

UPDATE ON KENYAN HORTICULTURE

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

“Mapato zaidi kwa kupitia kilimo bora”

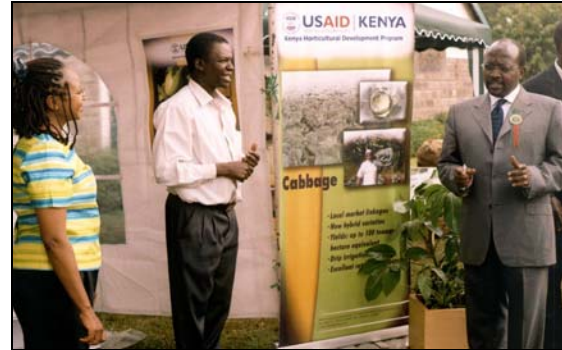
- **“Grown under the Sun” campaign launched**
- **KFC and FPEAK merger talks going well**
- **Kenya forms National Food Safety Committee**
- **Farm Concern wins International award**
- **EurepGAP-certified growers increasing**
- **Chelsea Flower Show win for Kenya**

To prove the old saying that “every problem is just an opportunity in disguise,” Kenya’s launch of its “Grown under the Sun” campaign has been a big hit in the UK. The KFC and FPEAK, working closely with Kenya’s High Commissioner to the UK, Joseph Muchemi, created the campaign to address consumer concerns about air freight and food miles. The campaign aims to assure UK consumers that Kenyan horticultural producers are as environmentally friendly as their European brothers and sisters.

“Grown under the sun” encourages consumers to buy Kenyan produce, on the grounds that trade is the most sustainable way to support economic development. So far the message seems to be getting across with no drop in sales being reported by exporters. Actually, the heavy rains in Europe have pushed up the demand for Kenyan vegetables this year with smallholder suppliers benefiting from good prices and European consumers getting their fresh beans despite the bad weather.

Merger talks between KFC and FPEAK, aimed at forming one trade association to represent the whole industry, are reported to be going well. Subject to final approval by both boards, the new association could be launched as early as September.

Yes, Minister



Agriculture Minister, Hon. Kipruto Arap Kirwa (right) talks horticulture with KHDP agronomists Geoffrey Nyamota and Irene Ngugi at the Nakuru Agricultural Show.

An important aspect of USAID and KHDP policy for promoting economic growth and poverty reduction is to provide technical assistance, which increases competitiveness throughout the value chain. A regional workshop was organized from June 4 – 8 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for 64 representatives of African projects funded by USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Participants presented project-specific case studies on overcoming value chain bottlenecks and fast tracking public-private collaboration. KHDP’s Market Analyst Julius Maithya gave a presentation on “Increasing Smallholder Incomes from Horticultural Crops and Products in Kenya.”

Congratulations to the Government of Kenya on launching the National Food Safety Coordination Committee. The Agriculture Secretary Dr. Wilson Songa outlined the Committee’s 5-Year Strategic National Action Plan. The Committee will coordinate all ongoing initiatives to ensure food safety in both export and domestic trade and keep Kenya ahead on EU and WTO requirements.

Well done Farm Concern International, one of KHDP’s key partners, on winning this year’s Pro-Poor Innovation Challenge, sponsored by the World Bank. This is part of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) initiative and Farm Concern was recognized for its innovative partnerships in providing financial and non-financial services tailor-made for the poor.

The KHDP is always trying to make *Update* as interesting and informative as possible. Starting with this issue, we shall be sharing your comments and suggestions with our readers and welcome you to contact Update Editor Anne Wangalachi at anne@fintrac.com.

— Steve New, KHDP Director

National Task Force on Horticulture/KEPHIS

The Task Force continued to coordinate industry issues related to EPAs and participate in international trade shows and capacity building for SPS compliance. The new KEPHIS initiative to increase national pesticide analysis capacity in fresh produce was formally initiated. It is supported by the Government of Kenya's Horticulture Research Fund. Routine sampling and analysis of both export and domestic market produce will be increased massively over a one-year period with quarterly reporting for the benefit of growers, processors and consumers. In its important role of promoting "Kenya plc" the Task Force ensured that horticulture was well represented on the Kenya national stand at the UK's Royal Agricultural Show. Contact the MD, KEPHIS at director@kephis.org for more details on the work of the Task Force and KEPHIS.

Local Market Fruit and Vegetables

With the continued rains, vegetable growers were busy establishing nurseries, transplanting and managing their established stands. Tomato, cabbage, onion, carrot, watermelon, butternut squash, kale, indigenous African vegetable, sweet pepper and banana sales of KHDP-assisted small-scale farmers reached a record high in June and July. At the current rate, KHDP smallholder horticulture clients throughout the country will achieve an average income of more than KSh 80,000 (\$1,200) in 2008.

