



Boosting international trade by improving the Sanitary and Phytosanitary system for horticulture in Uganda

Project summary

Uganda benefits from fertile soils, a favourable climate and hardworking farmers producing high-quality fresh fruit and vegetables (FFV). The potential to export is high but to access lucrative international markets, especially the European Union (EU), Ugandan exports must meet strict Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards.

Unfortunately, many farmers and exporters struggle to meet these standards and as a result, exports are jeopardized, limiting economic growth and export opportunities.

This project will strengthen the capacity of farmers, the Ugandan authorities and private sector organizations to comply with SPS measures, with the aim of boosting trade, safeguarding health and increasing income and employment opportunities.

The challenge

In Uganda, the export of horticultural produce to global markets is important for the economy, food security and livelihoods. In 2023, 60% of horticultural exports, which included FFV, went to the EU and were valued at 58 million euros.

However, Ugandan farmers and exporters face significant barriers complying with SPS standards. Consequently, exports are being intercepted and rejected because of harmful and excessive maximum residue limits (MRLs) that are not in line with the EU standards, and Codex and documentation errors, hindering Uganda's ability to penetrate and compete effectively in the EU market.

For example, between 2015 and 2024, according to EUROPHYT/TRACE, more than 787 interceptions occurred due to harmful organisms (70% were on FFV exports), 308 interceptions because of documentation errors (71% on FFV exports) as well as notifications of excessive MRLs.

The challenges faced by farmers and exporters include limited knowledge, lack of awareness, insufficient testing facilities, weak regulatory frameworks, and limited access to quality packaging and inadequate infrastructure, all of which impede the export of safe, high-quality produce.

Additionally, the country faces environmental concerns, such as deforestation, driven by agricultural expansion. This threatens the long-term sustainability of forests and climate resilience but also exports because exporters must prove that their products meet regulations, such as the EU Deforestation Regulation.

The project

The project aims to help improve the FFV export value chain to the EU and other international markets from Uganda.

The project will do this by strengthening the capacity of farmers, public and private sector organizations in Uganda to comply with SPS and food safety standards for FFV value chains in export markets, particularly to meet the regulatory and markets requirements of the EU plant health and food safety regulations. By doing so, the project hopes to contribute towards safeguarding consumers' health. Furthermore, the potential to export to the EU and beyond is unlocked.

The specific objectives are:

- To optimize the regulatory and operational processes of the competent authorities needed to implement SPS measures in FFV export industry
- To enhance production and produce handling processes among private sector actors for improved compliance of FFV value chains in Uganda with SPS and food safety regulations to meet market requirements

The project will also support government agencies, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), in policy enforcement and will foster partnerships with European buyers to align product quality with market demands.

To ensure Uganda's exports are both high-quality and environmentally sustainable, there will be an emphasis on sustainable agricultural practices, such as soil and resource conservation. These will help to combat deforestation and build awareness around the need for producers to be compliant with EU deforestation laws and rules.

Expected outcomes



Two-fold increase in Ugandan FFV exports by 27 mt for fresh fruits and 4 mt for vegetables



Build capacity and support 150 exporters of FFV



Build capacity of government institutions and train 59 inspectors



Create permanent jobs for youth e.g. in the cold chain tracking and management sector



Project partners and donor

The initiative is being implemented by CABI in collaboration with COLEAD, MAAIF and National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs).

All partners are working collaboratively across capacity building, infrastructure development, policy enforcement and communication to strengthen Uganda's SPS compliance and export capacity.



MAAIF
Ministry of Agriculture
Animal Industry and Fisheries

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Find out more
about the project

