

Monthly Update – December 2010

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

USAID-TAPP TRAININGS REACH THOUSANDS

This month USAID-TAPP held 53 training events where 5,467 smallholder farmers learned about business skills, marketing, processing and production. Project agronomists also carried out technical assistance visits to farmer groups on topics like HIV/AIDS, marketing, postharvest handling and production.

AMAGRO MANGO FESTIVAL LEAVES SWEET AFTERTASTE

The annual Association of Mango Growers (AMAGRO) Mango Festival in December encouraged people to grow mango trees and learn about modern methods of production. More than 1,300 people learned about mango production, market opportunities and irrigation during the course of the festival.

USAID-TAPP funded a scientific conference and a day-long farmer workshop to open the event, bringing together more than 300 farmers, scientists, government officials and agricultural service providers. A tasting festival followed, allowing the different groups to interact and establish linkages in a relaxed atmosphere. The tasting festival took place on December 17 at the Mnazi Mmoja grounds where the public had the opportunity to see and taste the different mango varieties grown in the country.

The scientific conference addressed the major challenges to mango farmers, and specialists discussed different aspects of mango production. Topics included mango diseases and fruit flies, which pose problems for mango farmers. One of the presenters was an international mango consultant who talked about different pruning methods for mango trees, which the farmers found particularly helpful. The farmers had not been introduced to pruning methods before, and adopting this practice will increase the production life and yields of mango trees and enable farmers to plan when mango trees produce fruit.

The farmer workshop involved AMAGRO members, district agriculture livestock development officers (DALDO) from mango growing districts, and mango farmers from different regions. Presentations covered postharvest losses, market opportunities and international requirements for mango exports. Farmers from Tanzania and Kenya shared their experiences and talked about challenges in producing mangoes.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

At the annual AMAGRO Mango Festival guests had the opportunity to sample different mango varieties that are grown in Tanzania. Above, former Tanzanian President Ally Hassan Mwinyi enjoys some bites of mango.

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

“Increased food security through enhanced productivity”

TAPP is a 5-year program designed to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity, crop diversification and improved market access.

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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STUDIES GAUGE MARKET NETWORKS

USAID-TAPP commissioned two studies on the produce supply chain in Tanzania as part of its plan to develop a fresh produce network through satellite facilities in Arusha, Lushoto and Morogoro. The first study revealed a short supply chain where traders conduct on-the-spot transactions with farmers and then bring the produce to market, cutting into farm profits. The second study examined the availability of mangoes, oranges and pineapples in Tanzania and found that these fruits are produced in high volumes, but that farmers still face challenges in marketing and other areas that need to be addressed.

USAID-TAPP SPONSORS MARKET INFORMATION WORKSHOP

Rural Entrepreneur Network Tanzania Company (RENTC) is a USAID-TAPP partner that has agents in eight regions of Tanzania and in Nairobi and Mombasa. These agents share daily market information on availability and wholesale prices of horticultural products in their regions, which is passed on via text message to subscribing TAHA members. This month, RENTC and TAHA hosted an East African Horticulture Market Information System (MIS) workshop in Dodoma to introduce interested parties to the network and demonstrate how the information is shared and used. This initiative will reduce the need for middlemen and increase farmers' incomes. Attendees included newly recruited site managers for data collection, members of TAHA's MIS program, and members of the RENTC network.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

At the AMAGRO event smallholder farmers had the chance to interact with input suppliers.



A scientist from the Mikocheni Agricultural Research Institute gives a presentation on fruit flies at the scientific conference.



Different mango varieties from across the country were displayed at the AMAGRO Mango Festival. Butter mangoes (left) and zill mangoes (right) are just two types of mangoes grown in Tanzania.