

COMMUNIQUE

Communique on the post harvest control seminar for grains and other crops



February 5th, 2026

Golden Tulip Dar City Center Hotel, Dar Es Salaam





Introduction

The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC), in partnership with Kett Electric Laboratory and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), convened a seminar on Post-Harvest Control for grains and other crops on 5th February 2026 in Dar es Salaam. The seminar brought together key public and private sector stakeholders, including representatives from the Cereals and Produce Regulatory Authority (COPRA), Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), and AGRA. The forum provided a platform to share findings from recent surveys conducted by EAGC under the auspices of the partnership on moisture meter adoption, strengthening collaboration across the grain value chain, and promoting practical solutions to reduce post-harvest losses while enhancing grain quality and trade competitiveness.

The discussions underscored Tanzania’s strategic position as a net exporter of key cereals despite persistent post-harvest losses estimated at 20–30 percent. Participants emphasized the critical role of structured grain trade, standardized quality management, accurate moisture measurement, and effective pest control in safeguarding food safety, improving market access, and securing better price offers for producers and traders. The seminar reaffirmed a collective commitment by government institutions, development partners, and private sector actors to scale up adoption of modern post-harvest technologies, strengthen regulatory and calibration systems, and enhance regional grain trade across East Africa.

Key event highlights and remarks from speakers

Remarks by Mr. Gerald Masila, Executive Director, EAGC set the tone for the session where he:



RECOGNIZED the event co-hosting partnership among EAGC, Kett Electric Laboratory, and JICA.

RECALLED that the partnership between EAGC and Kett was initiated following EAGC’s participation in the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in Japan.

APPRECIATED Kett’s participation in the African Grain Trade Summit in Zanzibar, Tanzania, where the company showcased its grain moisture meter solutions to industry

stakeholders.

HIGHLIGHTED that Kett subsequently conducted a survey in Tanzania on the use and adoption of moisture meters, which informed the convening partnership with EAGC to disseminate findings and promote uptake of the technology.

INTRODUCED EAGC’s key initiatives, including the structured trading system through the Grain Business Hubs (G-hub) model and G-Soko trade platform, capacity building through the Grain Business Institute (GBI), market intelligence services through the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN), and various policy advocacy initiatives aimed at strengthening regional grain trade.





REITERATED on the grain sector performance and trends in Eastern Africa illustrating the export-import data for grains which brought out that:

- Kenya is a net importer for most grain commodities including maize, wheat, rice,
- Uganda is a net importer for wheat but an exporter for maize and sorghum while
- Tanzania is a net exporter for maize and rice but a net importer for wheat.

FURTHER DESCRIBED the trade opportunities among the East African Countries, a case in point was the public notice from the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) which announced availability of 500,000MT of maize for sale.

UPDATED how on the other hand, Kenya’s Agriculture Ministry raised an alarm of grain shortage in the country with probable hoarding of the maize by farmers.

RECOGNIZED the presence of key industry stakeholders, including COPRA, TBS, MOA and AGRA, and **invited** the EAGC Board Chairman to officially open the event.

Opening remarks from Mr Michael Kitulizo, Chairman of the EAGC Board of Directors

UNDERScoreD THAT despite Tanzania recording 20–30% post-harvest food losses, the country remained a net food supplier within the region.

HIGHLIGHTED the role of EAGC in promoting structured grain trade through interventions addressing grain quality and post-harvest losses, emphasizing the need to maintain high standards to compete effectively in cross-border markets.

EMPHASIZED THAT “*meaningful production is intrinsically linked to active grain trade,*” noting that without trade, production alone cannot drive sector growth.

ENCOURAGED stakeholders to join EAGC and actively participate in structured trade frameworks supported through the Council’s key intervention pillars.



Presentation by Ms. Ester B. Massao , Principal Agricultural Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture provided an overview of the grain sector in Tanzania:

In her remarks, Ms. Ester Massao:



PROVIDED an overview of the Tanzania grain sector, highlighting its structure, key actors, production trends and its contribution to national food security and trade.

POINTED out that Tanzania has 94.5 million hectares of land out of which 44 million hectares are classified as arable land for agriculture and about 24 percent is under crop production.

