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## Macfrut 2024: Elevating the Fruit and Vegetable Industry

The 41st edition of Macfrut, the premier international trade fair for the fruit and vegetable sector, was held at the Rimini Expo Centre in Italy from May 8 to 10, 2024. This year's event which uniquely focused on the entire supply chain for industry professionals, marked a pivotal moment as it set new standards for leadership in the sector.

Macfrut 2024 encompassed a comprehensive range of sectors including Production & Trade, Machinery & Plants, Packaging, Agricultural Machinery, Greenhouses & Irrigation Systems, Spices and Herbs, Nursery & Seeds, Bio stimulants, Logistics & Services. The exhibition attracted a diverse audience, from producers and traders to buyers and culinary enthusiasts. The fair featured exhibitors from across the globe and offered a variety of activities such as workshops, B2B meetings, high-level conferences, seminars, and product presentations.

The Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) proudly participated in Macfrut 2024, facilitating B2B meetings for Kenyan exporters with potential and existing buyers. This participation aims to enhance Kenya's horticultural exports to Italy and other European markets, demonstrating a strategic commitment to expanding international trade.



Over the past five years, the total value of fresh horticultural produce exports has exhibited fluctuations, reflecting the dynamic nature of the global market. Despite these variations, there has been a general upward trend, culminating in a revenue of Ksh.156.7 billion in 2023 from Ksh.147.1 Billion in the previous year. This steady revenue growth underscores the resilience and potential of Kenya's horticultural exports.

- Specifically, the export volumes of fruits increased from 81.9 thousand tons in 2019 to 188.9 thousand tons in 2023, highlighting the industry's capacity to meet global demand. The value of fruit exports surged from KSh 13.2 billion in 2019 to KSh 32.4 billion in 2023.

Macfrut 2024 highlighted the industry's growth potential and the crucial role of global collaboration and networking in advancing the fruit and vegetable sector.

# Revitalizing The Coconut Industry

The Nuts and Oil Crops Directorate (NOCD), in partnership with key industry players, successfully conceptualized the National Coconut Planting Week, held from April 17th to 26th, 2024. The initiative aimed to rally all value chain stakeholders to enhance participation and investment in increasing the coconut tree population across the country. By boosting the coconut tree population, this initiative will ensure a steady supply of raw material for processing facilities, thereby increasing farmers' income and strengthening food security. The official launch of the coconut seedling distribution exercise took place in Tezo, Kilifi County, attracting representatives from the national government, coastal county governments, development partners and the private sector.



The event was attended by a total of 560 participants including diverse players in the coconut sub sector; coconut entrepreneurs and experts from around the country, governments, traders, academia, researchers, coconut producers, processors and exporters. Others included; development partners, technology service providers, financiers, policy makers and the international community. Kenya is a member of the international coconut community and the country benefits from facilitation on relevant aspects of coconut development including facilitation to increase coconut production and productivity and resource mobilization.

The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development Hon. Mithika Linturi launched the coconut seedling distribution week accentuating the role of the coconut value chain as one of the key agricultural subsectors in the coastal region supporting an estimated 1 million people through its effective forward and backward linkages.

Key recommendations from the conference included; creation of an enabling robust replanting of coconut trees development of strategies to mitigate climate change including drought and, addressing the financing gap in the coconut value chain to stimulate value addition and processing for both the domestic and the international market. The panel sessions discussed the feasible strategies for increased coconut tree productivity, youth involvement in the coconut subsector, quality assurance for market access for coconut products, the resources required for investment in the coconut industry and the overall performance of the Coconut Industry. As a result of the deliberations, the Kenyan coconut industry players are expected to undertake deliberate interventions across the value chain supported by national and county government policy changes and resource allocation.


# Coffee Seedlings Distribution Initiative

The Authority, in collaboration with the Kisumu County government, distributed 8,000 coffee seedlings to farmers from South Nyakach Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society under the Seedlings Support Initiative. The launch event, held on April 26, 2024, at Siany Community Hall, featured the Principal Secretary of the State Department for Trade. Key participants included Kisumu's Deputy Governor and other high-ranking officials.



The seedlings, inspected for quality at Fort Farm in Muhoroni, were handed over and transported for distribution. The initiative included a demonstration on coffee establishment and a farmers' meeting, highlighting the significance of coffee in the economy and emphasizing strong cooperative societies. The Directorate and the County Government committed to ongoing support, monitoring, and further expansion of coffee farming in Kisumu. This collaboration aims to significantly boost coffee production in the region by 2027.


# Wheat Field Day



Wheat is Kenya's second-largest cereal crop after maize and is produced in fifteen counties with the leading producers being Narok, Nakuru, Uasin Gishu and Meru counties respectively. Its trade and consumption is however, nationwide.

