

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”

- **US Ambassador Ranneberger intervenes to support the horticulture industry**
- **USAID backs horticulture**
- **National Taskforce adopts action plan for pesticide residue monitoring**
- **HCDCA completes baseline report on national horticultural production**
- **Real IPM and KHDP launch the Positive Cook Book**
- **Passion fruit season takes off in Rift Valley**

Kenyan companies are working hard to win new business in the US. As a result of these efforts, which are supported by USAID-KHDP, trade in horticultural products between the two countries is up 50 percent and set to reach a record level this year. Some American customers, however, are reluctant to visit Kenya because of security concerns. In September, FPEAK brought this to the attention of US Ambassador Ranneberger who responded with typical support and tenacity by circulating an open letter, which was originally written in April 2008. To reassure our readers overseas we are reproducing excerpts from this letter below.

EXCERPTS FROM AN OPEN LETTER TO AMERICAN TRAVELLERS AND BUSINESSPEOPLE FROM US – *AMBASSADOR TO Kenya, Michael E., Ranneberger*

Dear Fellow Citizens

I am sure many of you have been following the recent events in Kenya, specifically the crisis triggered by the sharply disputed results of elections held in late December. ... This unfortunate chain of events led to a great deal of short-term damage to the Kenyan economy. ... Kenya faces formidable challenges in repairing the damage done by January's political crisis but I can report that there have been positive developments that are opening up the economic climate and making Kenya once again the perfect locale for business and tourism. ... The US recently pledged an additional \$25 million in new assistance to help the reconciliation and reconstructions efforts. Kenya is re-energized and is once again a country on the move.

Horticulture brings new Income for Farmers in Conflict-affected Areas



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

USAID-KHDP Director, Steve New, right, inspects John Oneko's cabbage on his plot in Bungoma. Oneko was among the residents of Eldoret that were displaced during the post election chaos. He moved his family and leased a farm 60 kilometers from Eldoret to plant horticultural crops following an interaction with USAID-KHDP beneficiaries. This is his first harvest.

Kenya is a regional distribution center for trade across East Africa, home to the largest regional financial industry, and is investing aggressively in communications and transportation infrastructure. This is an extraordinarily good moment for those with an eye for business opportunities to take a close look at East Africa, and at Kenya. I urge you to look again at Kenya as an exciting place for tourism and for doing business. ... I urge you to read the US State Department Travel Warning for Kenya. ... It does not advise against travel to Kenya. It is similar to travel warnings issued for several dozen other countries, many of which are also close friends with the US. ... I hope you'll consider visiting Kenya as a tourist or businessperson in 2008. The country is very much back in business and this is an

exciting time to be here. ... I assure you we will do our utmost to provide appropriate support and assistance for your engagement. ... Karibu Kenya!

NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON HORTICULTURE

The Task Force continued work on major issues facing the industry, with funding support from KEPHIS. Main activities in September were:

- Following the ban of avocados to South Africa because of fruit flies, FPEAK sent a letter to relevant ministries (i.e. Agriculture, Trade and Foreign Affairs) seeking government intervention. KEPHIS sent a letter to the South African NPPO on the same issue. A trade delegation mission from Kenya led by the Deputy Prime Minister will soon visit South Africa to discuss a bilateral trade agreement.
- The task force developed an action plan for national pesticide residue-monitoring for foods of plant origin and a committee consisting of key industry players will be selected to spearhead implementation of the plan. The action plan was one of the key recommendations made by the EC FVO mission that visited Kenya in November 2007.
- Preparations for a regional UNECE workshop to be held in November are underway. The workshop is Nov. 17-21 at KEPHIS headquarters in Karen. The theme of the workshop is “Enhancing the capacity of developing countries to implement international standards for commercial agricultural products to improve their trade competitiveness.”
- An OECD evaluation team will be visiting Kenya from Oct. 13-15, 2008. Kenya is already involved in the OECD seed scheme and now wants to join the fruits and vegetable schemes. Once a country is involved in this scheme, its produce becomes more acceptable on the international market.
- The task force met a USAID/Washington team assisting with the design of a possible new, long-term program of support for the horticulture industry when USAID-KHDP ends in March 2009. Private sector members highlighted a range of issues including water management and product diversification, which would benefit from technical assistance.

KENYA HORTICULTURE COUNCIL – KHC

The Fresh Produce Association of Kenya (FPEAK) is preparing to hold a Coast region Hortifair in Kilifi at the Pwani University grounds, on Oct. 23-24, 2008. The event is expected to attract major stakeholders in the industry supporting the fast-growing horticulture sector at the coast. New investments are taking place for export vegetables, chilli, mango, yellow passion fruit, sweet potatoes and processed products. Horticulture is projected to become a major source of income to complement the tourism industry which needs a constant supply of fresh fruit and vegetables.



The Positive Vegetable Garden

Harrigan Mukhongo, USAID manager for KHDP, admires Kale growing in the Positive Kitchen Garden during an open day at Real IPM's Kichozi farm in Thika. The garden supplies enough vegetables for the employee canteen and extra produce for employees to take home.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

A new report providing validated baseline figures for national horticultural production in 2005-07 was completed by the MOA, HCDA, USAID-KHDP and other stakeholders. It was submitted to a panel of Provincial Directors of Agriculture for final validation before publication. The panel had one week to crosscheck the data in the report against their own figures before publication. The report will be published by HCDA and made available to the public this year.

