



# SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR FOOD SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## **2nd Expert Roundtable on Certification: *Making Certification Work for Producers of Horticultural Planting Materials***

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## Foreword

The horticulture sector has been prioritized by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) as the third contributor to agricultural export earnings after tea and coffee (NAEB 2013), and in its potential to alleviate rural poverty directly via (i) participation of small producer in supply chains of different market actors (production and selling fresh and dried fruits and vegetables), (ii) creating employment opportunities as hired labor, and in value added activities (processing and drying), (iii) import substitution of fruits that are currently being imported from middle east.

Rwanda has a wide range of agro-climates suitable for the production of horticultural crops especially in the Eastern, Southern and Northern zones, and some parts of western zones are also ideal locations for the sub sector.

Although there are opportunities exporting high value horticultural products (HVP), quality appear to challenge the growth of HVP exports. On one hand, the high prices tend to indicate less favorable growing conditions than in neighboring countries and hence lack of comparative advantage while on the other hand, poor quality is a big impediment for export markets; In addition to meeting consumer expectations regarding taste, appearance, consistency, packaging and other characteristics, obtaining certifications (at production and processing levels) is increasingly important for penetrating export markets. These can include organic, Fair Trade and other types of certification at the farm level and HACCP and ISO, as well as organic and Fair Trade. Rwanda has advantages for organic production because of the traditionally low use of agro-chemical inputs and its relatively attractive export niche market which provide fairer prices and premiums that confer greater returns compared to high input intensive horticultural crops. However, this advantage has not always been well exploited. In addition to trade related challenges, the production of both conventional and organic horticultural crops is still low due to lack of improved cultivars, little knowledge on good and sustainable cultural practices,

The first Roundtable on Certification, jointly organized in December 2015 by SAFE, RSB, NAEB and RALIS has put more emphasis on certification of horticultural product and has recommended among others, to organize such multistakeholders forum more than once a year and to also consider exploring the issues around certification of planting materials.

It is in this framework, that to spark the rethinking of the Standards and certification of Horticultural Planting material in Rwanda, the second expert roundtable have been organized to jointly frame the needs/gaps, benefits, requirements, processes, responsibilities and commitments toward a standardized process of production and certification of safe, healthy and vigorous horticultural planting materials in Rwanda.

The main objective was to raise awareness on potentials for development and dissemination of inspection guidelines and certification standards of horticultural planting materials produced by smallholder farmers.

We hope that the recommendations which emerged from the second roundtable will provide useful signposts for the successful promotion of certification in Horticulture and will in

particular support SAFE, RSB, RALIS, NAEB and other stakeholders to facilitate the full participation of value chain actors especially smallholders so as to ensure a more equitable playing field in horticulture production, processing and commercialization in the future.

## **Acronyms**

**HACCP:**Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point

**HVP:** High value horticultural products

**ISO:**International Organization for Standarization

**MINAGRI:**Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources

**NAEB:**National Agricultural Export Development Board

**RALIS:**Rwanda Agriculture and Livestock Inspection and Certification Services

**RSB:**Rwanda Standards Board

## I. Introduction

Under the project “**Strengthening the competitiveness of women organic growers in rural Rwanda**” that aim to support women pineapple growers, SAFE is implementing activities to enhance horticultural sector in Rwanda to reach a high value market impact and outcome generation.

The project strategic approach is making certification work for the poor, by increasing to certification services and benefits for the low, medium and high income farmer entrepreneurs and agribusinesses.

In close collaboration with various stakeholders such as civil society, public institutions, private sector, local non-government organizations, SAFE convened a second expert roundtable with a theme “**Making Certification Work for Producers of Horticultural Planting Materials**” that took place on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at Umubano Hotel.

### 1.1 Objectives of the roundtable

The purpose of this roundtable was to:

- To acquire broad knowledge on the framework regulating the nexus Planting material – Certification – Export in Rwanda,
- Experience sharing from various initiatives and stakeholders in country and elsewhere around certification domain,
- Networking for promotion of certification of production process of horticultural planting materials,
- Brainstorm on priority agenda for joint-action and possible short to long term interventions.