ADDED THAT in addition, 75% of the population engage in agriculture and the sector contributes 30% of the National Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

UNDERScoreD Tanzania’s food self-sufficiency by illustrating the trends in demand-supply for cereals over the past five years. **FURTHER ILLUSTRATED** that in the past five years, the agricultural sector experienced an increase in budget allocation from 1.8% to 2.2% that led to an exponential growth in overall agricultural production. This translated to a rise in production of cereals over the period as illustrated in figure 1.



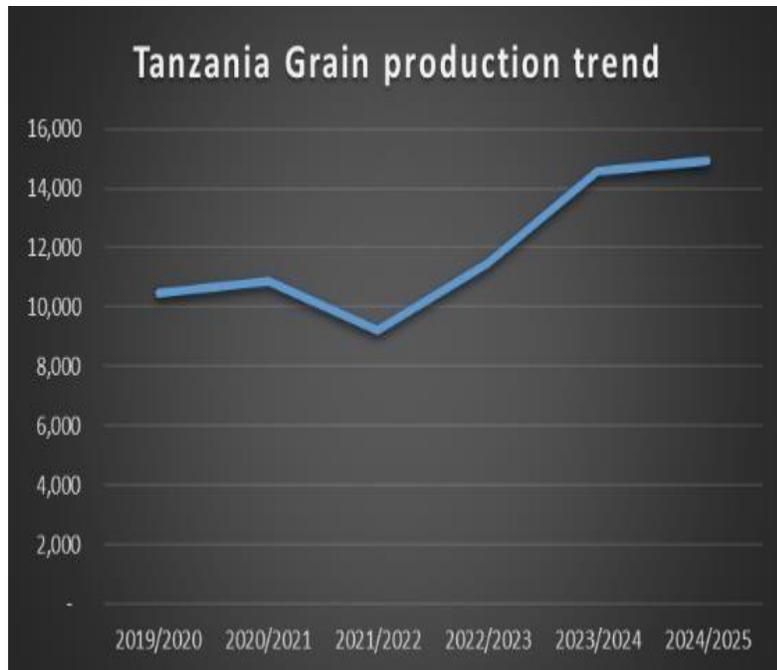


Figure 1: Cereal production trends in Tanzania

HIGHLIGHTED THAT unpredictable weather patterns and poor infrastructure (storage facilities and road network) have been contributing to post-harvest losses. **INFORMED** that implementation of the Tanzania Initiative for Preventing Aflatoxin Contamination (TANIPAC) project (2018-2025) created awareness and training on aflatoxin management to farmers, transporters, processors leading increased safety against aflatoxin contamination within safer limits (< 10 ppb) from 77% to 93% after the project interventions in maize.

to

Ms. Mary Majule, Head of the Eastern Zone at Cereals and Other Produce Regulatory Authority (COPRA) outlined the Authority's grain management initiative:



In her presentation, Ms. Mary Majule:

HIGHLIGHTED the Authority's mandate in the cereals and other produce subsector

EMPHASIZED COPRA's role in standard development and setting, enforcement of regulations, and coordination and promotion of activities along the value chain.

HIGHLIGHTED THAT COPRA has developed four regulations (awaiting approval) through stakeholder engagement and public participation which include;

- i. Quality control regulations: designed to control and verify the quality of agricultural produce.
- ii. Registration, licensing & permit regulations: aimed to oversee the registration, permits, and licenses for growers, dealers, and premises involved in cereals and other produce.
- iii. Contract farming regulations: set to manage and govern contract farming agreements.

UPDATED on other initiatives undertaken by COPRA including:

- Development and enforcement of sustainable agronomic standards for key strategic crops, dissemination of good agricultural practices and marketing guidelines for chick peas and sesame.
- Formalized marketing systems for sesame and pigeon peas by digitizing the marketing of these crops through WRS. This initiative enables the Ministry to have accurate trade data statistics for imports and exports as well as for production data in every region.





ANNOUNCED COPRA's upcoming plans for :

- Training agricultural extension officers on climate smart agriculture and good agricultural practices and production of quality seeds distributed through Quality Declared Seeds (QDS) centres.
- Conducting awareness campaigns on WRS and digital auction benefits and rice branding for paddy varieties.

In his presentation on challenges in post-harvest grain management, Mr. Festus Pole, a regional programs officer at EAGC :

HIGHLIGHTED the importance of grain quality in trade, noting that it enabled access to better markets, attracted improved price offers, and safeguarded food safety for consumers.

