

# 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”***

- **Carbon miles debate not harming Kenya**
- **Passion fruit production booming**
- **EU approves KEPHIS SPS program**
- **National EPA negotiations on course**

**C**ongratulations to KEPHIS for getting the green light from the EU on their proposed SPS program which is set to begin in July. The program seeks to build Kenya's SPS capacity for compliance with all food safety and traceability standards at the national level.

In the Ministers' meeting in Brussels, Belgium, Kenya was elected to coordinate the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) negotiations of 16 Eastern and Southern African countries. At home, the National Task Force on Horticulture met with Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, David Nalo to agree on the country's position on EPAs. With six months to go, it is essential that a clear strategy is developed to maintain the horticulture industry's competitiveness in the European market.

Kenya has stepped up its efforts to widen the debate on carbon miles through coordinated media briefings both locally and internationally. Also, a documentary on Kenyan horticultural production practices is being filmed by Tony Colman, director of respected NGO “African Practice” and a former UK Member of Parliament. In a joint panel, FPEAK CEO Dr. Stephen Mbithi and KHDP agronomist Timothy Mwangi fielded questions on the carbon miles issue during the Mali Shambani show aired May 21 on national radio. These proactive measures have widened the carbon debate to include total energy budgets and development issues. As a result, Kenyan sales of fresh produce have not been affected in Europe, and leading UK

## Flowering Success



George Mutua picks white *Ranunculus* that is blooming in the KHDP greenhouse. It is one of many new varieties being trialed and commercialized by smallholder flower growers.

retailers (Tesco and M&S) have said publicly that they will be buying even more Kenyan and African produce in the future. Well done KFC and FPEAK!

The KHDP is always trying to make Update as interesting and informative as possible. Please contact Update Editor Anne Wangalachi for comments and suggestions at [anne@fintrac.com](mailto:anne@fintrac.com).

— Steve New, KHDP Director

## National Task Force on Horticulture/KEPHIS

The Task Force continued to coordinate industry issues related to EPAs, capacity building for SPS compliance and market interceptions. On May 21, a proposal on the “Centre of Excellence on Phytosanitary Issues in Africa” was presented to the Task Force by Ralf Lopian, a World Trade Organization (WTO) consultant. The proposal was developed by KEPHIS, the University of Nairobi, the International Plant Protection Committee and the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau International

(CABI). It addresses industry views that the technical capacity to meet current and future global SPS requirements should be developed within Africa. The proposal has been submitted to the WTO for funding. Also, the EU-funded KEPHIS program on “Horticultural Produce Phytosanitary Certification and Quality Assurance” has been given the go ahead and will begin in July.

On May 28, the Task Force held discussions with the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Trade on the EPA negotiation process. Market access is one of the key issues yet to be agreed on. The Task Force will continue to be involved in the development of a national strategy for Kenya’s EPA document to be revised before the end of the year. The objective is to ensure that Kenya’s horticultural exports to the EU remain zero rated and competitive. For more details on the work of the Task Force, contact the MD, KEPHIS through [director@kephis.org](mailto:director@kephis.org)

### Local Market Fruit and Vegetables

Farm activity was intense in May as growers strove to take advantage of good rains in most of the country. Although the main activity was transplanting, many KHDP-assisted small-scale farmers made sales of watermelons, butternut squash, kale, tomatoes and indigenous African vegetables.

From Coast to Nyanza; Rift Valley to Central, growers all agree that adopting more efficient production technologies and new vegetable varieties has made all the difference for them. The MOA national production survey confirms this. One such grower, Mr. Ngatia, of Endarasha, Central Province, told KHDP he made KSh 11,000 from 800 kilos of Anna F1 tomatoes and KSh 3,200 from 40 kilos of garlic onion, planted on just 225 and 90 square metres respectively. He is a first-time grower and now plans to expand production to include more hybrid vegetables.

With the rains forcing up tomato prices, demand for technical assistance in setting up low-cost greenhouses was high in May, with 7 new ones being established in Rift Valley and Western provinces. In a few years all commercial production of tomatoes will be in greenhouses. Greenhouse production consumes less water and agrochemicals, reduces costs and improves quality.

The ongoing KHDP group business capacity training program was attended by 75 leaders from 31 grower groups in Nyanza and Central provinces. The training covered leadership, recordkeeping and financial management. In recognition of the role of brokers as service providers to growers, KHDP and partner Seminis held a seminar for 50 market intermediaries of various crops at the Thika Market to introduce them to hybrid varieties of cabbage, tomatoes, carrots and capsicum. The intermediaries saw real samples of these crops provided by KHDP growers and were

### In the field



New hybrid tomato varieties like this one, Anna F1, are ideal for both greenhouse and field production and hold great promise for small scale growers.

upbeat about promoting them to their growers and buyers.

### Chilli Products

In May, growers continued to supply high quality dried African Birds Eye (ABE) chilli. Equator Products in Eastern Province was supplied with 2.2 tonnes while Mace Foods received 2.4 tonnes at their depot in Eldoret. This earned growers from Nyanza, Western and Eastern provinces KSh 458,900 in new income. KHDP and partner agronomists were on hand to provide technical assistance as more nurseries were set up in the main growing areas and production expanded into new areas. At the Coast, farmers were trained on staggering ABE nursery establishment and seed bulking to provide enough planting material.

There is a growing demand for fresh ABE and other chilli varieties for local and export markets. UK buyers in particular are looking to Kenya for EurepGAP-certified ABE and “bullet” chilli. KHDP has also sent samples of Kenyan chilli sauces to US buyers looking for African food products.

