

Monthly Update – March 2015

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

OVERVIEW

USAID-TAPP is increasing incomes for smallholder farmers, improving nutrition, and expanding markets through agricultural innovation and commercialization. The program is part of Feed the Future, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in the developing world. Feed the Future is focusing on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), a region the Tanzanian government has identified as the most conducive for agricultural growth. Working with our partners and the Government of Tanzania, USAID-TAPP is concentrating efforts on selected crops and regions to help transform the country's food security.

HORTI-TENGERU PTC LAUNCHED TO SERVE THE NORTHERN ZONE

The Horticultural Research and Training Institute (HORTI) at Tengeru Practical Training Center (PTC) held its inaugural field day on March 5th, 2015. The field day was attended by more than 400 guests, including smallholder farmers, students, government extension officers, and government officials. HORTI-Tengeru is a government owned research and training institute offering specialized agronomical education to youth and smallholder farmers.

The PTC, which is utilized by students from HORTI-Tengeru and smallholder farmers to enhance their knowledge on horticulture, has been helping the students in their practical core curriculum. Through the PTC, HORTI-Tengeru students and neighboring farmers apply new practices and learn how to grow a wide range of fruits and vegetables.

Speaking at the field day, Anne Assenga, director of the training division at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Cooperatives, was delighted at the establishment of the PTC, made possible by the partnership between USAID-TAPP, Tanzania Horticulture Association (TAHA), and the government of Tanzania. "Such establishments will be very helpful to smallholder farmers, extension officers, and students pursuing their horticulture education. In time, the country will have very knowledgeable extension officers and improved horticulture production," said Assenga.



Photo by Fintrac Inc
HORTI-Tengeru students (right, in hats) give explanations of squash production to the guest of honor, Anne Assenga (in pink suit), at the PTC during the field day in Arusha.

The fully operational PTC has been planted with a variety of crops on more than three acres. The crops include one acre of tomato, 0.25 acres of cucumber, 0.75 acres of sweet pepper, 0.25 acres of watermelon, 0.75 acres of high density banana, 0.25 acres of squash, and 0.25 acres of carrots.

"This partnership has enabled students to learn from the state of the art practical training center which makes our students very competent in their field of work. There are very few institutions which get such privilege, we appreciate USAID-TAPP and TAHA for their support," said Juma Shekidele, HORTI-Tengeru principal.

The PTC will facilitate practical learning for more than 300,000 smallholder farmers from the northern zone. Farmers will learn a variety of different good agricultural practices which are displayed at the PTC, including raised beds, hybrid seeds, trellising, integrated pest management, greenhouse technology, and postharvest management. The field day gave the attendees the opportunity to get answers to their questions regarding the horticulture sector.

USAID-TAPP, in partnership with TAHA and government institutions, has established three PTCs in Zanzibar, Morogoro, and Arusha to serve students, extension officers, and smallholder farmers in the country.



Photo by Fintrac Inc

A child enjoys cooked OFSP at the kiosk launch in Jacaranda grocery market in Arusha.

USAID-TAPP LAUNCHES OFSP KIOSKS

On March 6th 2015, USAID-TAPP, in collaboration with partner organization EcoAgri-Consult, launched orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) tuber and vine kiosks in Arusha to link smallholder farmers with consumers following their participation in the HORTI-Tengeru PTC field day. During the event, customers and retailers had a chance to taste cooked OFSP and received nutrition training from USAID-TAPP nutrition specialist Alice Mwambambale.

Through field days and nutrition trainings, the ongoing OFSP awareness campaigns have allowed EcoAgri-Consult to introduce OFSP kiosks in local markets in Arusha, as there has been growing interest in OFSP tubers and vines among stakeholders there. The field day conducted at the HORTI-Tengeru PTC resulted in a total of 10,000 vines being sold to farmers and other organizations who attended the event.

“The launch provided immediate customers who bought at retail price and the vendors were very interested in selling the potatoes. I now have a ready market in Arusha where I provide more than 1,000 kilograms of potatoes every week,” said Donath Clavery, an OFSP farmer in Arusha. More than 6 tons have been delivered to the vendors since the launch of the kiosks.

“There has been a remarkable demand of OFSP tubers and vines as most people are getting to know the nutritious content of the potatoes and the low cost of production in growing them. The sale points will ease the availability of the vines to the consumers,” said Wilfred Mushobozi, Managing Director of EcoAgri-Consult.

In the last three months, there has been a significant investment by EcoAgri-Consult in facility expansion, compared to past quarters. A total of TZS 13,090,000 (\$7,800) has been invested in a newly constructed hardening greenhouse, as well as a water tank reservoir for the new greenhouse in Kisongo, Arusha.

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

“Increased food security through enhanced productivity”

USAID-TAPP is a five-year program implemented by Fintrac Inc. 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.

P.O. Box 15035 | Arusha, Tanzania

Tel: 255 27 2545325

tapp@fintrac.com

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