Dear Members and Stakeholders,

Welcome to the August Members’ Update!

This is a special year in the EAGC calendar as we are set to host the flagship conference, the 7th Africa Grain Trade Summit (AGTS) from 5th to 7th October 2017. The month of August was characterised by high level engagements with key stakeholders in preparation for the Summit which will be held in Dar es Salaam, in the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Summit is a biennial conference, first held in 2005 and as a result, EAGC was established. EAGC now marks ten years and will celebrate the journey travelled over the passed decade in facilitating Structured Grain Trade. We urge you to visit the summit website on www.graintradesummit.com and register to participate as a delegate, speaker or event sponsor. We continue to look forward to working with you towards the realization of the Council’s mandate.

Enjoy the reading!!

Executive Director’s Message

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The 7th Africa Grain Summit expected to Spark Progressive Policy agenda in Grain Industry

Theme: Setting New Horizons: Rethinking Grain Trade for Food Security and Prosperity in Africa

The past decade has witnessed a number of developments in the grain sector in Africa. Governments and development partners have invested significantly to promote production and productivity, and strengthen market linkages to improve access to finance for value chain actors. The 1st AGTs held in 2005 in Kenya led to the establishment of the Eastern Africa Grain Council in 2006. In 2007, EAGC and other development partners held the 2nd AGTS leading to establishment and strengthening of structured grain trading systems, including the Warehouse Receipts System. The Subsequent Summits have resulted to tremendous developments in the grain industry and the Agricultural sector at large.

The 7th AGTS will be a reflection of the past ten (10) years in the grain sector in Africa with an intention of sparking a new vision and strategic thrust for the transformation of the grain sector. Happening at a time when EAGC is commemorating its 10th anniversary, the 7th AGTS is expected to be a landmark Summit that will reshape grain trade policy in Africa in the context of Africa’s overarching development vision and global food trade dynamics.
because food security is not a problem in that part of the world.

Despite the social and economic benefits witnessed from adoption of biotech crops over the last two decades, adoption continues to lag behind in Africa. This is due to a myriad of factors, key among them misinformation, unfavourable policy environment and controversy over markets and trade in Genetically Modified foods and/or products. “The prevailing arguments surrounding the application of GM technology in Africa will never go away until all stakeholders come together and establish a common ground for regional benefits.” Lauded Dr. Getachew Belay, COMESA's Senior Biotechnology and Biosafety Advisor.

According to Hon. Adam Malima, the Vice Chair of East Africa Biotechnology and Biosafety Alliance (EABBA), Regional agricultural policies are heavily Influenced by attitudes and stringent rules exported from the EU that has close trade ties with Africa for their benefit.

Hon.Adam Informed the business community representatives that EU leads in the application of GM technology medicine and not agriculture because food security is not a problem in that part of the world.

EAGC joins COMESA Members for Agricultural Biotechnology and Biosafety discussions

EAGC and COMESA member states through its specialized agency ACTESA - Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa acknowledged the need for rigorous reforms on policies governing adoption of Genetically Modified Crops in Africa. This was during a two-day regional sensitization workshop on Agri-biotechnology and Biosafety held on August 30 –31, 2017 in Kenya. The workshop brought together representatives from six COMESA member states actively involved in biotech research, the East African Community (EAC) and key private sector players.

Indicating that EAC has not yet taken an official position on GM crops, Hon Christophe Bazivamo, the Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community in charge of Productive and Social Sectors emphasized the need to prioritize food security by incorporating all available tools along the value chain to achieve a stable economic environment in the region.

