

National Taskforce on Horticulture (Kenya)

The proceedings of the National Taskforce on Horticulture meeting held on 26th August 2008 in KEPHIS HQ.

Present

1. Dr. Stephen Mbithi – FPEAK – Chairing.
2. Dr. Brigitte Nyambo – ICIPE.
3. Mr. Martin Mulandi – KHDP.
4. Dr. Monicah Waiganjo – KARI.
5. Dr. Esther Kimani – KEPHIS.
6. Dr. Steve New – KHDP.
7. Dr. John M. Wesonga – Horticultural Assoc of Kenya/JKUAT.
8. Ms. Margaret Aleke – KEBS.
9. Ms. Alice N. Muriithi – Horticultural Assoc of Kenya/KARI.
10. Dr. Wariara Kariuki – JKUAT.
11. Mr. S.M.Miyogo – PCPB.
12. Mr. Charles Tumbo.
13. Ms. Jane Ngige – KFC.
14. Dr. Lusike Wasilwa – KARI.
15. Mr. Jotham Ouko – HCDA.
16. Mr. Joseph Kigamwa – KEPHIS – Taking minutes.

Absent with apologies

1. Dr. Chagema Kedera – KEPHIS.
2. Mr. Tiku Shah – FPEAK.
3. Mr. Rod Evans – Horticulture Private Sector representative.
4. Mrs. Daphne Muchai – KENFAP.
5. Dr. Sunita Sarkar – LNGG.
6. Ms. Evelyn Lusenaka – AAK.

The meeting started at 3.15 pm with self introduction.

Min 1/26/8/08 Opening Remarks

A brief history of the National Taskforce on Horticulture was given. The following agenda was adopted for discussion:

1. Planned All Africa Horticulture Congress (AAHC).
2. Position for Kenya on the forthcoming GlobalGAP Conference in October 2008 in Germany.
3. Action plan for Avocado exports to South Africa.
4. Kenya Flower Day in Holland.
5. Kenya Response to EU parliament decision to start an aviation levy.
6. Harmonised EU pesticide/active ingredient regime.
7. AoB.

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Min 2/26/8/08 Planned All Africa Horticulture Congress (AAHC)

1. Due to the planned All Africa Horticulture Congress (AAHC) to be held next year it was felt that the congress being a horticulture industry concern it warranted discussion in the National Taskforce in Horticulture. Previous industry stakeholders have attended ISHS meeting where discussions to hold a scientific meeting in Kenya were done. The international Society of Horticultural Scientists is an intergovernmental organization which brings together professionals in the horticulture sector (academia, research, industry and policy) to discuss developments in horticulture and agrees on targeted actions. Membership is at national level, and each member country is allocated two seats at official ISHS formal discussions.
2. Kenya Government through the Ministry of Agriculture had paid for the membership of ISHS (payment made by HCDA in 2008), although previously Kenya has been admitted to the meetings on observer status. The proposal for Kenya to host All Africa Horticultural Congress was discussed in the last two meetings of ISHS.
3. There have been some meetings by JKUAT team to discuss aspects of the conference, and in a meeting attended by GHI and KHC it was agreed that a national committee be constituted to manage the process, involving all horticulture sub-sector institutions. The initial discussions had proposed 26th and 30th April 2009 as possible dates for the conference, but this was to be reviewed by the National committee and then by the Africa organizing team and international organizations participating..
4. The Horticultural Taskforce therefore proposed that a National Organizing team be constituted to oversee the preparation of the AAHC. The proposed participating institutions, which will represent other institutions in their clusters, are as follows:
 - a) Research Institutions – KARI.
 - b) Academic Institutions – JKUAT.
 - c) International organisations – ICIPE.
 - d) Industry (FPEAK/KFC) – KHC.
 - e) Government Institutions – KEPHIS, HCDA
 - f) Other – HAK
5. One of the participants in the Meeting, Dr Wariara Kariuki of JKUAT submitted that she was the official representative of Kenya at ISHS, and therefore she needed to be included in the committee in person and reflected as the convenor. There was variance in explanations given by other participating institutions as it was indicated that Kenya as a country, not through a person was a member, and that the official representation for Kenya was through Ministry of Agriculture, with HCDA (a parastatal in the Ministry of Agriculture) having paid for Kenya membership. It was agreed that the Chairman of Horticulture Taskforce, Dr Kedera, would seek official clarification from Ministry of Agriculture on the status of Kenya's representation at ISHS (whether or not there were individual contact persons).
6. The Chairman of Horticultural Taskforce, Dr C. Kedera, has since established with the Ministry of Agriculture that Kenya is indeed a member of ISHS, and that the Ministry had mandated HCDA to make the official payment for membership. There are therefore no individual representatives or contact persons for Kenya at ISHS, and the Ministry reserves the right to appoint participants at any of the ISHS meetings in the formal official channels.

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The Ministry of Agriculture endorsed the institutional approach proposed by the Horticultural Taskforce to the preparation of the AAHC.

7. The next meeting of the committee would be held in 10 days time i.e. on 5th September 2008.

Min 3/26/8/08 Position of Kenya on the forthcoming GlobalGAP Conference in October 2008 in Germany.

