



The East African Organic Products Standard (EAOPS).

A tool to overcome constraints and increase trade in organic product from East Africa

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Summary

- Current Status of the Organic sector in Africa
- Challenges/Opportunities
- The Process and development of the EAOPS

Current Status of the Organic sector in Uganda

- Organic Agriculture (OA) is among the fastest growing subsectors in Africa
- There has been increasing interest and involvement from the private sector mainly as a result unfolding market opportunities in International markets.
 - Suitability and compatibility to smallholder farming systems
 - Closer to and utilizes most traditional farming practices
 - Relatively low risk ,given production and resource constraints
 - low market entry barriers compared to conventional fruits and vegetable exports
 - Increasing global demand for organic products and associated premium prices, contributing to improved household incomes in the rural communities

- Taking an example of a country like Uganda
 - Over 200,000 certified organic farmers participating in export chains
 - 250,000 ha of certified land
 - 44 certified export companies
 - volume of exports growing at an average of 55% in the past 2 years
 - Value of exports stood at Euros 30 Million by end of July 2010

Challenges/opportunities

- Demand from the market in excess of supply (for some products up to 10 times)
- Increasing demand for value added organic products (dried fruits, Pulp, Juices, textiles, coffee, spices, nuts, semi processed vegetables)
- Most companies engaged in export are SME, with limited capital to invest in up-scaling
- Processing infrastructure and quality systems (cool chain) inadequate to match the volume of demand coming from the market

- Promotion and Branding efforts of African organic products insufficient
- Volumes up-scaling possible, but requires investment in organization of farmers into groups/association, and achieving groups certification
- Certification process and costs is still a limiting factor for many qualifying smallholder farmers (current major market standards; EU, USA are in many areas not compatible to local realities)

- Access to Investment and trade finance is still one of the biggest obstacle for most SME export companies and cooperatives
- Funding Research into Organic friendly technologies to boost organic production is still limited

Critical Issues for Further Development of the sector

- Strengthen the institutional capacity for the Organic movements to lead and coordinate all actors along the entire chain
- Direct interventions to bottlenecks along entire organic value chains (Value chain approach), with focus to both the export and local/regional markets
- Strategic focus on research into organic and environmentally friendly technologies and solutions
- Speedy establishment of the organic policy support framework for further growth in organic production and trade within Africa.(The AU has taken the



The East African organic product standard- EAS 456:2007 Process and Development

- Process of development of the EAOPS was a public- private partnership
- Process started with the establishment of the a Regional Standard Technical Working Group (RSTWG) Composed of a cross - section of stakeholders
 - 5 representatives from the Government National Bureau of Standards(NBSs)Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda Rwanda and Burundi.
 - 3 from certification bodies,
 - 3 from National Organic Agricultural Movements (NOAMs)
 - 1 from the East African Business Council
 - Facilitators from IFOAM and UNCTAD
- Intensive consultation process

The Regional Standards Technical Working Group – the facilitators of the East African Organic Standard



Scope

- Standards covers;
 - General requirements for all organic production
 - Crop production
 - Animal husbandry
 - Bee-keeping
 - Wild collection
 - Handling, storage and processing
 - Labelling
 - Lists for inputs in agriculture and food processing

Process

- Process Started with Establishment of the RSTWG- September 2005
- Followed by developing a Framework of the standard.
- 1st RSTWG meeting - Oct 05 to compare stds
- Drafting Standards commenced- inputs from 2nd RSTWG meeting in March 06
- National consultative meetings were conducted throughout the 5 east african countries for comments in May 06

- 3rd RSTWG meeting in May to comment on the 1st Draft.
- Wider Stakeholders consultation undertaken on – 2nd Draft
- National consultative meetings were again conducted throughout the east african countries in September 2006
- “Field Testing” was carried out from Nov 27- Dec 1 2006
- Comparison with International stds (Codex & IFOAM)
- “International” Forum Dec 2006

- 4th RSTWG in December 2006 produced 3rd DRAFT
- Final technical work by email, submitted to the secretariat for the East African Standards (which is the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) 15 January 2007
- KEBS submitted Standard document to the Committee responsible for standards in the East African Community (EASTSC)
- The EASTSC approved the document in February
- The EAC Council approved the standard in April 2007 and was immediately Gazetted as an East African Community Standard: EAS 456:2007

Next Stages

- Development of the Inspection and certification system- work has been started through the OSEA project
- New Areas to be introduced e.g. Sustainable fisheries, Aquaculture etc,
- Equivalence discussions with other standards in the major markets for East African Organic products (mainly EU, USA)

Thank you for your attention

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