

UGANDA SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



EDITORIAL | Katabira Jonathan
TEAM | Robinah Babirye

AUGUST
2024

Review of the Seed and Plants Act 2007 Meeting



Above: Secretary for the Uganda Law Reform Commission (Ms. Jackie Akuno) addresses the stakeholders from both the agricultural sector and seed sub-sector at the consultative meeting at Kabira Country Club on 4th June 2024.

On June 8th 2024, Uganda Seed Trade Association took part in the Review of the Seeds and Plants Act meeting organized by the Uganda Law Reform Commission (ULRC) at Kabira Country Club in Kampala.

The members in attendance at this event included representatives from the agricultural and seed sub-sector that included National Research Organization (NARO), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Ministry of Justice and Land Reform, Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFF), Uganda National Board of Statistics (UNBS) and researchers from the agricultural field. USTA was represented by members that included Pearl Seeds, Equator Seeds and Savannah Seeds.

The purpose for the meeting was to obtain views of the users and implementers of the law on issues that affect the sector they operate in in order to make it more responsive and so efficient in addressing those challenges.

First on the agenda, the review on why the law is being amended was presented by the legal officer of ULRC, Mr. Emmanuel Kaweesi. The presentation informed members present on the justification for the review, the methodology that will be used to effect these changes and the gaps present in the law that would need to be addressed.

After this, participants were engaged in an open discussion that was moderated by the Director of NACRRI, Dr. Godfrey Asea who took on the role of the chairman at the meeting.

**...exchange ideas, dialogue,
critically analyze the laws and
policies in order to find viable
solutions to the challenges...**

During the session, key issues that emerged had to do with how to make the laws and policies more flexible in terms of clarity when it comes to handling laws and offences, accreditation and roles of the different seed actors within the value chain and what criteria each would have to meet be registered by MAAIF.

The meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders within both the agricultural and seed sub-sector to exchange ideas, dialogue, critically analyze the laws and policies in order to find viable solutions to the challenges that affect the industry as a whole.

ACN Empowers Private Sector to Fight Counterfeits

On 3rd July 2024, the USTA joined other private sector players at the Anti-Counterfeit Consultative Meeting organized by the Anti-Counterfeit Network (ACN) Africa at the Sheraton Hotel.

The meeting aimed to address the pervasive issue of counterfeits and substandard goods affecting the industry. In a strategic move, ACN engaged stakeholders to share their perspectives on the drafted Anti-Counterfeit Goods Bill designed to combat this problem.

Made possible with the support from the Parliament of Uganda, the meeting was moderated by the Chairman of ACN, Mr. Fred Muwema who proceeded in his opening speech to emphasize the importance and relevance that the law will have on the Private Sector industry as a whole.

“There have been so many issues of counterfeits in products. So we welcome this law that is coming into place to fight this vice,” Mr. Muwema said.

To understand and assess the effects of counterfeits on private sector business owners, a panel discussion featuring various speakers was held that took up a significant portion of the meeting.



Above: Chairman of Anti-Counterfeit Network (Mr. Fred Mwema) moderating the panel discussion at Sheraton Hotel.

One of the speakers at the event, Mr. Robert Mwange, the Board Chairman of the Grain Council of Uganda underscored how the issue of counterfeits affects the grain and seed value chain. He called for a deliberate sensitization campaign that would be able to engage consumers and spread awareness about counterfeit and substandard products.

“There is a need to create awareness for consumers about what is real and fake,” Mr. Mwange said.

Mr. Mwange went on to further call for a penalty put in place to handle different cases of counterfeit and substandard goods because one may not be as severe as the other. He concluded by stating that there also needs to be a system put in place for consumers to report offences of counterfeit.

The collaborative effort of the Anti-Counterfeit Network (ACN) Africa, Government of Uganda and stakeholders within the Private Sector to get to the bottom of this critical issue at this workshop shows that we are on the right track when it comes to civic activism, strengthening our legal systems and prioritizing the needs of

“There is a need to create awareness for consumers about what is real and fake,”

Mr. Robert Mwange

The Issue of Seed Potato Certification Addressed at EAC Meetings

In a significant move to engage implementing partners, the East African Community (EAC) organized a series of hybrid National Consultative meetings from 18th July – 19th July 2024 at Fairway Hotel.