As part of its strategy to upgrade and streamline operations in the domestic market, the MOA led the formation of a task force to address domestic market infrastructure issues. The new task force, chaired by HCDA, with technical assistance from the Gatsby Trust and KHDP, is working with both public and private stakeholders to develop a "master plan" for the domestic market, including major investment in urban wholesale markets.

Since May, 243 group leaders have improved their skills in leadership, recordkeeping and financial management through the KHDP group capacity-building program. Seminis and KHDP also held a seminar for 30 market intermediaries in Eldoret. Brokers form a vital link in the supply chain and will promote new varieties to growers and buyers in the area.

Chilli Products

Growers continue to supply high-quality, dried African Birds Eye (ABE) chilli, though ongoing rains pose drying challenges despite use of improved drying racks. Nevertheless, in June and July, farmers from Nyanza, Western and Coast provinces earned KSh 800,000 (\$12,000) from sales of dried chillis to Mace Foods.

Vanilla

KHDP vanilla expert Umran Kaggwa focused development activities on vine management through mulching, looping, pruning and shade management

Vanilla republic



Zuberi Mohamed loops two-year-old vanilla vines grown on Jatropa plants at Mr. Devshi Kambi's farm in Malindi, at the Coast.

techniques. Malindi is emerging as an important vanilla zone, with four medium-scale commercial farms (more than 1,000 vines) and many smallholder producers with 10-100 plants. In anticipation of future demand for planting material as the Kenyan vanilla industry expands, various types of propagation systems and different shade trees are being tested by KHDP and partners.

Passion Fruit

Commercial passion fruit production has caught on in a big way. Through a cost-sharing arrangement with growers in Central and Rift Valley provinces, KHDP put up six modern nursery structures with a combined annual capacity of 63,000 high-quality grafted seedlings. Market linkages were also provided to growers for high-quality grafted seedlings and fresh fruit as demand rose steadily in June and July. Market prices for fresh passion fruit stabilized at KSh 30-40 per kilo, and KHDP-assisted growers in Western, Rift Valley and Central provinces earned KSh 2.2 million (\$34,000).

Tree Crops

Earthoil's tea tree program is gathering momentum in Naromoro. By the end of July, 80 smallholders had transplanted 263,000 seedlings. The growers will be

audited by Africa Now in August to ensure that they continue to meet the Body Shop's community trade guidelines. Earthoil is also a major buyer of Moringa seeds, which is becoming a valuable crop for growers in Western, Rift Valley and coastal areas. Moringa tree foliage is a tasty vegetable and Moringa seeds are valued for their oil content.

A new partnership among processors, agrochemical suppliers (Syngenta and Bayer), KHDP, the MOA and KARI started activities in July with grower training in macadamia pest control. At the Coast, growers harvested cashews and mangoes, however, heavy rains reduced yields this year.

Smallholder Flowers

Congratulations to Lydia Kang'ethe for her award-winning displays at the UK's prestigious Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show. Lydia's stunning designs won bronze, silver and gold prizes in the individual category, themed "Floral Profusion." The designs drew many visitors who were impressed by the quality of Kenyan flowers, many of which were sourced from small-scale producers.

Prof. Michael Porter of the Harvard Business School gave a lecture on "Global Competitiveness: Implications for Kenya." Citing Kenya's successful cut flower industry, he explained how businesses can play a key role in improving the country's competitiveness. He was hosted by the Strathmore Business School and National Economic and Social Council (NESC).

EurepGAP/SPS

National EurepGAP and SPS initiatives focused on training, auditing and certification to various schemes and food safety. At the end of June, there were 386 EurepGAP certificates in Kenya representing exporter owned/managed farms, medium-scale outgrowers, outgrowers in groups and a production scheme. Among the certified smallholders, 1,930 supply the fresh market and more than 10,000 grow primarily for processors. The highly anticipated KenyaGAP will officially be launched on August 29 in Nairobi. To participate and for more information on KenyaGAP, please contact the CEO, FPEAK at info@fpeak.org.

Industry News and Views

HCDA

As part of its outreach activities, the Horticultural Crops Development Authority (HCDA) held a regional meeting on produce marketing at its Limuru depot in Central Province. The HCDA is working to streamline the implementation of regulations and standards through registering all horticultural growers, brokers and exporters. This move will support ethical sourcing practices and enhance product traceability.

Your Say

We thank you K. S. Subramanian, of Agro-Irrigation and Pump Services Ltd., Nairobi for your letter telling us that you find *Update* practical and useful for

Flower power



Kenyan floral designer Lydia Kang'ethe won silver at the Royal Chelsea Flower Show for her interpretation of the theme "Floral Profusion." Lydia used flowers grown exclusively in Kenya.

farmers. We will strive to incorporate your suggestions and make *Update* even better.

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