



ZAMBIA NATIONAL POSITION PAPER
Video Conference on High Value Agriculture in Eastern and Southern Africa:
Standards and Market Preferences: Opportunities and Constraints (27 July 2010)
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This is the Zambia national position paper that was presented at the video conference highlighting the present status of standards for fresh produce, management of the crises across a multiplicity of standards, on-going strategies at regional level and opportunities and constraints and ends with a synthesis of the issues arising from the conference especially as they relate to the Zambian situation.

1. Present status of standards (international and national ones if any) for horticultural produce

Zambia's affiliated to World Trade Organization, Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) in terms of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPSs) and Standard issues. Locally the Zambia Bureau of Standards is the statutory body tasked with development of Standards.

All fresh produce exports and imports into Zambia have to meet SPS. These are determined by importing countries and the SPS inspections are based on these standards with reference to international standards for phytosanitary measures. Standards for imports are based on pest risk analysis and these are regularly reviewed depending on pest situation in the country and those from which imports come from. There are SPS inspectors at all points of entry/exit into/out of Zambia. In some cases conformity inspections have to be done. These inspections are conducted by the Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Services of the Zambia Agricultural Research Institute (ZARI).

Commercial exports have additional standards which have to be met. All exports to Europe need to meet GlobalGap standards, while some countries such as England, Switzerland and Holland require additional standards. The export sector has been pressurized into conforming with standards relating to working conditions, environment and employment of women among others. The Zambia Export Growers Association (ZEGA) has established a code of practice benchmarked against the GlobalGap which all members have to meet. Within the local market some standards have to be met for sales to big supermarkets. These are prescribed by the buyers to the potential suppliers. The Organic Producers and Processors Association of Zambia (OPPAZ) has developed Zambia Organic Standards to facilitate honey, vegetables etc for exports among its members.

The ZEGA exports have to comply with Phytosanitary Measures (statutory measures) imposed by the Zambian Law and the importing country. Further, the exports have to comply with a multiplicity of private standards imposed by various market channels. These standards are stated to be voluntary but are in effect mandatory since you have to meet such standards in order to access that particular market. Generally, for the UK market exports have to comply with GLOBALGAP, British Retail Consortium (BRC), in additions to Conformity Assessments. For the Dutch market, exports have to comply with MPS for flowers and the

Max Harvelaar standard in the the Swiss market. In addition, various High Street shops, such as Marks & Spencers, TESCOs, ASDAs have their own standards which have to be complied with. There is a proliferation or multiplicity of standards which do not recognize equivalency and seem to be introduced as entry barriers in a discriminatory manner. For example, growers feel that the export markets impose more stringent compliance requirements for exporters from developing countries than they do to their domestic producers.

In addition to having SPS inspectors, ZARI has specialists dedicated to improving the production management of fresh produce so that it can meet prescribed standards. This is a public institution and a research wing of the agriculture ministry. The University of Zambia also has a faculty that teaches and conducts research in these areas. The ZEGA/Natural Resources Development College (NRDC) Trust was developed with donor support for staff training to meet commercial export sector management staff requirements. The commercial export sector withdrew its interest in the training trust after its staff requirements leaving it to be wholly managed by NRDC. The commercial export sector is concerned with the performance of the SPS inspections and supports the service by soliciting donor support for staff training and purchase of equipment among others.

2. Present management of the crisis around standards (too many ones, GlobalGAP versus national GAP, food miles, Green Pass, fair trade etc.)

The commercial export sector is concerned with the multiplicity of standards but has not done much about it, the issue being global but Zambia's export sector very small. ZEGA joined the Horticultural Council of Africa which was formed with support from FAO and also gets support from Denmark which is trying to address this issue among others, but not much has been achieved.

3. On-going strategy at regional level

The Horticultural Council of Africa is still in its infancy and needs to be developed. Stakeholders are in the process of establishing a broader based national organization to better coordinate with regional efforts.

4. Opportunities and constraints

Requirements to meet prescribed standards are providing opportunities for production and consumption of better quality fresh produce not only on the international but local markets as well. Quite often produce made for international markets finds itself on the local market. As producers work to meet these standards they develop good agricultural practices which are increasingly applied even for produce made for the local market.

While the large commercial producers have complied with the voluntary standards as imposed by the markets at great cost, the small-holder producers do not have the knowledge, capacity and resources to meet the high cost of training, auditing and certification. As a result, these producers who number in thousands, if not millions, are left out of the production and marketing value chain and poverty levels have remained high. Zambia has had a number of small growers certified for GLOBALGAP, but because of the need to have annual certifications, the GLOBALGAP certifications obtained in previous years under ZEGA assistance have expired.

5. Synthesis of issues from the conference

- *Reducing cost of certification among smallholders:* Standards are driven by consumer demands and producers need to comply. Issue is how to reduce costs with commitment from producer, consumer and Government. A host of academic papers has alluded to the

difficulties in reducing the cost of certification to smallholders and point to the potential of amortizing these costs across the supply chains. Working and being creative with smallholder producer groups can help reduce the costs. Training of the smallholder farmers in record keeping, traceability, better health, better productivity, etc is key in reducing the cost of certification.

