical status and most of it does not go to the market but is bought by farmers to plant because it has much higher price than normal garlic. And the price of their organic rice and vegetables is also several times higher than for normal crops, according to Yin.

"Annual incomes can reach 2.4 million yuan (\$369,000) now," he noted.

Wenjiang now has 61 agricultural products processors, which an annual output value that can exceed 5.6 billion yuan. It also has 11 famous provincial brands.

Flowers are another sector supporting Wenjiang's agriculture.

Nearly 95 percent of the village of Xingfu is covered with trees and flowers.

"We've set up six specialized flower cooperatives," said village Party Secretary Guo Jianping.

"Farmers not only get sci-

entific planting suggestions from the cooperative, but also benefit from smoother trade channels."

### Rural construction

In addition to agricultural development, the authorities are working on improving infrastructure in rural areas.

"Our goal is to build an idyllic rural area with a charming landscape," the local officials have said.

In Xingfu, rows of modern houses are under construction, surrounded by ginkgo trees, sweet osmanthus and reworked landscapes.

"We want our people to experience a harmonious combination of prosperity and serenity, modernity and heritage," the officials added.

"The village shows its initial beauty and we'll build it into another famous tourist spot."

According to the local rural development bureau, Wenjiang has 53 new communities on a more than 6.2-million square meter area, accommodating nearly 30,000 households.



Fairy phalaenopsis flowers help to raise the incomes of rural folk.

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## Farmers rent their land to city folk so they can stay and work on it

By XU XIAO

The farmers of Wenjiang have found some new ways to make money, other than just working the land, thanks to new district policies that benefit rural people.

Zhang Xianfeng, who was carefully attending to the flowers in his field when this reporter found him, said that he was not working for his own interest, but for that of other people.

"Although I work for others on my own farmland, I have a better income — more than 1,400 yuan (\$215) a month. The company also pays my rent and my wife gets her monthly old-age pension of 850 yuan."

The elderly couple now have an annual income of 30,000 yuan, which is far beyond the amount they earned before.

"Young people go to the city to seek their fortune, and those who remain rent

their land out to companies, and villagers above the age of 40 come to work," said Jiang Zhonglin, a local Party committee member.

"Many talented people who are already rich rent land and establish a company in our village. Those elderly people who knew nothing but farm work, leased out their land and hired themselves out to the companies, so they still deal with the earth they're familiar with — but get a better salary," Jiang noted.

According to agriculture development bureau personnel, the Wenjiang district has tried hard to find ways to increase farmers' income and narrow the wage gap between rural and urban people.

Now it has trained 36,240 farmers — or 85 percent — providing them with some useful techniques.

And, according to Jiang, while money is certainly important, leading a harmonious, happy life can be

more important.

Another sign of Wenjiang's effort to bring the villagers self-government has been the allocation of housing — something the officials believe will bring harmony and happiness.

Jiang told reporters that the housing allocation respected the farmers' wishes and the government regulations.

To make sure that the allocations were above board, the community published the names of the people who got the housing and other needed information. Anyone can see the procedure, officials said.

According to some district residents, Wenjiang is developing a democratic system that involves villagers in the decision-making process when it comes to public services and industrial development.

To get more villagers to take part in the management process, one part of Wenjiang district estab-

lished a community service center in October 2010. It now has an art troupe, an information service center, a public service center, and other groups taking part, too.

When a free gym was opened in 2011, community service groups pitched in to oversee its daily operation.

Mou Liang, a local county official, told reporters that, "Villagers take part in social affairs, so the government doesn't have to attend to odds and ends, and can concentrate on policy making, so it makes better development decisions for the people."

These days, Wenjiang has its eye on a modern rural complex that is both good for economic development and harmonious living.

"A city surrounded by farmland, a farming area within a city, and people dwelling in a pastoral environment — that's the blueprint for Wenjiang's future prospects."