### 1.2 Expectations

As SAFE had gathered key stakeholders and value chain actors in the Rwandan horticultural sector, it was expected to result into a lively interchange of ideas, sharing of best practices and expert opinions that would lead to a shared vision, strategies and commitments geared towards making certification and standardization work in the Rwandan horticulture sector. An active participation is critical to contribute to this development agenda, and we wanted to take this opportunity to capture needs, comments, experience, skills that everybody disposes to help us achieve the set objectives of this project above cited.

On the agenda, the roundtable covered:

- Welcome and opening remarks by Ruganintwali Eric, Division Manager, NAEB

- Background and objective of the conference by Semukera Landouard, Chief Executive of SAFE
- Presentation on “Filling the knowledge gap on Certification of Planting Materials in Rwanda: Case of Horticulture” by Ms Murekezi Carol, Seed Regulation and SPS Matters advisor to MINAGRI
- Presentation on “Control of Disease free and quality Planting materials” by Beatrice Uwumukiza, Director, RALIS
- Presentation on “Certification framework for Agricultural Planting materials” by Mulindi J. Bosco, Food Certification Lead officer, RSB
- Draft Roundtable declaration and Concluding remarks by Mr. BUSOBOZI Martin

## II. Summary of the Roundtable

### 2.1 Welcoming remarks / NAEB

In his welcoming remark, Mr RUGANINTWALI Eric expressed his appreciation for and everyone that took his time to attend this event and mention that horticulture is one of the Key championing of export in the region and beyond the region. He emphasized that the horticulture have to be done professionally which start with the quality of planting materials. He also suggested to have a participatory roundtable as he expect much recommendations and way forward from experts’ participants.



Mr. RUGANINTWALI Eric, Division manager, NAEB

### 2.2 Background and objectives of the conference /SAFE

The chief executive of SAFE, Landouard SEMUKERA introduced the objectives of the roundtable that is to raise awareness on potentials for development and dissemination of inspection guidelines and certification standards of horticulture smallholder farmers. He also clarified that this take part in the program and initiative of SAFE where the contribution to the economic development lead. He finally wishes everyone to have a fruitful event.



Landouard SEMUKERA, Chief executive of SAFE

### III. Session 1

#### “Filling knowledge gap on certification of planting materials in Rwanda: a case study of Horticulture.”

During her presentation, Mrs. Carol MUREKEZI, from MINAGRI/IFC focused on the general situation on the knowledge of Planting Material production in Rwanda, challenges, opportunities, best practices in other countries and Initiatives to be undertaken.

She said: “ most planting material is produced for the local market as a result farmers are not concerned with regional or international standards set for planting materials farmers interested in materials that give them the highest yield.”



Mrs. Carol MUREKEZI, MINAGRI/IFC

She mentioned that producers should be aware of;

1. Different procedures involved in the production of clean and healthy planting material
  - There are institutions available to assist – RAB/RALIS/ NAEB
  - Information on export/import requirements
  - Knowledge of national pests/diseases
  - Knowledge of trade requirements in candidate importing/exporting countries
2. The importance of pest risk assessments, surveillance systems, pest control, compliance and audit systems, record keeping mechanisms

And how all these systems work in tandem to ensure the production of quality planting material, entirely the information are available from indicated responsible organizations.

#### Challenges

##### Public Institutions

- Access to breeding material
- Production protocols
- Trained Staff

##### Private institutions

- Support – financial/knowledge
- Low farmer knowledge
- Low purchasing power of the farmers, example of inputs (seeds, fertilizers...)
- Little incentive to produce good quality planting material
- High prices of certified planting material
- Availability of land for large scale propagation of plant materials.

Opportunities and support available:

- National Legislation
- Regional Harmonisation of standards
- Responsible Institutions

Finally, she ended her presentation recommending on initiative that have to be taken capturing good example on best practices from other countries.

- Awareness creation
- Systems development, including extension system
- Private sector involvement

#### IV. Session 2

##### “Control of disease free and quality planting materials”

Mrs. Beatrice UWUMUKIZA, Director of RALIS/MINAGRI, in her presentation made a review on the meaning of seed being a grain/plant or part of plant intended for plant multiplication in general. She said that many seeds are not produced in Rwanda, they are imported, and therefore quality standards of seeds imported in Rwanda has been developed.



