

## Press Release

### EAGC, Chuka University and Tharaka Nithi County steer climate smart technologies for sustainable food systems in Kenya's Upper Eastern region.

[Chuka, Kenya - 14th March, 2024] - The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) in partnership with Chuka University, County Government of Tharaka Nithi and USAID - ERRA through Trade Mark Africa have today hosted the Upper Eastern Agribusiness Expo, at Chuka University grounds. Presided over by HE Hon Muisrael Nyaga, the Deputy Governor of Tharaka Nithi County, the expo championed sustainable food systems and enhancement of the agribusiness landscape not only in Tharaka Nithi County but also in the neighboring Upper Eastern region Counties of Kenya.

Informed by theme "**Climate Smart Technologies and Practices for Sustainable Food Systems**," the expo underscored the importance of adopting Good Agronomic Practices, Climate Smart Agriculture and Post Harvest Management to address food sector challenges posed by climate change. The expo convened 37 exhibiting companies involved in agro-inputs, agri-equipment and machinery, market and trade linkages, finance, insurance, processing, renewable energy among others. Over 2,125 farmers in attendance purchased products worth Ksh 350,570 from exhibiting companies while 13 companies established new client relationships for trade follow ups for machinery and equipment sales. The expo featured crop and livestock demonstration units, machinery displays, and Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings, providing farmers with invaluable opportunities for capacity building and training on new innovations. Grain trade contracts worth 5,258MT of assorted grains valued at Ksh 211.2M (\$1.579M) were signed for immediate trade.

In his keynote address, the Deputy Governor of Tharaka Nithi County "As an administration that is focused on promoting agricultural entrepreneurship (Kilimo Biashara) we welcome and support initiatives such as this EAGC platform that provide linkages between our farmers with experts, practitioners, and development partners". He affirmed the county government's commitment to increase production and productivity to enhance the quality of agribusiness produce so that farmers in the county can access premium markets.

Giving his welcome remarks, Mr. Gerald Masila the EAGC Executive Director, recapped the role of EAGC in facilitating efficient, structured, inclusive, sustainable, and profitable grain trade in the Eastern Africa region. Mr Masila, commended Tharaka Nithi County for the active partnership with EAGC in the past decade in enabling farmers in the County to access a market through Gsoko for pulses. Mr Masila called on neighboring counties in Upper Eastern Region to partner with EAGC in farmer cooperatives management, post-harvest handling, value addition and innovative marketing to enhance food security and improve communities' livelihoods.

Expressing his gratitude to EAGC for selecting the institution to host the expo, Prof. Henry Mutembei Ph.D., Vice-Chancellor of Chuka University, reiterated the university's commitment to its mission of providing access to knowledge and pioneering agricultural

research. Prof. Mutembei further highlighted the importance of integrating theory with practice, innovation, and entrepreneurship to boost agricultural development.

Reflecting on the successful organization and execution of the Agribusiness Expo, Mr. Kevin Kangai, Scales & Software Limited, extended his heartfelt gratitude to the EAGC noting that the event not only facilitated the establishment of valuable relationships but also laid a solid foundation for future business endeavors. As an exhibitor, Mr. Kevin eagerly awaits the next expo in May.

"Working closely with EAGC has been instrumental for Tharaka Cereals Cooperative," says Mr. Jacob Muriungi. "From farm to market, we've received extensive training, particularly on the warehouse receipt system, which allows us to secure finances. Through EAGC's Gsoko platform, we've benefited from contract farming, ensuring a ready market for farm produce, along with market information services. One of our significant achievements is our first export of green grams to India, made possible through EAGC's Gsoko trading hub."

Looking ahead to future engagements and opportunities in the agribusiness sector, we are pleased to announce our upcoming expos. These include the Lower Eastern Region at KALRO Katumani on May 9, 2024, the Coast Region at KALRO Matuga on August 8, the Central Rift Region at KARLO Njoro on September 26, and the North Rift Region at the Eldoret National Polytechnic on November 7.

**Ends**

### **ABOUT EASTERN AFRICA GRAIN COUNCIL (EAGC)**

The Eastern Africa Grain Council is a regional organization with membership drawn from across the Eastern and Southern Africa. Membership is drawn from grain value chain stakeholders currently with presence in 10 countries across Africa including Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, South Sudan, DRC Congo and Ethiopia. EAGC's key products and services include promotion of structured trading system (STS) through the warehouse receipting systems (WRS), and Regional Grain Trading platform (GSoko), Market Information Systems (MIS) offered through the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN- ([www.ratin.net](http://www.ratin.net))) and evidence-based Policy Advocacy and Training and Capacity Building through the Grain Business Institute (GBI).

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### **ABOUT CHUKA UNIVERSITY**

Chuka University is a public University located in Tharaka Nithi County with Main campus at Ndagani, Chuka, with a vision to provide quality education, training, and research for sustainable national and global development. Chuka university mission is to provide access, generate, preserve, and share knowledge for quality, effective and ethical leadership in higher education, training, research, and outreach through nurturing an intellectual culture that integrates theory with practice, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

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#### **ABOUT THARAKA NITHI COUNTY**

Tharaka Nithi County is one of the 47 counties in Kenya and is known for its agricultural endeavors. The primary economic activities in the county revolve around farming, with tea, coffee, sorghum, maize, green grams, and millet being cultivated. Dairy farming and fish farming also contribute to the local economy. The county administration regularly partners with institutions of repute in order to boost agricultural production and productivity, elevate the quality of agricultural products, and enables farmers to access premium markets.

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