1. Kenya participates every year in the GlobalGAP conference and this year it shall be in Germany where Kenya has been allocated two slots to do presentation.
2. There is a new threat on market access for produce from small scale producers in that several supermarkets especially in Germany have stopped buying produce under Group 2 GlobalGAP certification. The argument is that production controls are not as rigorous as those under Group 1 certification. This presents a real threat to market access from small scale producers from Kenya, and is particularly unfair considering that production controls in small scale production are actually more thorough than in large scale production because of the smaller volumes of production involved. The Kenya Horticulture Council (KHC) would therefore develop a position paper on what they shall present at the workshop and circulate it for comments from taskforce members. It was reported that among small-scale farmers there is a high level of compliance to GlobalGAP, but low levels of certification.
3. The UK supermarket depend on Kenyan produce, hence the need to develop a strong lobby since this supermarkets have little knowledge on the production systems from Kenya. There is a possibility they could have been lobbied from other fronts, hence the need for details to strengthen Kenya's stand.
4. Kenya should make a petition since the supermarkets have no basis for taking this stand.
5. Certification bodies in Kenya should be brought in and assist where necessary, since this hinges on credibility of certification. This could involve bringing the supermarkets to Kenya to see the production systems.
6. There are countries in the EU in group 2 e.g. Belgium, since group 1 certification is expensive.

Min 4/26/8/08 Action plan for Avocado exports to South Africa

1. South Africa has been blocking avocados from Kenya for one year saying avocados may introduce the Fruit fly (*Bactrocera invadens*) from Kenya.
2. ICIPE and other research institutions have done a lot of research on fruit fly all over Africa that showed wide distribution of the pest in Africa, including South Africa. Already PIP documents show similar studies.
3. This blockage by South Africa on the KShs 2.2 billion avocados sales has brought losses to Kenya, since S Africa is a major avocado market for Kenya. Kenya has the advantage of being able to supply throughout the year, as opposed to South Africa, which can only produce at certain times of the year, hence the need to import.
4. KEPHIS is currently gathering information about fruit fly presence in Kenya and the rest of Africa, including S. Africa to develop a case in the IPPC and WTO since there are rules governing how Phytosanitary measures can be applied by an importing state on an exporting state.

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5. KHC will write directly to the Ministries concerned challenging this position by S Africa and this will go in-conjunction with what KEPHIS will send to the S Africa NPPO.
6. ICIPE will provide information on this subject to assist in developing the paper.

Min 5/26/8/08 Kenya Flower day in Holland

1. Kenya will be at the Holland Hortifair as they have been going for the last four years. This hortifair will occur on 15th of October and a request has been sent to the Minister for Agriculture to lead delegation.
2. HCDA has paid for the stand, and will work together with KHC (KFC and FPEAK) to organize the Kenya events at the show.
3. The Minister for Agriculture will attend the Naivasha Hortifair and visit farms in order to understand the industry, and also receive issues from farmers affecting the floriculture sector.
4. KARI requested to be included in the Holland Hortifair in order to appreciate the researchable issues.
5. It was reported that various stakeholders had been invited to be part of the Kenyan stand in Holland to make it a one-stop shop for the horticultural industry. This is to ensure the service providers deliver the same message.
6. There is need to put an invitation to ICIPE and other institutions to join in the tour with the Minister during the Naivasha Hortifair between 12th and 13th September 2008.

Min 6/26/8/08 Kenya Response to EU parliament decision to start an aviation levy

1. The EU parliament passed a regulation that will involve levying airlines on long haul flights, on account of their levels of greenhouse gas emissions. The Explanation for this action by the Commission is that the Kyoto protocol did not have specific text on aviation industry, hence the need for this new legislation.
2. From a business point of view, any costs on long haul would eventually be passed on to cargo owners. Such a cost may be absorbed easily in developed economies, but will represent significant increase in cost of doing business by sectors in developing countries such as Kenyan Horticulture exports
3. The taskforce therefore considered the possibility of making a written submission to the head of EU Delegation in Kenya expressing Horticulture concerns on this matter. Further, the meeting agreed to have all our exhibitions using the Banner 'Grown Under the Sun' to underscore the positive environmental benefits of horticulture grown in Kenya. Also, the theme of the AAHC was agreed to be 'grown under the sun'.

Min 7/26/8/08 Harmonised EU pesticide/active ingredient regime

1. It was reported that the EU member states are undergoing a process of harmonizing their pesticide list. This process is expected to delist some products that have traditionally been used to control certain pests in several EU countries and also Kenya. Several organizations in the EU, including growers and import companies have appealed to Kenya to support their campaign to retain several products in the list, especially southern European countries.

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2. The meeting therefore agreed that the taskforce secretariat circulates the proposed EU list for members' consideration. A Draft letter on products that would need to be retained will therefore be drafted and send to COLEACP (PIP) and other EU organizations as Kenyan input into the Process.

Min 8/26/8/08 AoB

1. PCPB has received communication from KEPHIS to send a nominee to participate in the Horticap project and would want to know their role in the project. The want to know the role in order to send the right representation.
2. The HAK Chairman, Dr J. Wesonga, introduced the organization to the meeting. Horticultural Association of Kenya (HAK) was formed in 1999 and brings stakeholders in the industry. HCDA is a trustee of HAK. Already HAK publishes a journal and will hold a conference in December of 2008 where they will involve stakeholders. They are keen to work in the taskforce in order to build on synergies already existing.
3. There is an important meeting in Maputo where donors of CGIAR will converge and therefore make a presentation at the end of November 2008. Since these donors fund horticulture in Africa there is need to support the process.

The Chairman of the National Taskforce on Horticulture will convene the next meeting by notice.

The meeting ended at 5.10 pm.

Secretary _____ Dated _____

Chairman _____ Dated _____