



Kingdom of the Netherlands

# Agriculture Newsletter

January – April 2020

11<sup>th</sup> Edition

## Rwanda and Uganda

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Dear reader,

We would like to share with you the latest updates in a 11th edition of our Newsletter. The news and events about agriculture in Rwanda and Uganda are from January to March 2020. We are always looking forward to hear from you, if you have remarks or suggestion for this newsletter please inform us on KIG-LNV@minubuza.nl

### COVID – 19 in Rwanda and Uganda

As the rest of the world, Rwanda and Uganda are also affected by the pandemic caused by COVID-19. The number of infected persons remains small for now and most infected people are travelers that came from abroad and their direct family members, but the measures taken are amongst the strictest in the world. Both countries have very limited IC-space in the hospitals and available ventilators, and cannot permit the disease to get out of hand. In both countries there is a full lockdown, and people are only allowed out of their home for grocery shopping, banking or if they

### EVENTS CALENDAR

**10 – 11 May 2020:** HortiConnect Conference Kigali

**June 2020:** National Agrishow Rwanda (expo)

**7 – 11 Sept 2020:** African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Kigali (conference & expo)

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work in essential services. The airports are closed for persons, but cargo flights remain operational. In Uganda there is a cargo flight two or three times a week, and the tariffs remain more or less the same. In Rwanda Rwandair is using a passenger flight for cargo once a week. Cargospace in Rwanda has reduced from 130t/week to 30t a week, leaving the still young and fragile export sector in distress.

The epidemic almost seemed to have been brought to a halt, until last week when in both countries they found truck drivers from Kenya and Tanzania infected with the disease. Regional transport is essential for the food security of both countries, especially since both countries had to use a large part of their food reserves to provide food to people that are unable to work because of the lockdown.

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## VISITS

### Extension mission to the Netherlands

From 1st to 9th February 2020 a Rwandan delegation composed of members from the Ministry of Agriculture and affiliated implementation Agency, Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB), Private Agribusiness, Universities and Polytechnics visited the Netherlands to learn from the collaboration in the "Triple Helix". The visit was made possible through a benchmarking mission to the Netherlands organized and supported by RVO and SEAD Project. Their program featured a combination of visits to policy makers, universities, private sector and recipients of extension services (farmers), all the forming parts of the triple helix.

The delegation visited the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality where the structure of the Ministry and the Circular Economy Policy were introduced, after which a timeline of the evolution/transformation of the extension services was presented. The delegation also visited the very players who were involved in the transformation process, and are today the private extension services providers: World Horti Center (to meet with Delphy), Wageningen University, Van Hall Lareinstein University of Applied

Sciences, GD-Animal Health, the World Potato City Emmeloord, Friesland Dairy Research & Outreach and the Dairy Campus.

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## EVENTS

### Harvest Money Expo Kampala

From 14 – 16 February the fourth edition of the Harvest Money Expo took place in Kampala. As in the years before the embassy organized a trade mission to participate in the expo. 14 Dutch companies participated in the trade mission and expo. In the Holland Village also 27 Dutch-Ugandan companies, 30 Best Farmers and 6 Embassy programs exhibited their products and services. Although the visitor numbers of this year were lower than previous years, a number of business deals were made, making the event just as successful as previous years. We are already looking forward to next year!



### Workshop FSI Covenant Floriculture

From 10th March 2020, The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands organized a two-days workshop on CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) in Uganda, Entebbe. The main goal was to present the IMVO covenant on floriculture to all members of UEFA. The programme included presentations on CSR in general, the covenant and living wages; living wages and integrated pest management and a field visit to Wagagai, which sublets a large share of its greenhouses to two flower propagation companies, namely: (1) Beekenkamp Deliflor, a Joint Venture of breeders from the Netherlands of chrysanthemums and begonia's (2) Selecta One, a breeder of poinsettias from Germany.

Some key discussion points of the two-day workshop were:

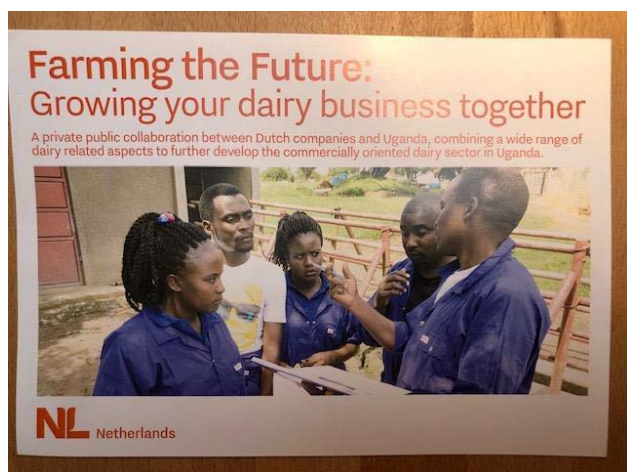
- Flower growers indicated that prices over the last 10 years dropped more than 50%.
- The committee of the covenant will push further on retailers to join the pact
- CSR should not be an activity to greenwash a company's image.

