

# UPDATE ON KENYAN HORTICULTURE

*Brought to you by the Kenya Horticultural Development Program (KHDP) — a USAID-funded project aimed at increasing incomes through smallholder production and employment in the horticulture industry. USAID-KHDP works with public and private sector agencies to provide technical and marketing assistance to growers throughout Kenya. USAID-KHDP's main agribusiness partners include grower associations, input suppliers, processors, exporters, research institutions and trade associations.*

## “MAPATO ZAIDI KWA KUPITIA KILIMO BORA”

- **USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah visits Kenya – innovation and food security top the agenda**
- **USAID announces new five-year project to support Kenyan horticulture**
- **Asda Wal-Mart supermarkets promote new bouquets from Kenyan smallholders**
- **FPEAK launches KenyaGAP standard for the domestic market**
- **KHDP-assisted farmers get microfinance lift from Equity Bank**
- **Real IPM and KHDP field days focus on horticulture, health and nutrition**
- **Kenya's Africert opens new certification office in Ghana**

## KHDP NEWS

This is the last update from USAID-KHDP. After June 1, USAID is supporting Kenyan horticulture through a new five-year initiative, **the Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project (USAID-KHCP)**. USAID-KHCP will build on the success of USAID-KHDP. It will focus on business development for small-scale growers, technical assistance to increase competitiveness industry-wide and the formation of new partnerships that will contribute to growth and diversification.

During the six years of USAID-KHDP we have seen continuous increases in rural incomes from the production of horticultural products such as vegetables, fruits, and flowers. Productivity and management practices have improved and thousands of farmers have adopted new technologies. Horticulture is now widely recognized as a path to food security.

Low-cost greenhouses for year-round production are appearing in villages from Kilifi to Busia. Growers are



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Alice Kamami of NatureGrown Flowers visits an Asda UK supermarket selling bouquets made entirely from flowers grown by Kenyan smallholders.

collecting and storing water and buying improved seeds after seeing the cash rewards that come from the efficient production of vegetables for the local market.

Kenya has become a world supplier of new products such as African Bird's Eye (ABE) chili and tea tree oil. In May 2010, a group of KHDP-assisted smallholders became the first flower growers ever to receive Rainforest Alliance certification. Their flowers are now being sold by Asda supermarket in the UK, which is owned by Wal-Mart and is part of the world's largest supermarket chain.

Kenyans are recognizing the health benefits of fruits, vegetables and root crops. In villages and cities, families are focusing on eating more balanced meals. Safety and quality standards of fresh produce have gone up on the local market and will continue to improve as more farmers achieve KenyaGAP certification.

It has been a great pleasure working with the many USAID-KHDP partners in the public and private sector. Thank you all for making the program a great success. The first communication from USAID-KHCP will be with you in a few weeks. As always, your suggestions on how to improve the Update are welcome.

## USAID ADMINISTRATOR DR. RAJIV SHAH VISITS KENYA

Dr. Rajiv Shah, USAID's new administrator, made a two-day visit to Kenya in May. He visited USAID-funded projects and hosted a discussion on innovative

approaches to development and food security with 30 implementing and donor partners, and USAID staff and mission directors from the East Africa region.

The event coincided with the launch of the U.S Government's "Feed the Future" initiative. Discussion points included how to collaborate with the private sector to increase productivity, market competitiveness and food production, and the importance of income generation to food security. Dr. Shah was briefed on smallholder cultivation of nutritious crops such as sweet potatoes, butternut squash and leafy vegetables that are drought tolerant and contain essential nutrients.

Well known for his high-tech interests, Dr. Shah was keen to hear more on technological improvements for tracking regional commodity movement using the iPhone, techniques for reducing postharvest losses with UV-resistant vinyl structures, and electronic warehouse receipts systems for grain storage.

### FPEAK AND KENYAGAP NATIONAL TECHNICAL NETWORKING GROUP (NTWG)

In May, FPEAK officially launched the KenyaGAP Domestic Scope and distributed information defining the control points and compliance criteria, supported by checklists and training manuals. The Domestic Scope defines the standards growers must follow to achieve KenyaGAP certification, which will ensure that their produce meets safety and quality standards approved by the Kenya National Bureau of Standards. Certified growers will have a strong competitive advantage when selling to supermarkets and other buyers, as the certification serves as a guarantee to consumers.

The new training center for horticulture is now creating courses to meet the immediate needs of the industry. The training center was established with support from the Netherlands Government, and FPEAK has called on members and growers to collaborate in identifying training gaps in all areas from farm to packhouse, with trainees coming from each sector. Courses will be designed to impart practical skills, avoiding duplication of topics covered by academic institutions. Technical assistance for curriculum development will be given by specialists from Wageningen University, the Netherlands.

