

Monthly Update – April 2010

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Spicing it up

TAPP believes that Tanzania and Zanzibar should again become global leaders in the spice industry, regaining their reputation as suppliers of the best spices in the world. During my recent trip to the “Spice Isles,” I met with culinary spice producers to determine how TAPP could help them meet their production and marketing needs. As a result, TAPP has established contact with marketers of spices in Europe and the United States to evaluate market trends, and started surveying the area’s potential for meeting the worldwide demand for certain spices. We have formed a partnership with Golden Foods Ltd, which already has more than 600 organically certified spice growers in the Tanga Region. We will help them get organic certification for many more growers on Unguja and Pemba Islands so they can supply the market for high-quality organic spices. Golden Foods already has orders for 14 tons of organic ginger powder and TAPP will be assisting the firm to expand their marketing to the United States later this year.

*Jim Vernon, Program Director
Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program*

MEET OUR NEW PARTNER: FLORESTA

Floresta is a nonprofit organization that works in Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean to reverse deforestation and poverty by transforming the lives of the rural poor. Floresta Tanzania was established in 2004 in Masia Mamba, at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro. They conduct income generation and environmental conservation activities and have a strong presence in the region.

TAPP will work to expand commercial horticultural activities in a number of smallholder farmer groups under Floresta’s community development program. TAPP will establish six demonstration plots and six seedling nurseries to transfer new technologies and better agricultural practices to six farmer groups selected by Floresta.

TAPP HOLDS BUSINESS SKILLS WORKSHOP

Milton Chitanda, TAPP’s field manager in Moshi, held a two-day workshop in April for 80 members of the Siha District farmer groups. Chitanda was assisted by Business & Entrepreneurship Support (BEST), an NGO based in Arusha. The participants were trained in business planning, record-keeping, and safe use and storage of pesticides.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

Farmers of Floresta, a TAPP partner, are growing sunflowers in Mishiri Village.

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

Increased incomes through enhanced productivity

TAPP is a 5-year program to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity and improved domestic and export marketing of agricultural products.

Visit www.tanzania-agric.org for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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TAHA SELECTED AS HOST OF GLOBALGAP WORKING GROUP

Representatives from TAPP and TAHA attended the GLOBALGAP National Technical Working Group Formation Meeting on April 13 at the Snowcrest Hotel in Arusha. At the meeting, 17 institutions were selected to form the working group, and TAHA was selected as the host member. The group serves as a direct communication channel to the GLOBALGAP Secretariat and as a platform to discuss GAP certification practices and capacity building.

TAPP SUPPORTS SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH TRAININGS

In April, TAPP staff trained 739 farmers in subjects as diverse as marketing, land preparation, and nursery management. Trainings took place in six regions with more than 30 client groups, and focused on the transfer of practical skills central to the development of a sustainable model in commercial horticulture. With smallholder horticulture at an early stage of development in Tanzania, now is a key moment to establish best practices in a way that confers early and replicable improvements to yields, farm management activities and profit lines.

TRAINING

44 training events were conducted in April: 739 people were trained – 433 men and 306 women.

Focus	# Events	# People
Production	36	538
Natural resource management	3	91
HIV/AIDS	1	40
Marketing	4	22
Other	3	48
Total	44	739

Training event examples: farm chemical safety, crop rotation, fertilization, Integrated Pest Management, and land preparation.

TAPP Demonstration/Technology Plots

In April, TAPP started seeing the positive effects of their demonstration plots, which have been set up to showcase various agronomic practices such as the use of high quality seeds, fertilizer/manure treatments, appropriate plant spacing, and drip irrigation. In one plot at Messerani, outside of Arusha, visitors saw a big difference between amaranth or 'mchicha' grown in natural soil versus plants given fertilizer. A yield of 1.2 kg/m² (equivalent to 4.8 tons/acre) was obtained from the plot where an NPK (nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium) fertilizer treatment was applied five days after sowing. The plot with no fertilizer treatment only yielded 0.3 kg/m² (1.2 tons/acre). Growth measurements found that the average height of plants treated with NPK was 50 cm, as compared to 13cm when no fertilizer was used. Using 'boma' manure alone resulted in some yield improvements – 0.7 kg/m² (2.7 t/acre) – but the combination of manure and NPK produced similar results to that of NPK application alone. The crop was harvested 23 days after sowing.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

Amaranth grown without fertilizer (left) is not nearly as robust as amaranth grown with an NPK fertilizer (right).