

Current Status of Organic Agriculture in Uganda

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Summary

- Background
- Current Status
- Main actors/drivers
- Critical Issues for further development of the sector

Background

- OA is still among the fastest growing subsectors in Uganda
- 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

Current Status

- Currently
 - Over 215,000 certified organic farmers
 - 305,000 ha of certified land
 - 44 certified export companies
 - volume of exports growing at an average of 60% in the past 2 years
 - Value of exports stood at USD 36 Million by end of July 2010

Current Status contd...

Products

- At export level, a number of products including;
- Coffee, Cotton, Cocoa, Sesame, Chillies
- Fresh and Dried fruits (pineapples, mangoes, apple bananas, Jack fruits), passion fruits,
- Fruit pulp, Juices
- Ginger, vanilla, other spices (cadamon, black pepper etc)
- Textiles, Shea nuts/butter, Fish

Current Status contd...

- Domestic Market still small but growing at about 50% p.a
- The East African Organic Product Standard and the mark have now been integrated are being used for the facilitating domestic and regional marketing in organic products
- Diversity of products at domestic market growing fast, including Animal products
- 3 supermarkets stocking organic products
- 4 exclusive organic outlets (including the NOGAMU shop)
- Home delivery scheme (Basket delivery)

Current status contd....

- A National organic certification body (Ugocert), in addition to 6 other international certifiers
- Ugocert is now handling about 40% of certified projects
- A national organic policy is in its final stages, and the final draft is before the last approval stages in the Ministry of Agriculture before it goes to Cabinet
- Organic agriculture has also been incorporated in the five year National Development plan

Main Actors

- Farmers
 - Over 90% of the organic farming population in Uganda are smallholder farmers
- Local and international NGOs
 - Mobilization of the smallholder farmers (building viable, focused groups)
 - Training of farmers on production, quality control and marketing aspects
 - Developing and establishing internal quality management (IQM) systems among the groups

Main actors contd...

- Market linkage and promotional services
- Lobbying and Advocacy for increased government and development partner support to organic sector
- Financing of activities and Partnerships (HIVOS, SIDA, Government of Austria through UNCTAD, ITC, AU)
- Export Companies/local traders
 - Buying organic produce from, and working with the smallholder farmers
 - Quite often directly providing similar services as the NGOs (except lobbying) to the smallholder

Main Actors contd...

- Universities/Research institutes
 - Uganda Martyrs University is running Full Degree, diploma and short certificate courses in organic agriculture, hosting the African Centre of Excellence for Organic Agriculture initiative
 - Makerere University has been hosting annual international summer course in organic agriculture (SUA, University of Nairobi and BOKU University of Austria)
 - Makerere University senate has also approved 2 short courses targeting practitioners (Organic honey Processing, and organic animal husbandry) to be run under the newly commissioned AFRISA, as vocational courses
 - Collaboration is being initiated with research institutes

● Parastatals (e.g. Uganda Export Promotions Board-UEPB, and Uganda National Bureau of Standards-UNBS)

- Active in promoting organic exports as area of competitive advantage for smallholder farmers
- Participating in the local/regional organic standards development processes with the industry
- UNBS is the custodian of the East African Organic Products Standards in Uganda, and together with NOGAMU concluded a stakeholder consultation on the revision needs of the standard

● Government (e.g. Ministries)

- Ministry of Agriculture in Uganda is developing policy on organic agriculture together with all key stakeholders
- Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (MTTI), has been very active and supportive in all processes of promoting exports

Critical Issues for Further Development of the sector

- Strengthen the institutional capacity of NOGAMU to lead and coordinate all actors
- Direct interventions to bottlenecks of entire value chains (Value chain approach), with focus to both the export and local/regional markets
- Strategic focus on research into organic friendly technologies and solutions
- Speedy finalization of the organic policy support further growth in organic production and trade.



Thank you for your attention

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