The engagement held in the boardrooms provided by the hotel featured moderation and expert guidance from focal persons that included Ms. Asio Mary Teddy, MAAIF's Assistant Commissioner for Seed Inspection and Certification and Mr. Moses Kanyesigye, the Regional Coordinator for AFCFTA.

The purpose for the meetings being to monitor and update the draft reports in the implementation of the Fruits and Vegetables Strategy, Leather and Leather Products; Pharmaceutical Strategies, Seed Potato Certification Standard and the Development of the Strategic Action Plan for Promoting Value Addition and Trade in the EAC Nuts Value Chain (2024-2034).

The different stakeholders that were in attendance were divided in three technical working groups to discuss the draft papers. Stakeholders from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Hortifresh,

National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), Private Sector, African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) Secretariat and so many others took part in these interactive sessions.

The technical working group for Seed Potato Certification used this opportunity to delve into the intricacies of Seed potato production and regulation in Uganda.

Leading the discussion, Mr. Isaac Wamatembe Senior Inspector of NSCS brought out the emerging issues that were central into understanding why the bill was drafted.

Ranging from the need for a more streamlined seed chain that makes clear what different roles the seed actors will play to the issue of traceability, the group work session gave room to further refining and in-depth analysis of the report.

As the deliberations came to a close, the final item on the agenda was a plenary discussion where the insights of that the participants had given on the different draft reports were put together into one final report that was shared with everyone in a power-point presentation by Mr. Jerome Luwabasa, the rapporteur at the meeting.

Below: The technical working group for Seed Potato Release and Registration going through the draft report.



...the need for a more streamlined seed chain that makes clear what different roles the seed actors will play to the issue of traceability...

The National Agricultural Show 2024

Below: An agronomist (Kelvin Opio) from Equator Seeds showcasing the tomato varieties to a farmer.



Below: Simlaw Seeds' crop varieties on display at the Agricultural show



Below: Naseco Seeds exhibiting its new Tomato varieties known as Pele F1 at the Agricultural Trade Show.



Below: Pearl Seeds Ltd's maize variety known as PH 5355 being exhibited at the agricultural trade show



From 26th July – 4th August 2024, USTA alongside other agricultural value chain actors from within the industry took part in the 30th National Agricultural Trade Show organized by Uganda National Farmers' Federation (UNFFE) in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), at the Jinja Tradeshow Grounds.

An annual event geared towards giving an opportunity to different players within the agricultural industry to share experiences, showcase a variety of agricultural innovations, carry out demonstrations, knowledge benchmark, and network and market their different products and services.

Under the theme: “Innovating pathways to farm business led Agro-industrialization” the focus for this year’s show was creating a platform that aims to ensure all Ugandans are able to be economically secure through advancing the agricultural sector to meet their needs.

Major highlight of the show was the exposure it brought to the exhibitors most especially USTA’s members that got a chance to connect with farmers and those interested in the agribusiness.

The exhibitors, that included farmers, agronomists, agro-dealers and other players, used this golden opportunity to engage interested attendees, discuss their products and services, and offer agronomic advice.

Farmers were introduced to trial crop varieties that are both pest and drought resistant as well as promising high yields. The exhibited crops included a diverse range of vegetables, cereals, and legumes.

Esther Mpanga, a farmer with Golden Bull LTD, noted that the exhibition is a crucial event where fellow farmers can acquire new skills to enhance their gardening techniques.

Mpanga further expressed her expectations that the trade show would engage the youth,

Below: Attendees at the Agricultural tradeshow looking at Syova Seeds Pepper Crop Variety known as Gallant F1



Below: FICA Seeds' Cabbage variety (Indica F1) and Cauliflower variety (Poornima F1) on display at the Agricultural Trade Show.



encouraging them to view agriculture as a viable avenue for job creation and self-employment opportunities.

This show will provide valuable knowledge on plant care and cultivation techniques, enabling participants to achieve higher yields. Ultimately, this could inspire many to pursue farming as a viable career," Mpanga said.

The agricultural trade show offered farmers from all walks of life the opportunity to gain insights from industry veterans and discover cutting-edge farming solutions from numerous exhibitors who are shaping the future of agriculture.

“Innovating pathways to farm business led Agro-industrialization”

END

Plot 27 Nakasero Road Uganda National Farmer's Federation Building.

P.O.BOX 29726, Kampala. Tel: 0782423767/0787614173 Email: usta@usta.ug Website: www.usta.ug

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

BY:

DEBORAH AKELLO