Mrs. Beatrice UWUMUKIZA, Director of RALIS

- ✓ Seed purity
- ✓ Germination
- ✓ Grain moisture content
- ✓ Phytosanitary quality
- ✓ Labeling and packaging, are standards RALIS have that monitor the quality of seeds imported in Rwanda for direct farming or multiplication.

There are required documents for the importation of seeds in Rwanda including;

- ✓ Import permit from MINAGRI
- ✓ Original certificate of seed quality from country of origin
- ✓ Original phytosanitary certificate from country of origin

She assumed that all the above are done to minimize the risk of introduction and spread of pests and diseases in the country, and also be able to respond to different measures required in the exportation countries ( Inspection prior to export, Testing prior to export, treatment prior to export ...)

There are phytosanitary constraints caused by some importers who do not apply for import permit, seeds are being imported from nearby countries like Uganda and they are multiplied and distributed in the country, she said this is illegal.

Ways to overcome the challenges;

- Strong collaboration among key players: private sectors, governance and producers that will benefit in : -strong collaboration among the chain
  - Job creation to Rwandans
  - Rwandans will expert in techniques of producing clean planting materials
  - Traceability
  - Risk and pest management,...
- Registration of local producers
- Publishing existing and new varieties
- Publication of pest list by commodity
- Record keeping for producers
- Establishing database of producers

## V. Session 3.

### “Certification framework for agriculture planting materials”

Mr. MULINDI Jean Bosco, in his presentation assured that there is certification framework for agricultural planting materials which is in its initial stage. RSB provide service of product certification, standard based solution for customers. They don't only focus on produced planting material but also they think about the impact of the product quality. He said: “the emphasis on root cause analysis certification of the product provides information to customers as they can not reveal it themselves.”



Mr. MULINDI Jean Bosco, RSB

RSB do not only provide inspection and certification but they also provide trainings for development standards in place for the planting materials. Today RSB harmonized standards in EAC and this December will start worldwide accreditation of the products by the International Accreditation agency from Germany.

Constraint

Agriculture is wide, we have DEAS 821 Certification standard for maize, which will be adopted to other cereals. We need to develop standards for each and every commodity.

## Recommendations

### RSB recommended

1. A strong collaboration among all players (farmers, seed suppliers, private and public sectors.),
2. Awareness of the RSB services to local producers.

## **VI. Way forward and recommendations**

- Systems development, including extension system
- A strong collaboration among all players (farmers, seed suppliers, private and public sectors.),
- Establish law which don't allow to buy seeds that are not certified
- Awareness creation to all concerned actors- sharing information
- Registration of local farmers who propagate horticultural planting materials
- Establishment of a joint organ (partnership) under which certification of horticultural products and planting materials will be developed

## Attendance list

No	Name	Organization
1	NIZEYIMANA Eugene	Agripro focus
2	NYIRINGABO Ignace	NASR
3	CAROL MUREKEZI	MINAGRI/IFC
4	EVANS O. SIKINYI	MINAGRI/IFC
5	NYIRANDIKUBWIMANA M. Louise	MHDC
6	NGERERO N. Gervais	RAB
7	BUSOBOZI Martin	RAB
8	MULINDI J.Bosco	RSB
9	NGIRINSHUTI Fidele	CODEANYA
10	HABIYAMBERE Maurice	NAEB/PRICE
11	Carian Emeka	EKN
12	Eric RUGANINTWARI	NAEB
13	Devotha MUKASERILE	RFHC
14	Beatrice UWUMUKIZA	MINAGRI/RALIS
15	Gaudence M.MURENZI	MINICOM
16	UWITIJE Cyprien	European Union
17	NDASHYIKIRWA Medard	TUZAMURANE Coop.
18	SEMUKERA Landouard	SAFE
19	NDATSIKIRAMUSAFIRI	SAFE
20	MUTARAMBIRWA Adrien	SAFE
21	NYAMPATSI J.Claude	SAFE
22	ISHIMWE Aline	SAFE
23	UYISENGA Josiane	SAFE
<b>Media houses</b>		
24	TOMBOLA Felicie	IGIHE LTD
25	NYUZAHAYO Norbert	Umuseke.com
26	SAFARI Desire	RBA
27	MUTUYEYEZU J.Claude	RBA
28	MUGENZI Napoleon	Kigalifesta.com