ISAAA AfriCenter Director, Dr.Margaret Karembu, reiterated the need for a consensus within the Agri biotech community and urged experts entrusted with providing technical information to communicate effectively and harmonize their messages to reduce public confusion. The workshop, which was organized by ISAAA AfriCenter under the OFAB program, in partnership with COMESA/ACTESA, also provided participants with an opportunity to visit the Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) insect resistant/drought tolerant (Bt-DT) maize field trials at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), as well as the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture’s (IITA) AflaSafe partnership plant addressing the aflatoxin menace in Katumani, Machakos County. EAGC is yet to have a position regarding Agri-biotechnology but plans are underway to hold a stakeholder engagement with members to consolidate their views and inputs regarding the technology. Discussions are ongoing to collaborate with Agri Biotech community to sensitize the grain industry on the technology especially for the production of maize and soyabean.
High level Grain Industry players set to converge to chart new grain policy dimensions

The 7th Africa Grain Summit 2017

Lowering barriers to domestic and cross-border food trade will increase the efficiency of moving food from surplus zones to deficit zones, which in turn will open up markets for surplus food producers to improve their livelihoods, food availability and access in deficit areas to improve food security. The two benefits combine to stimulate economic growth and improve overall societal welfare.

Achieving this end goal through EAGC's theory of change requires continuous and constructive high-level public-private policy dialogues to instigate and add momentum to policy reforms geared towards creating a more supportive grain trading environment.

EAGC hosts this flagship policy conference known as the African Grain Trade Summit (AGTS).

68 Regional Food Balance Sheet (RFBS) contributors signed up for submission of private sector stocks on staple foods

Within the month of August, the Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) organized a training, recruitment and installation of the new RFBS system and data collection Mobile App. The activity was aimed at collection of Private sector stock data through recruitment of stakeholders.

So far, there are 68 RFBS contributors in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda. As the process goes on, 300 contributors are expected to sign up before the end of the year.

The new system is purposed to advice on trade and agricultural sector trade policy, monitor food status providing early warning service for the region in partnership with the Ministries of Agriculture regionally, Food Relief agencies and the East Africa Community (EAC).

The system current major focus is on Maize, Wheat, Beans, Rice, Barley, Millet, and Sorghum commodities.

This initiated implementation of the new EAGC RFBS system in Rwanda which also involved gathering of inputs and recommendations leading to action on the findings to further improve the system.
The Eastern Africa Grain Council roots to work with the Civil Society Public Private Sector Forum (CSPPSF) after a meeting held at the EAGC Uganda offices.

The meeting was attended by Prof. Maggie Kigozi; the Executive Secretary of the Forum and Mr. Samuel Niiwo and the EAGC country team, discussed wide range of programs by both organizations.

CSPPSF also conducts institutional capacity building for both Government and Private Sector.

EAGC will formulate modalities of joining CSPPSF as a member to push her advocacy agenda through cluster tailored discussions every two months and the annual Social Economic Summit. EAGC envisions to collaborate with organizations which will benefit its members and stakeholders in order to realize its made in the country.

Agriculture and Agribusiness Sector raises concerns on cost of doing business

The EAGC Uganda team participated in the Agriculture and Agribusiness sector working group consultative meeting organized by the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) on August 18, 2017 at the PSFU Boardroom.

From the analyses undertaken on the sector policies, laws, regulations and institutional arrangements in Uganda, EAGC realized that there are greater opportunities for the grain stakeholders to thrive in the Industry.

In the meeting various concerns were presented including; tax levy, import duties, agriculture financing, Lack of policies on agriculture insurance, lack of policy on feeds, interest rates, contradictory policies, and water & irrigation issues.

This model is aimed at encouraging agriculture entrepreneurship among the youth in the African countries. The meeting then agreed, that each sector company will compile a proposal to include all Policy issues to be included the Foundation’s Policy Agenda.
TANZANIA

Trade Barriers with India is affecting Tanzania Farmers and Traders, says EAGC

The EAGC Tanzania team has been on the forefront in promoting the pulses sector in the country. This month, the International Trade Centre (ITC) sector coordinator in Tanzania held a meeting with EAGC and the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

The meeting brought forth the situation in which the Indian Government has imposed a restriction on pigeon peas imports from various selected countries.

The restriction is affecting farmers and traders negatively. EAGC policy team is working closely with other organisations to find a lasting solution to allow trade to continue for the sake of the traders and farmers. The team will have another meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade to unlock the situation.

