

Monthly Update – January 2012

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

The Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program (TAPP) welcomed in the new year by supporting festivals to highlight the horticulture industry and hosting high level government leaders to view first-hand the impact of the program. Beyond these highlights for January 2012, the TAPP program continues to increase incomes for smallholder farmers, improve nutrition and expand markets through agricultural innovation as part of the Feed the Future initiative.

AMAGRO MANGO FESTIVAL DRAWS LARGE CROWD

USAID-TAPP partner, the Association of Mango Growers (AMAGRO), organized a successful Mango Tasting Festival in January that attracted more than 1,000 people. The annual festival promotes mango production and highlights to the public the importance of eating the nutritious fruit.

The Mango Tasting Festival supported by USAID-TAPP ran from January 6 – 7, 2012, in Dar es Salaam with over 100 mango growers from Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar participating in the event. During the course of the festival participants learned about mango production, market opportunities, and irrigation. Mango seedlings and varieties of mango fruits were on display as people had an opportunity to taste different types of mangoes and juice. According to AMAGRO, since the commencement of the annual festivals, mango growers have improved their mango production; a result of learning how to properly prune and manage flower production.

During the opening ceremony, AMAGRO's chairman Mr. Burton Nsape said, "We face a variety of challenges from a lack of mango research institutes to the presence of pests and diseases to unstable weather conditions. Despite these challenges, our association has set future goals of making sure that a farmer is capable of producing 20 tons per hectare to meet the local and international market," said Mr. Nsape.

On behalf of the government, the guest of honor Deputy Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Cooperative, Engineer Mbogo Futakamba assured the association that the government will provide more support to ensure that more mango hybrid seeds are available in the country through research institutions.

"I congratulate AMAGRO and your supporters for your initiatives to increase the number of mango seedlings to over 100,000 seedlings in your next season."

-- Mbogo Futakamba, Tanzania's Deputy Principal Secretary for Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Cooperatives



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Deputy Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Cooperatives, Mbogo Futakamba (dark suit) visits mango growers' pavilions when he inaugurated the Mango Tasting Festival.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Members of the public who visited the mango festival had the opportunity to taste different mango varieties grown in Tanzania.

US AMBASSADOR IMPRESSED BY AG TECHNOLOGIES

“USAID-TAPP has shown the farmers great innovations,” commented the U.S. Ambassador His Excellency Alfonso E. Lenhardt when he visited three of USAID-TAPP’s projects in Arusha this month. The ambassador was particularly impressed by the program’s technology assistance to the Patandi Women Group which included a drip kit, seed trays, and training on raised beds, sack gardens, and correct spacing to improve the farmers’ yield production. The ambassador praised the 29 women for their hard work to help the community, particularly orphans and those with disabilities. The ambassador also paid a visit to an individual farmer, Mr. Ngumuo, where the ambassador had an opportunity to witness USAID-TAPP’s Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) applied by the farmer to improve his crop production and increase his income. His last visit was to USAID-TAPP partner Home Veg, where he learned about the company’s initiatives to support small farmers. Home Veg buys various vegetables from small farmers, like fresh beans and baby corns, then sorts, grades, and packages the vegetables to prepare them to export to Kenya and Europe. The ambassador challenged Home Veg to ensure that the exported produce is well packaged with a Tanzanian mark.

TANZANIA’S VICE PRESIDENT VISITS USAID-TAPP

Tanzania’s Vice President Dr. Mohamed Gharib Bilal visited the Upendo Women Group supported by USAID-TAPP in Lushoto district, Tanga region. The visitor was impressed by the 10 women’s unity and strength in managing their two greenhouses. The group started in 2010 and in 2011 USAID-TAPP assisted the group with the construction of a 250 square meter size greenhouse to grow hybrid tomatoes and a 200 square meter size greenhouse to grow hybrid sweet peppers. USAID-TAPP provided the group with training, installation of drip irrigation system, and hybrid seeds. The group informed the Vice President that they experienced their first harvest in November last year by harvesting 3.5 tons of tomatoes worth Tshs. 1,700,000 (\$1,051) and harvested 2 tons of green and colored sweet peppers worth Tshs. 4,000,000 (\$2,475). “Continue with your hard work and you will be a great example for other Tanzanian women to follow,” the Vice President told the group.

USAID SENIOR LEADER VISITS USAID-TAPP PROJECT

USAID’s Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Africa Bureau Raja Jandhyala visited USAID-TAPP’s project in Morogoro region, praising the project’s initiative to train farmers on better agricultural practices to improve income and nutrition and to expand their market network. Raja also visited farmers located in Dakawa area where they practice sustainable vegetable growing as an alternative crop after they have harvested rice as their main crop.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Elinuru Pallangyo secretary of Patandi Women Group explains how amaranthus is grown in a sack garden to Ambassador Lenhardt.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Vice President Dr. Mohamed Gharib Bilal (in dark suit) receiving information on greenhouse technology from USAID-TAPP agronomist Ismael Guga.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

USAID-TAPP Southern Zone Production Manager Stephen Mruma explains to Raja Jandhyala from USAID about the importance of raised beds, which allows for better drainage and ensures optimal soil conditions for crop growth.

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