### NEW BUSINESS FOR AFRICERT AT BIOFACH ORGANIC FAIR

In April, USAID-KHDP helped partner organization Africert attend BioFach 2010, the world's largest organic fair. Currently, Africert offers a range of certification services to the horticulture industry in East and Southern Africa, including audits and inspections, but they are looking into opening a new office in Accra, Ghana to serve the expanding market needs for organic certification in West Africa. There is an overwhelming demand for organic certification from West African growers, and for several years Africert has been



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

These watermelons, produced by the Karwa Women's Group in Homa Bay in Nyanza, have been graded and await collection.

conducting audits in West Africa from their Nairobi office. With the increasing demand for cost effective certification as well as growth of the market across Africa, this is an opportune time for market entry.

### KENYA PLANT HEALTH INSPECTORATE (KEPHIS)

KEPHIS is a major contributor to Kenya's success in export horticulture, and KEPHIS inspectors must stay vigilant to ensure national compliance with international standards. In April and May, USAID-KHDP provided technical support to KEPHIS, outlining its regulatory role and training its inspectors on improving KEPHIS operations. Inspectors received training on contemporary market requirements, Phytosanitary requirements, IPPC standards, WTO/SPS, EU directives, markets standards (GLOBALGAP, OECD) – activity code (1.3.11 & 1.3.21).

### REAL IPM FIELD DAYS A BIG SUCCESS

USAID-KHDP partner Real IPM held four field days in April to take their message of "horticulture for positive health" into the community. The partnership conducts research on the development of nutritious vegetable varieties and kitchen garden techniques.

The open field days were held at Thika District Hospital, Watoto Wenye Nguvu orphanage, Matarajio Women's Group farm and Joy Town School for the physically challenged. 127 people attended the events, with participants demonstrating new technologies for vermicomposting (compost using worms), multiple cropping to obtain high yields from small areas, and low-cost greenhouses. Everyone enjoyed delicious and nutritious food from recipes featured in the Positive Cook Book, produced by Real IPM and USAID-KHDP.

## SMALLHOLDER FLOWER BOUQUETS HIT UK SUPERMARKETS

In May bouquets of flowers from smallholder growers were sold in 48 Asda supermarkets across the UK. The growers supply USAID-KHDP partner NatureGrown Flowers, and their success came after program technical assistance helped them achieve certification for the prestigious Rainforest Alliance (RA) environmental standard. This was a requirement of U.S. company Wal-Mart, which owns Asda and it is the first time flower growers have been certified by RA. USAID-KHDP manager Lydia Njuguna and Alice Kamami, managing director of NatureGrown, went to the UK in May for a press event with Asda. Customers are queuing up for the flowers, and the program is expected to grow.

## FARMERS BENEFIT FROM MICROFINANCE

Equity Bank continued to expand lending to USAID-KHDP-assisted farmer groups across the country. The bank met with passion fruit farmers from Rift Valley and Western Province in May, to agree on new funding levels for fertilizer and other inputs.

## CROPS AND PRODUCTS

### Pulses from Ukambani

USAID-KHDP farmers started harvesting pigeon peas, beans, cowpeas and green grams in May. Fourteen farmer groups completed 36 demonstrations, and all increased their yields and net incomes over previous years.

### African Bird's Eye (ABE) Chili

Deliveries continued to USAID-KHDP partners Mace Foods in Eldoret and Equator Products in Malindi. Seed selections by Moi University are producing high quality uniform seed crops, which will be distributed to growers for the next planting season. The selections are high-yielding, easy to pick, optimum size and uniformly red.

### Sweet Potato

The sweet potato bulking program at KARI-Matuga made solid progress, and 70,000 vines of Tainung variety were harvested for re-planting. Multiplication of "Mtwapa 8" continued, and this variety should be available for commercial growers after the next crop.

### Mango

Fintrac and USAID-KHDP, in cooperation with Technoserve, completed a survey of mango production in Eastern, Central and Rift Valley regions. The survey showed that production is increasing annually by 15 percent per annum in Eastern Province, and that apple mango is the variety preferred by growers

### Tomatoes

New greenhouse tomato varieties, Beverly R2 and Alboran R2 were introduced by Rijk Zwaan to compete with the popular Anna F1 from Seminis. Many service providers including banks, agro-chemical dealers, fertilizer companies and builders have created new



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Pigeon pea is a critical food security crop for many rural families. It will be targeted by the upcoming USAID-KHCP.

products to support the massive demand from growers and consumers for greenhouse tomatoes.

### Irish potato

Irish potato production demonstrations were established with USAID-KHDP partners ADPP, KENFAP and FCI in Bomet and Buret. This was in preparation for a major USAID-KHCP initiative to increase potato yields and productivity, which will be implemented with KENFAP during the next three years.

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