Over 300 delegates to participate in the 7th Africa Grain Summit (AGTS) in Dar es Salaam

The 7th Africa Grain Summit Host Country Committee (HCC) Chairs, Mr. Julius Wambura and Dr. Honest Kessy together with the EAGC Tanzania Country Manager, Mr. Terry Ikunda have held successful meetings with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Eng. Mathew Mtigumwe, and the Deputy PS, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment to discuss preparations for the AGTS.

The Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Hon. Tizeba is keen on ensuring the summit will drive towards tangible policy reforms for the grain sector in order to strengthen intra-regional trade in Africa. This years’ summit is themed, “Setting New Horizons: Rethinking Grain Trade for Food Security and Prosperity in Africa”

Why Attend The 7th AGTS?

As a high-level policy dialogue, the Summit is expected to deliver on the following:

⇒ Adoption of a unifying Vision for the grain sector in Africa,
⇒ Policymakers commit to establish and strengthen structures for increased transparency and information-sharing with private and non-state actors,
⇒ Policymakers commit to trade policy reforms and to implement policies that incentivise private sector investment in the grain sector;
⇒ Policymakers commit to move away from unilateral action towards regional and continental approaches to addressing pertinent challenges in the agri-food sector; and
⇒ Strong business-to-business linkages amongst private sector actors across the continent as a means of driving business growth and strengthening regional integration.

The President of the Republic of Tanzania is expected to grace the 7th Summit to be held from 5th to 7th October, 2017 at Whitesands Hotel, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The summit’s strategic partner is the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (The Hub). So far, several partners have offered to support. Among them, the Agriculture Market Development Trust (AMDT), ASPIRES, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Tanzania, and JICA.

In addition, Port Authority of Tanzania and the Bakhresa Group of Companies host AGTS field visits.
**MPULUNGU PORT REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE GRAIN TRADE THROUGH BUKUMBU**

EAGC Burundi Country Programme manager, EAGC members and Mpulungu Port team resolved on trade facilitation needs to promote trade between Burundi and Zambia. This was at a meeting held on 16th August 2017 at the City Hall Hotel in Bujumbura. The team resolved to promote agricultural producers near Mpulungu port to avoid the cost of transportation of goods.

A follow up meeting will take place in Mpulungu with all relevant stakeholders in September 2017 to discuss the modalities required to promote trade via Mpulungu and Bujumbura ports. The Minister of Transport in Burundi is expected to participate in the regional meeting.

The team agreed on the need to set up a warehouse at the Bujumbura port which could serve as a transit point for DRC and Tanzania.

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**UPCOMING EAGI TRAINING**

**STRUCTURED COMMODITY TRADE FINANCE TRAINING**

**13th – 15th September 2017**

Pride Inn Paradise Mombasa, Kenya

**CHARGES**

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**ACCOUNT DETAILS**

Account Name: Eastern Africa Grain Council - Institute (Eagi)

Account Number: 6432510148 | Bank: Commercial Bank of Africa Ltd | Currency: USD | Bank Branch: Westlands, Nairobi

For more information, contact Violet Nyando at vnyando@eagc.org - 0714099922 or Christopher Wang’ombe at cwangombe@eagc.org - 0712651820 with a copy to eagi@eagc.org
KENYA

EAGC Trains over 80 Trainees under the KCEP Project


The three day training took place from 22nd –24th August 2017 attracting 80 participants from 8 counties in which the project is also being implemented.

MALAWI

EAGC held business advisory services meeting for the small business enterprises

The Malawi country office team held a business advisory service engagement to the small business enterprises in the grain sub sector within Mzuzu, Lilongwe and Blantyre Respectively.

The engagement created a platform for SME mentorship. Through a professional mentor, the SMEs will be guided in a systematic process to address the challenges they face in their businesses in a practical manner.

The mentor will support by demonstrating the solutions to the challenges the SMEs face, supervising the learning process and evaluating to ensure the SME can apply fully the learnt competence with ease.

Besides addressing their challenges, the mentorship process will enable the SME to tap the opportunities available to operate beyond their comfort zones and embrace new Innovations, processes, and procedures that consequently will translate to better service delivery and profitability.
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