- *Economic impact of certification for smallholders:* A significant number of certified smallscale farmers in Tanzania have been linked to international and domestic markets making price premiums of between 75% and 100% and their market share locally and on the international markets has increased to 35%. In Kenya, the share of the smallholders in horticultural products has been increasing and farmers adopting good agricultural practices (such as observing hygiene) have been ever increasing. There has also been an increase in public private partnerships in certification bodies. That there are many certification laboratories in Kenya has helped increase compliance.
- *Low levels of certification compliance among smallscale farmers:* This is quite low at 5% for smallscale farmers compared to 90% among the large scale farmers in Tanzania. The reason for this is the high cost involved and the complexity of the process. The National Bureau of Standards in Mozambique has authority to enforce standards while the Government has put in place an export promotion programme which is sensation and training producers in the SPS. The programme also emphasizes imparting business skills and assist smallholders unlock markets some of which need compliance with standards. Working in groups of smallholders helps reduce certification costs. Other motivation factors for certification are hygiene, safety from chemical poisoning, continuous regular training on market requirements and support for laboratory testing activities from the private sector in Kenya.
- *Acceptance of the ZEGA code of practice by importers:* ZEGA has been exporting fresh vegetables and flowers since 2004 using mainly commercial farmers/farms that were also supported by smallscale farmers whose capacity to meet certification standards was a challenge and needed support. Since there are different certification schemes in world markets ZEGA developed a foundation code with minimum standards benchmarked against the GlobalGap. Some markets have accepted this code of practice though others such as TESCO require additional specific.
- *Any solutions to civil society organizations lobbying of standards leading to loss of markets:* Private standards are developed and meant to stay and failure to comply implies loss of market (often at higher level) though producers still keep local markets. Higher private standards are more expensive but are optional just like one may opt to watch an expensive football match and vice versa. Standards bodies are providers and not takers of standards but African producers or their representatives can participate in standards certification committees if they can have funding.
- *Need for harmonization rather than ad hoc SPS measures:* At the global level, there have been efforts to develop a single document to which to benchmark standards to in different parts of the world. The ChinaGap, for example, is benchmarked to the ISO standards and other standards are benchmarked to the GlobalGap among others. Standards organizations such as the CODEX, ISO, GSFA normally work closely together harmonizing their different standards. At the regional level, the first step to harmonization of SPS in the region by COMESA was the development of SPS Regulations which among other things provides for the establishment of a certification scheme known as the Green Pass. The

COMESA SPS Regulations have been published in small blue book. The publication is freely available to the public and is normally distributed in any gatherings that COMESA is involved in order to increase awareness. Soon the Regulations will also be made available through the COMESA Website (www.comesa.int). However accreditation plays a critical role in certification. The framework for accreditation has been developed but developing a regional accreditation body is long term and in the interim it has been suggested that use of national accreditation bodies already in existence continues. As part of its Capacity Building strategy, COMESA has designated three Laboratories as Regional Reference Laboratories. These are in Zambia (for Animal Health), Kenya (for Plant Protection) and Mauritius (for Food Safety).

- *Market standards in the Middle East: Over 90% of the fresh produce exports from the East and Southern African region are to Europe and experience with standards in the Middle East is limited. However, it is known that there are fewer standards there though exports need to meet food safety standards.*

6. Conclusion/Lessons learned

Certification standards are a requirement of modern markets and can not be done away with. While these are a necessary cost to large producers and eat into their profits they are posing a real barrier to smallholder farmer participation in world fresh produce markets. The multiplicity of standards in different markets only compounds the programme. Not much can be done to address these issues by the Zambia small fresh produce market in isolation, but regional efforts by COMESA to harmonize these standards offer great hope for the sector in the country.

7. Attendance List

Name	Institution	Position
1. Mr. Chance Kabaghe kabaghec@msu.edu	Food Security Research Project	Director
2. Ms Martha Byanyima mbyanyima@comesa.in	COMESA Secretariat	Regional CAADP Process Coordinator
3. Mr. Luke Mbewe mbewelc@yahoo.com	Zambia Export Growers Association	Chief Executive
4. Dr. Mebelo Mataa mmataa@unza.zm	University of Zambia, School of Agriculture	Lecturer
5. Mr. Munguzwe Hichaambwa Munguzwe.hichaambwa@iconnect.zm	Food Security Research Project	Research Fellow
6. Mrs. Shirley Ng'andu Sng'andu@unza.zm	University of Zambia, School of Agriculture	Lecturer
7. Ms Angela Mulenga amulenga@comesa.int	COMESA Secretariat	Regional Agro-food Coordinator
8. Mr. Samuel Mwambazi smwambazi@comesa.int	COMESA Secretariat	Standards and SPS Expert
9. Mr. Kenn Msiska	Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Service	Research/Plant Health Inspector