OUTLINED key grain quality parameters, including foreign matter, pest damage, discoloration, and other physical defects

REFERENCED the harmonized grain standards for maize and beans applied across East Africa.



IDENTIFIED major post-harvest grain management challenges such as uneven storage temperatures, overfilling of storage facilities, inadequate aeration, and failure to effectively control pests.

EMPHASIZED the high susceptibility of staple grains to pest infestation, remarking that what people value for consumption is equally attractive to storage pests.

ILLUSTRATED the formula for calculating weight loss resulting from moisture reduction

During storage as:

$$\text{Moisture Loss (Kg)} = \frac{(\text{Initial Moisture Content} - \text{Final Moisture Content}) \times \text{Amount of Grain (Kg)}}{(100 - \text{Final Moisture Content})}$$

Remarks by AGRA's Program Officer Mr Japhet Laizer on the organization's role in supporting post harvest control and loss reduction:



In his presentation, Mr. Japhet Laizer:

OUTLINED the AGRA's initiatives under the REGAIN program, which focuses on reducing food loss by addressing climate-related risks.

NOTED THAT the program targets two major crops widely produced by smallholder farmers across the country and actively traded within the value chain maize and rice.

EXPLAINED THAT the interventions include the large scale promotion and adoption of post-harvest technologies such as hermetic bags, on farm storage solutions (metal and plastic silos), tarpaulins, plastic sheets, moisture meters as well as mechanical multi-crop threshers and shellers.





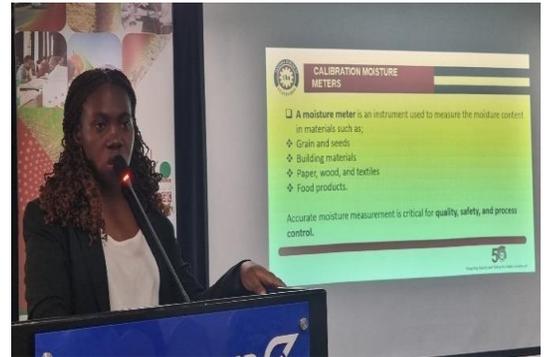
EMPHASIZED THAT these initiatives play a significant role in strengthening post-harvest management and minimizing grain losses.

Tanzania Bureau of Standards Senior Metrologist Ms. Jenitha Ishabaganzi presented on management of measuring instruments in proper transactions and the regulatory system in Tanzania:

In her presentation, Ms. Jenitha:

HIGHLIGHTED the institution's mandate to develop and sustain a robust framework for standardization, quality assurance, metrology, and testing in alignment with international standards and best practices.

NOTED the critical importance of calibrating moisture meters to ensure accurate results, traceability and cost-saving



EXPLAINED THAT moisture meters should be calibrated at intervals of at least six months to one year.

UPDATED participants on TBS interventions to enhance accessibility of these services, by initiating the establishment of calibration laboratories in Mbeya, Mwanza, and Dodoma regions, enabling stakeholders in the grain sector to conveniently access calibration services.

FURTHER OUTLINED THAT moisture meter calibration is conducted through comparison with the primary method based on weight change.

UNDERScored that measurement and quality control are collective responsibilities shared by all value chain actors, including farmers, traders, processors, and consumer

Address by Mr. Norihiro Noshida from Kett Electric Laboratory focused on practical approaches to moisture management:



In his remarks , Mr. Noshida:

OUTLINED the various types of moisture meters available and the range of grain commodities they are designed to test.

INFORMED THAT Kett moisture meters can test up to 162 different grain commodities.

EMPHASIZED THAT the effective operation of these devices requires trained technical personnel to ensure

accuracy and reliability.

PRESENTED the findings for the SDGs business needs confirmation survey for improvement of the quality of rice and grains and reduction of the post-harvest loss using high-precision grain moisture testers in Tanzania that was conducted from June 2025 to February 2026. Key findings included;

- a. Some government sectors use Grain Moisture Tester (GMT) in storage warehouses.
- b. Some AMCOS, cash crop and export business companies use GMT.





