

POST-HARVEST AND TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGY ISSUES IN EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA VIDEO CONFERENCE: Zambia Country Report

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In attendance:

Name	Institution
1. Mr. Chance Kabaghe	Food Security Research Project
2. Mr. Munguzwe Hichaambwa	Food Security Research Project
3. Dr. Mebelo Mataa	University of Zambia
4. Mr. Midge Drakes	Freshpikt
5. Mr. Philip Siamuyoba	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
6. Mr. Simango	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
7. Mr. Antony Bhaka	Buya Bamba
8. Mr. D. Mingochi	Zambia Agricultural Research Institute
9. Mr. L. Ntalasha	Farmer
10. Mr. Aaron Ananiah Simwanza	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

Synthesis and Outcomes

General Overview

Horticulture is a priority sector and many countries in the region have acted in this regard by having national strategies or master plans and have a number of organisations spearheading the articulation of sector issues and hence propelling its development forward. Zambia has no such strategy and there is no organisation looking at the interests of the sector. The National Agricultural Policy (NAP) articulates issues relating to the agricultural sector as a whole and mentions horticulture in passing. The Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) looks at interests of a myriad of commodities such that it can not effectively address peculiar issues affecting the horticultural sector. The Zambia Export Growers' Association (ZEGA) is a member professional body looking at the interests of its members (50) who primarily export fresh produce to European markets and is not involved in small-scale or domestic horticulture. However, a few small-scale farmers in Zambia are linked to export markets through out-grower schemes. The lack of the necessary institutional framework to develop the sector has led to non-availability of information on fresh produce production, marketing and exports/imports to guide micro- and macro-level planning.

Increased Involvement of Smallholders in Horticultural Supply Chains

Only one-fifth of smallholder farmers in Zambia sell fresh produce. The domestic horticultural sector can only develop if more and more smallholder farmers enter and participate in the supply chains. A developed domestic horticulture sector will spill into supplying regional markets. Smallholder farmers in some countries such as Kenya actively participate in horticultural supply chains. Kenya has a very active cooperative movement which has involved smallholder farmers from the grassroots into these chains, and are the major producers. They are organised into farmer associations through which they can invest in storage and cold chains. They are assisted with capacity building and identification of

financing and appropriate technologies to develop storage and cold chains. The smallholder farmers have seen the need to come and work together, bulking inputs and outputs which increases cost efficiency. They have representation from the village through the region and district to the national level.

Need for Investment in Appropriate Post Harvest Technologies

Lack of transport or appropriate transport and poor roads are one of the major contributors to fresh produce post harvest losses. While it is prudent to address these, it is also important to look at appropriate packaging which can greatly minimise the losses. Kenya has developed polythene bags which extend the quality of fresh produce. There are other post harvest technologies developed in the region which can also boost the shelf life of fresh produce apart from just using solar dryers. The charcoal cooler in Tanzania is used to cool fresh produce in storage before transportation to markets.

Government Involvement in the Supply Chains

There is significant involvement of Governments in the horticultural supply chains in other countries in the region through organisations or institutions or companies providing logistics in the chains or through provision of long and subsidised loans for investment in storage, cold chains and processing. This is unambiguously absent in Zambia.

Recommendations and Resolutions

Zambia's horticultural sector is still in its infancy and participation in this video conference made this even more apparent as the Zambia team got an impression of the extent of the development of the sector in the other countries in the region. At the end of the conference, the team deliberated and made resolutions/recommendation at both the national and regional coordination levels.

National Level

At the national level, it is imperative that an umbrella organisation such as a Horticultural Supply Chain Task Force of Horticultural Association is formed in order to spearhead lobbying of Government to declare horticulture a priority sector as well stakeholder addressing of sector problems as they emerge.

Of primary concern in the supply chain is the poor state of both hard and soft market infrastructure within the traditional marketing systems which is largely dominant to the modern one (largely supermarkets). Especially strategically located fresh produce wholesale markets need to be developed with cost-effective appropriate infrastructure which can then be supplemented with soft infrastructure such as development of market information, quality grades and standards, effective brokerage activities and more private sector involvement in ownership and management of these markets. The idea is that these markets will ultimately be linked to other regional markets and boost regional trade.

It is expected that improved wholesale markets will stimulate producer participation in the supply chains. However, it is imperative that smallholder participation is enhanced through, among other things, development of strategically located storage or packing houses for bulking produce before transportation to markets. Investment in these can be facilitated through farmer organisations with appropriate Government and/or donor support or through

private public sector partnerships (PPP). Other supply chain issues would be appropriately addressed through stakeholder articulation spearheaded by the association or the task force.

Regional Coordination Level

Formation of a regional body to spearhead and/or coordinate horticultural marketing in the region is a plausible development option as far as the Zambian Team's point of view is concerned, but emphasis is on developing the necessary national institutional arrangements which will later have linkages regional level institutions. Organisations such as the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) could be a vehicle for regional coordination through which international partners such as USAID can be engaged for support. Some of the identified areas of cooperation at the regional level are:

- A regional platform to exchange statistical data in production and marketing (trade)
- Regional research and technological capacity building in all areas through out the supply chain
- Developing a strong regional marketing block with regional standards, trade fairs and common information reports