### Vanilla

Vanilla vines planted in 2004 have reached 12 meters and are being “looped” by growers in western and coastal areas. In May, some growers harvested and sold bananas and Jatropha seeds, which are grown alongside vanilla as intercrops while waiting patiently for their vanilla to flower. A few growers have vines that have started flowering so training was provided by KHDP vanilla expert Umran Kaggwa, of Uganda on hand pollination and pruning. We are still on target to start a small vanilla industry in Kenya!

### Passion Fruit

The passion fruit revolution continues. Even though the market price for fresh fruit dropped to between KSh

25 - 40 per kilo, May saw increased sales of both fresh fruit and seedlings as many new orchards were established. Customs data for 2006 showed that exports have recovered to pre-2003 levels. MOA data shows that production is increasing faster than ever before. KHDP-assisted growers in Western, Rift Valley and Central provinces sold grafted seedlings worth KSh 226,050 (US \$3,373) while fresh fruit sales were KSh 1,113,400 (US \$16,617).

In Coast Province, it was good news for growers of yellow passion fruit. In consultation with KHDP agronomist Beatrice Gambo, the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) has developed a loan scheme specifically for them. With a minimum of a ¼ acre of passion fruit, intercropped with vegetables and supported by technical assistance from KHDP, farmers will be able to obtain AFC loans for poles, wire and other inputs.

### Tree Crops

Harvesting of moringa continued in Coast Province, though this was somewhat hampered by the rains. Tea tree was introduced by Earthoil as a new cash crop to growers in the Mt. Kenya area, with 7,000 seedlings being transplanted in May. Valued for its antimicrobial activity, tea tree oil is used as an ingredient in creams, ointments, lotions, soaps and shampoos.

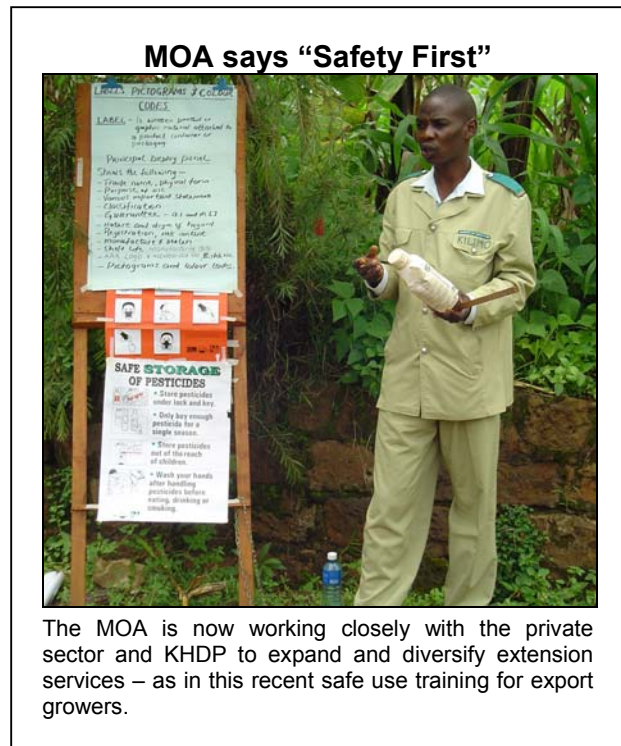
In a sad repetition of previous years, a good mango crop on the Tana River is being lost for lack of access roads to get the fruit to market. KHDP estimates that growers will lose potential income of more than KSh 2 million because the roads to the Tana are impassable after heavy rains.

### Smallholder Flowers

Now that bouquet preparation has largely moved from Europe to Kenya, opportunities for small-scale growers to link up with large-scale export companies are increasing rapidly. Floriculture activities in May focused on training in crop management, group capacity building and market linkages for producers of “summer” flowers. Thanks to joint efforts between KHDP and partners KARI and Jomo Kenyatta University, small-scale growers are now producing high quality eucalyptus, arabicum, moby dick and stachys. Growers are not only making new commercial sales of these flowers but are also receiving training in commercial multiplication of planting material to maintain continuity of supply. KHDP continued linking growers with partner Rosavie who uses many unusual varieties of flowers and foliage in their processed flower creations. Rosavie sells its unique, high-value products to leading stores in the US, Japan and Europe.

### EurepGAP/SPS

Various activities took place in May to improve grower capacity in both EurepGAP and SPS issues. The



The MOA is now working closely with the private sector and KHDP to expand and diversify extension services – as in this recent safe use training for export growers.

MOA, Agrochemical Association of Kenya (AAK) and KHDP organized a successful one-day training on safe use of chemicals at Kibirigwi in Central Province with 76 farmers participating. Other training by KHDP and partner agronomists focused on IPM, recordkeeping, farm hygiene and safe use of chemicals. The exporters were also busy preparing their smallholder suppliers for auditing and recertification for both EurepGAP and Tesco’s Nature’s Choice standards. Although no new certificates were awarded in the month, most farmers are largely compliant with supermarkets’ requirements and have been able to increase production of beans and other vegetables. The official launch of KenyaGAP, benchmarked to EurepGAP, is being organized by FPEAK for August and will coincide with their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To participate and for details on KenyaGAP, please contact the CEO, FPEAK [info@fpeak.org](mailto:info@fpeak.org)

### Contact KHDP

**Kenya Horticultural Development Program**  
MPPS Building  
Mombasa Road  
P.O. Box 3074-00506  
Nyayo Stadium, Nairobi

**Phone:** 20-556728/556807

**Fax:** 20-556804

**E-mail:** [khdp@fintrac.com](mailto:khdp@fintrac.com)

### Field Offices

Thika, Kisumu, Eldoret, Mombasa, Nanyuki

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