USAID- KHDP NEWS

Healthy living

Fresh fruit and vegetables are essential to healthy living. They help to boost the immune system for protection against various health threats and are a valuable supplement to ARV medication in HIV/AIDS treatment. USAID-KHDP and the Real IPM Company are pioneering the “Positive Kitchen Garden” initiative to link horticulture and healthy living. Real IPM hosted a successful open day in September to showcase their employee-managed garden. The concept is aimed at improving the health of employees working in the horticulture industry. It works on the assumption that all commercial horticulture farms have enough spare land to grow vegetables for their staff canteen. The vegetables produced in the garden are consumed at the canteen and periodically the employees get to take home vegetables for home consumption. In exchange, employees provide a little labor at the garden outside of working hours. Some flower farms and other horticultural

units are already putting up the gardens as a way to support the national fight against HIV/AIDS. During the event, guests from the wider horticulture industry learned about garden implementation and of the Positive Cook Book produced by Real IPM and Fintrac. It contains health tips and 80 sumptuous recipes customized for the Kenyan appetite. The cookbook is available on the Real IPM Web site www.realipm.com.

Local market vegetables

Horticulture has offered new hope for many displaced families in Rift Valley and Western areas. Crops such as kale and tomato produce quickly, are high value and can be sold locally in small quantities for cash. Many fishermen faced with poor catches as fish stocks disappear in Lake Victoria are also turning to horticulture for a living. USAID-KHDP has been working intensively with these growers since the post-election chaos and recorded excellent sales in September. Western Kenya now appears to be self-sufficient in the main vegetable crops and as a supplier of watermelons, butternut squash and tomatoes to Nairobi.

Tea tree

Organic tea tree growers had their annual audit in September and re-certification is expected. Earthoil bought 517 kilograms of tea tree leaves and produced 5 kilograms of oil for further testing. Harvesting and distillation is expected to continue into October. Growers planted an extra 600,000 new seedlings increasing production area to 181 acres. Plans are underway to conduct trials on organic sources of nitrogen, which can be applied to plants to increase leaf productivity.

Passion fruit

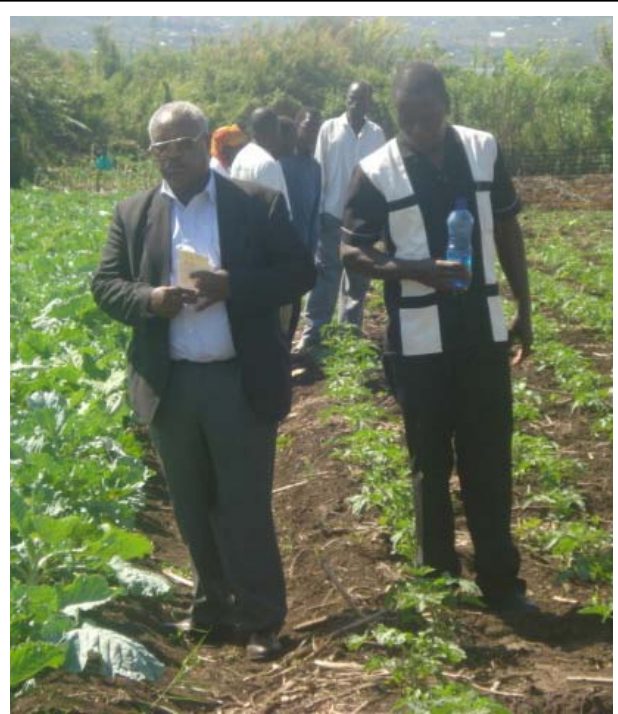
Demand for passion fruit is on the rise with prices stabilizing at KShs 35 per kilogram of grade two fruits in Rift Valley and Central province. The demand for seedlings is also on the rise with nurseries advised to increase production to meet the market requirements for the upcoming short rains when most growers will plant more vines. The demand for passion fruit is expected to reach its peak starting in October due to the demand arising from the export market and the local market processors and consumers.

Mango

USAID-KHDP met with Hon. Mungatana and leaders from the Tana River region to discuss a strategy for the next mango season starting in November. Growers predict the crop will be good if the weather is normal. USAID-KHDP will be following up to ensure as much mango as possible is marketed this season. This depends on tractors and trailers being available to reach the main Garsen-Malindi road and establishment of basic facilities being in place to grade mangoes at designated collection centres.

ABE chilli

Three export companies were competing for ABE chilli in September, which was good for growers. Harvesting



Commercial Horticulture booming in Nyanza

Veteran advisor Martin Mulandi, tours a USAID-KHDP-assisted farm in Suba, Nyanza where many growers have taken up production of kale and tomatoes for the domestic market. The growers receive technical assistance for business development and marketing from USAID-KHDP partner Animal Draft Power Programme, which is transforming commercial horticulture in the area.

started for crops planted in April in Nyanza and Coast regions, providing high volumes of chilli. New growers are receiving training on harvesting to ensure that they select good quality chilli to pick and harvesting takes place at the right time. Additionally, growers are receiving training on how to manage drying to reduce postharvest losses.

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