

# Strengthening SPS capacity in the Ugandan horticulture sector

Timeframe: 2019 to date

CASESTORY



## LED BY

### PUBLIC SECTOR

Department of Crop Inspection and Certification (DCIC), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)

### PRIVATE SECTOR

Five associations and professional organizations of fruit and vegetable producers and exporters



## GOVERNANCE

Cooperation agreements between the DCIC and the fruits and vegetable associations set up the objective and scope of the partnership, as well as the expected roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved. These include awareness-raising, dialogue and participation in joint training programmes.

## FUNDING

The horticulture associations and the DCIC share costs of the capacity development training carried out by the DCIC. While the public sector provides trainers and equipment, the private sector funds the training logistics. Farmers and exporters pay a fee for laboratory testing, certification, etc.



## PURPOSE

Uganda is the second-largest producer of fruits and vegetables in Sub-Saharan Africa. Thousands of Ugandan farmers and traders rely on the horticulture sector for income and employment, though lack of awareness and capacity to comply with food safety and plant health requirements – including good agricultural practices (GAP), good hygiene practices (GHP) and pest surveillance – affect exports to regional and international markets. This partnership aims to strengthen producers' SPS capacity and improve communication and collaboration between the public and private sectors.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### PUBLIC SECTOR

- Raise SPS awareness among fruit and vegetable associations.
- Train farmers on food safety and plant health requirements, and train trainers from farmer groups, agricultural extension workers and regional inspectors.
- Regulate, supervise and certify horticultural exports.
- Use information provided by industry associations to inform official controls and policy.
- Carry out research in partnership with the private sector.

### PRIVATE SECTOR

- Develop introductory orientation resources on food safety and plant health requirements for horticulture producers and exporters.
- Provide logistical support for the venue, transportation and translation of DCIC checklists into local languages, needed to roll out farm-level training and training of trainers (ToT).
- Leverage resources for advocacy to address market access issues that require food safety policy reforms.
- Support producers and exporters to assess their capacity needs before training.
- Guide producers and exporters to prepare for inspections.

## LESSONS

- Electing champions amongst farmers allows for the creation of communication channels with the public sector and smooth coordination between associations.
- Private sector-led PPPs are sustainable because they are driven by market demand, while the public sector benefits from platforms and mechanisms created by the PPPs to achieve desired impact.
- Self-regulation by the private sector before official controls promotes accountability and enhances trust between both sectors.

## UP-SCALING OPPORTUNITIES

- Opportunities have been identified to link association databases on food safety and plant health with government information systems to improve monitoring processes.
- This partnership contributed to leveraging a communication platform (composed of over 80 members representing farmers, exporters, associations, researchers, donors and government institutions) that strengthened dialogue among stakeholders involved in an ongoing STDF project in Uganda (STDF/PG/543), and creates new opportunities to further improve information exchange for sustainability.

## RESULTS



**CODES OF PRACTICE ON GAP, GHP AND PEST SURVEILLANCE WERE PRODUCED AND ROLLED OUT, IMPROVING COMPLIANCE WITH FOOD SAFETY AND PLANT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS.**

Since 2019, farm-level training has reached some

**400 farmers, and 175 trained farmer**

leaders, extension workers and regional inspectors have trained many others, based on a ToT approach.

**THE GOVERNMENT ATTRIBUTES A REAL CHANGE IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF STAKEHOLDERS TO THIS PPP,** which has also contributed to a drop in the number of rejections on horticultural exports.



**In July 2021, HORTIFRESH WAS ENDORSED AS THE APEX HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION BY KEY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STAKEHOLDERS IN UGANDA.**

HortiFresh brings together the five associations under this PPP and aims to include other associations in the future.