- c. GMT is not widespread yet, but many models which is from different manufactures exist.
- d. Growers and traders use traditional methods (chewing, contacting etc.) in controlling moisture of crops.
- e. Some buyers do not know where to calibrate and repair the GMT and revert to traditional methods.
- f. It is unclear where to purchase GMT.
- g. GMT may not be used correctly.
- h. There are standards for moisture value of crops, but the GMT has not standardized yet.

Remarks from Mr. Shailesh Chavda, Director Pest-guard:

Mr Shailesh:

- **PRESENTED** on the principles of grain moisture management and underscored the importance of proper moisture meter usage in maintaining grain quality during storage.
- **IDENTIFIED** common causes of post-harvest losses, including high moisture content, untidy stores and warehouses, old infested bags, poor stacking practices, and inadequate warehouse infrastructure.
- **ILLUSTRATED** the direct relationship between high moisture levels and increased post-harvest losses, noting that excess moisture accelerates insect multiplication, fungal growth, and aflatoxin contamination
- **HIGHLIGHTED** the widespread use of non-food-grade PVC and PE tarpaulins during grain drying, cautioning that these materials contribute to moisture build-up compared to cotton canvas tarpaulins.
- **EMPHASIZED** the critical role of effective pest control through proper fumigation practices, including the use of recommended chemicals, correct dosages, and trained personnel to prevent infestation, minimize residue contamination, and protect human health.
- **ADVOCATED** for the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches that combine good storage hygiene, moisture control, regular monitoring, and judicious chemical use, reaffirming that prevention remains the most sustainable strategy in pest control and grain management





Feedback & comments from plenary

Participants had an opportunity to ask questions and share practical experiences from the presentations and remarks made by guests speakers as follows:

Q1: What policy areas is the Ministry of Agriculture prioritizing to strengthen competitiveness in the grain sector in Tanzania?

A: *The Ministry indicated that it is prioritizing investments in strategic areas aimed at increasing productivity and overall production in the grain sector. These include strengthening agricultural research and dissemination of research findings, expanding extension services and digital advisory platforms such as M-Kilimo, implementation of fertilizer subsidy programs, improved seed production and certification systems, and upgrading irrigation infrastructure.*



Q2: What initiatives is COPRA undertaking to create awareness and strengthen the regulatory environment?

Response: *COPRA is finalizing four key regulations covering quality control, registration & licensing, contract farming, and avocado crop management. Regulations go through a series of stages, including stakeholder engagement and public participation and therefore COPRA is in the process of engaging in stakeholder and public participation.*

Q3: Why is TBS delaying processes for product certification?

Response : *TBS is tackling delays by:*

- *Launching a digital system for testing and calibration services to streamline processes.*
- *Working on system harmonization to ensure smooth and consistent certification procedures.*
- *Promoting technology adoption to facilitate efficient quality control and reduce turn around*





Q4: Why is calibration service hard to find in various regions

Response: By July 2025, two calibration labs were launched in the northern regions of Mbeya and Mwanza, with plans to establish additional labs in Mwanza and Dodoma by July 2026. These labs aim to improve access to reliable calibration services across the country.



Call to action

The seminar on post harvest control for grains and other crops concluded with the following call to action

- **IMPROVEMENT OF CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS**, to reduce delays in the assurance and issuance of product conformity and calibration certificates.
- **ESTABLISHMENT OF CALIBRATION LABORATORIES** in Mwanza and Dodoma regions by July 2026, to improve access to calibration services, reduce turnaround time, and lower compliance costs for stakeholders in the regions.
- **HARMONIZATION OF INTERLINKED GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS**, to operationalize a one-stop service framework for grain sector stakeholders and enhance ease of doing business.
- **ENHANCED STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS AND MOBILIZATION** for EAGC Grain Business Institute (GBI) trainings, to **STRENGTHEN TECHNICAL CAPACITY AND PROFESSIONALISM** across the grain value chain.
- **CONTINUOUS KNOWLEDGE SHARING** among grain value chain actors on best practices in post-harvest handling and grain quality management.
- The webinar called upon all grain sector stakeholders to **PRIORITIZE THE ACQUISITION AND PROPER USE OF GRAIN QUALITY MANAGEMENT TOOLS** especially moisture meters to ensure accurate testing, uphold quality-based trading, and significantly reduce post-harvest losses.

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