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## DAIRY SECTOR

### Launch of ImpactCluster Dairy in Uganda

During the Harvest Money Expo the Dairy ImpactCluster was launched in Uganda. ImpactCluster is a financial instrument from the Dutch government for a consortium of companies to work together to develop a new market and create impact. Six Dutch companies in the dairy sector have joined forces to use this 50% grant to develop the milk production in South West and West Uganda, and at the same time create a market for themselves. The companies are taking advantage of the successful developments the Ugandan dairy sector made in recent years. Investments in dairy processing factories has led to increased demand for high quality milk. Improving quality, quantity and business cases for farmers, is the expertise of these companies.



### Powdered milk factory to be set in Rwanda

A powdered milk factory is set to be constructed in Gicumbi district located in the Northern part of the country. The facility - a joint venture between South African and Rwandan investors – is expected to be completed at the end of this year. This is a major relief to dairy farmers as the factory will help in transforming milk into powder milk which is easily and safely preserved and this lowers its cost of transport to neighboring countries. [Read more](#)

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## POTATO SECTOR

### Rwanda pilots revolutionary potato seeds

True potato seeds varieties, developed by a Dutch firm called Solynta are already being tested by Rwanda Agricultural Board. The variety is known for its resistance to diseases and they are easily stored. The new technology, still under trial, is expected to replace the commonly used potato tuber seeds. [Read more](#)

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## TEA & COFFEE SECTOR

### Rwanda's tea export rise by 8 per cent

The total volume of Rwandan tea exported to more than 45 countries across the globe is now counted at 30 000 tonnes. Expanded tea plantation, implementation of good practices in tea growing as well as regular training for farmers are among the reasons behind this increase. [Read more](#)

### Rwanda to host World Coffee producers forum next year

By July 2021, Rwanda will host a third World coffee producer forum. The forum, which brings together industry leaders, economists and analysts from over 40 coffee-producing countries, will focus on finding solutions to the challenges faced by coffee farmers. The forum was last held in Columbia and Brazil. [Read More](#)

## HORTICULTURE SECTOR

### Horticulture farmers decry market woes

During a meeting organised by The Dutch embassy and RDB under SEAD initiative, horticultural farmers have discussed various challenges including the lack of reliable and sustainable market for their produce; Lack of skills for producing for international market; Lack of post harvest storage and cold room facilities. To address this , SEAD revealed a new horticultural scientific training and innovation centre will be established to continue supporting farmers. [Read more.](#)

## IRRIGATION SECTOR

### Nasho irrigation Scheme boosts farmers' yields

More than 2000 smallholder farmers benefit from Nasho irrigation scheme project that covers 1173 hectares. The project, which is made of 63 centre pivots irrigation system, not only contributes to an increased productivity ( 10 tonnes per hectare) but also to empowering farmers with farming best practices . The project is a joint venture between Howard J. Buffet foundation and The Rwandan government. [Read more.](#)

## VARIOUS NEWS

### Locusts threaten food security across EA

Unusual climate conditions in East Africa has resulted into a rapid reproduction of desert locusts which attack and destroy hundreds of acres of crops in East African region. The outbreak might last until June this year, according to UN agency. Affected countries are Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia. South Sudan and Uganda are also on risk. [Read more](#)

### Maize farmers rue post-harvest losses

Heavy rainfall that occurred in March proved that more quality storage facilities are needed to reduce losses faced by maize farmers in Huye district. The limited number of drying shelters and plastic sheets expose their produce to aflatoxin making it difficult to comply with quality standards demanded by buyers. [Read more.](#)

### High cost blamed for low fertilizer uptake

In Rwanda the use of fertilizers is still low compared to the global average as shared by Rwanda Agriculture Board. That is 45kgs of fertilizers per hectare whereas at a global level an average of 140 kg is used. Enabling farmers access to finance by helping them to get loans might be a good way to deal with this problem as farmers claim that the reason behind this low uptake is a high cost of these fertilizers. [Read more.](#)

### Does Agric insurance go far enough?

The agriculture insurance scheme which started in April 2019 in Rwanda is criticized to cover inputs seeds and fertilizers only when it comes to crops. The expected production is not insured. This leads to banks being reluctant to give loans to farmers based on their harvest. [Read more](#)

### Minister, lawmakers call for fresh measures to shore up agric lending

Despite contributing 28% to the country's GDP, agriculture receives 3,4% of loans as shows data from the national bank of Rwanda ( BNR). Some people consider it more risky compared to other sectors. There is a need to take to the next level and help the country to be self-reliant in foodstuff. [Read more](#)

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