



Kenya Horticulture Development Program (KHDP)

PRESS RELEASE

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALLHOLDERS IN FLORICULTURE

Kenyan Smallholders have cut a niche for themselves in a business that for long has been regarded capital and resource intensive; floriculture. Traditionally Kenya is renowned for its roses, carnations and hypericum which constitute over 80% of the flower exports.

However demand for bouquets in the market, both domestic and abroad has changed fortunes for smallholders. The farmers are now planting “fillers” predominantly green foliage and a range of colored flowers that are less resource intensive and can be grown in open fields. In 2006, smallholders produced 2600 tons of flowers that constituted 3% of the total flower exports.

The demand for bouquets is also on the rise, making 10% of flower exports in 2006. Smallholder farmers plant a wide variety of flowers including the most popular Arabicum, Eryngium, mobydick, and Omis. At the farm gate, a farmer makes an average of KShs. 3 per stem. One square meter of land can produce up to 200 stems. The production cost per stem is kshs.1.30.

Fillers are a quick source of income for smallholders, the flowers take an average of 12 weeks to mature and often can be harvested weekly for 6 months. The demand for fillers is on the rise with export companies providing a ready market for the product.

KHDP is working with farmers in Central and Rift valley province providing them with technical assistance and market linkages for their products. For example, smallholders working with KHDP in central Kenya are delivering over 30,000 stems every week to a Nairobi company, Rosavie that has developed a world-leading know-how on preservation of flowers and foliage by maintaining their colors, softness and natural beauty in high value arrangement created by top interior designers.

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For more information contact
Grace Nzou
Communications Manager
Kenya Horticultural Development Program
Tel: 0721154876
Email: gnzou@fintrac.com