

**POST HARVEST AND TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGY ISSUES IN EAST & SOUTHERN AFRICA
PROCEEDING REPORT OF VIDEO CONFERENCE HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2010
KENYA DEVELOPMENT LEARNING CENTRE (KDLC)**

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1.0. PRE-INTERACTIVE CONFERENCE SESSION

During the pre-conference discussion, the Kenyan team deliberated at length on the recommendation proposed to the national position paper by one of the participants. The session was informed that contrary to the assertion; ethylene response inhibitor 1-methylcyclopropene (1-MCP) was already registered in Kenya by the Pest Control Product Board (PCPB). The meeting was further informed that 1-MCP is currently registered for only

avocado and is distributed by a local farm. The session therefore agreed that the recommendation be deleted from the country's position paper.

2.0. VIDEO CONFERENCE SESSION

A number of answers and clarifications were sort from the Kenyan team regarding the country's presentation. Below are the answers in response to questions and clarifications sort from the Kenyan team.

As to the relative use of air and sea freight, the conference was informed that 91% of Kenyan horticulture produce to Europe is by air freight; while 9% is by sea freight. The conference was further informed that it costs US\$ 1.8 and 0.7 per kg of horticultural produce for air and sea freight, respectively.

The team attributed the success of smallholder farmers in Kenya involved in export horticulture to cohesive farmer groups that put emphasis on Quality Management System. This system focuses on bulk purchase of inputs to exploit the economies of scale, produce quality by adhering to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and effective management of the groups' resources, assets, and resolving conflict among members amicably. Good organization has not only benefited farmers economically but has also made it easier for extension service providers to many smallholder farmers.

On regional data, the conference was informed that a recent (2010) regional study conducted by a USAID program in Kenya indicate that the country is a net exporter by value but a net importer by volume. The study indicates that in 2008, Kenya imported from the regional market horticultural produce valued at US\$ 19.40 million; over the same period, Kenya exported to the regional market horticultural produce valued at US\$ 105.4 million. The exports were mainly processed fruits and vegetables.

Responding on inquiry regarding post harvest technologies adopted in Kenya, the conference was informed that there are many post harvest technologies currently in use in Kenya. These include the use of 1-MCP and the special bags that prevent transpiration thus prolonging the produce shelf life. This is however limited to large scale farmers and exporters. The Kenya team observed that there was need for developing a wide range of post harvest technologies that are affordable to smallholder farmers.

Regarding Kenya's capacity in post harvest technologies, the conference was informed that all the seven (7) Kenyan public universities run teller made agriculture related courses such as horticulture, crop protection, food science, post harvest technologies etc. This has over time built the country's capacity to adequately respond to emerging challenges such transportation of horticultural produce.

On region capacity building, the Kenyan team was optimist about a regional initiate on capacity building in post harvest technologies. The team proposed that such initiatives can be coordinated through the regional organs such as the Inter University Council of East Africa and the RUFORUM which brings together sixteen (16) universities from East and Central Africa. The team further observed that such regional organs can facilitate

information sharing; guide policy changes in teaching and agriculture research across the value chain; facilitate access to research funds for inter institutional projects; promote inter institutional development of post graduate programs; and promote or advocate for inter institutional/regional projects.

The Kenyan team concurred with the sentiments expressed by participants from other countries on the need for regional strategies in the following areas: data collection, compilation, and sharing; information on packaging material; sharing cold storage facilities; and common farmers training curriculum.

3.0. POST INTERACTIVE CONFERENCE SESSION - WAYFORWARD

The Kenya team proposed the following measures as the way forward in addressing challenges of post harvest and transport technologies in the region:

1. strengthening capacity build in post harvest technologies along the entire value chain;
2. promote processing and adoption of appropriate packaging of horticulture produce;
3. develop strategic production systems that ensure availability of quality and adequate produce quantities to enhance use of sea freight throughout the year;
4. intensification of research on post harvest issues such as packaging, storage, and produce quality;
5. inter institutional collaboration with regard to post harvest technologies
6. integration of appropriate standards along the entire value chain