In the year 2022, the area under wheat production decreased from 123,090 hectares to 104,440 hectares in 2023. This reduction is attributed to farmers shifting their focus from wheat to maize in 2023, the continuous land subdivision and the favorable prices for maize in 2022, which motivated farmers to switch growing more maize.

However, wheat production experienced an increase, from 270,700 metric tons in 2022 to 309,492 metric tons in 2023. This is attributed to increase in productivity per unit area as a result of the fertilizer subsidy and favorable weather conditions. Consequently, the value of locally produced wheat increased from Ksh.10.6 billion in 2022 to Ksh.14.30 billion in 2023. This was as a result of good prices set by the government through the wheat purchase program involving all the value chain payers and high demand for wheat products. The local average retail prices were Ksh.65 per Kg while the wholesale prices traded at a minimum price of Ksh.5,200 per 90Kg bag for grade one, Ksh.5,100 for grade two and willing buyer willing seller basis for grade three and below



Wheat imports increased from 1,662,100 MT in 2022 to 1,989,932 MT in 2023 due to the increased local demand to meet the consumption deficit. Exports increased from 1,970 MT to 8,712 MT in 2023, attributed to good prices in the export destinations.



As such, The Large-Scale Farmers' field Day was held on February 8th, 2024 at Sasumua Agriculture Ltd within OI Maisor Ranch, Laikipia County. This event was a collaborative effort between the Cereal Growers Association (CGA), Agventure Ltd, the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA), and the County Government of Laikipia.

The Field Day targeted progressive farmers from Narok, Nakuru, Nyandarua, Uasin Gishu, Meru, and Laikipia counties

The Theme for the event was, "Conservation Agriculture for Enhanced Productivity", resonated well with the farmers who practice zero tillage and implement an effective rotation regime featuring maize, wheat, barley, canola, sunflower, sorghum, and garden peas.

# Tree Growing Restoration campaign



The Government led by H.E President William Ruto initiated planting of 15 billion trees by 2032, a move aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions, stopping and reversing deforestation and, restoring 5.1 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes through the African Landscape Restoration Initiative which was launched on 22nd December, 2022. In fulfillment of this presidential directive on the National Tree Growing Campaign, AFA has grown a total of 75,849 trees against a target of 11,220 trees as outlined in the table. This shows AFA's commitment to raise our country's tree cover to 30% both as a livelihood and climate action initiative.

Avocado	Citrus	Macadamia	Miraa	Cashew nuts	Mango	Coconut	Bixa	Pawpaw	Forest trees
3,344	370	8,215	5,030	19,579	869	30,554	1,500	49	6,339

## Launch of Bixa Production Handbook

Bixa Orellana is a plant best known as a source of annatto, a natural orange-red condiment obtained from the waxy arils that cover its seeds. Annato and its extracts are widely used to color food because the coloring does not alter the flavor and is not toxic, cosmetics (lipstick, hair coloring products, nail polish, soaps, lacquers, paints) and pharmaceutical products. Bixa was officially designated as a scheduled crop in March 2020 and is cultivated in various regions of Kenya, including Kwale, Lamu, Tana River, Elgeyo Marakwet, Baringo, Makueni, Homabay, and Kilifi. Spanning 3,341 acres, bixa production contributes significantly to the local economy, with an estimated value of 1.257 billion Kenyan Shillings. Despite being commercialized for over five decades in the coastal region as a source of natural dye and food color, information on its varieties, optimal production methods, mechanization and approved pesticides has been scarce.

To address these gaps, the Authority, in collaboration with public and private partners, developed the first comprehensive Bixa Production Handbook. This guide aims to instruct farmers on best agricultural practices, thereby enhancing both production and productivity and ultimately increasing farmers' incomes. The handbook was officially launched by Dr. Paul K. Ronoh, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Agriculture, at the Kenya School of Government in Mombasa on Thursday, December 14, 2023.

Looking ahead, the Authority is working on implementing regulations to standardize bixa production and developing the local market to reduce the crop's heavy reliance on exports. These initiatives are expected to enhance the sustainability and profitability of bixa farming in Kenya.

# Miwa Bora Application



## Miwa Bora App is an information hub for the sugar industry that:

- Aims to empower stakeholders, including farmers and industrialists, with cutting-edge solutions and expert knowledge.
- Provides a real-time news feed with the latest updates and developments in the sugar industry.
- Covers market trends and policy changes to keep users up-to-date.
- Offers access to essential statistics and data for informed decision-making.
- Provides easy-to-understand data insights, including production numbers, pricing trends, and historical statistics.
- Simplifies the licensing process with a user-friendly guide.
- Breaks down regulatory requirements and provides step-by-step instructions for sugar industry licenses.
- Ensures compliance effortlessly, saving time and effort.

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