



# ROOT AND TUBER CROPS CONFERENCE & TRADE FAIR

## A FOCUS ON THE CASSAVA VALUE CHAIN

(KALRO HEADQUARTER GROUNDS, JUNE 21 - 25, 2021)

### CONCEPT NOTE



#### Introduction

Kenya has the largest, most diversified economy in East Africa with agriculture being the backbone of the economy and also central to the country's development strategy. More than 75% of Kenyans make some part of their living in agriculture, and the sector accounts for more than a quarter of Kenya's gross domestic product (USAID Agriculture & Food Security Fact Sheet 2020).

The Kenya Agricultural Sector Growth and Transformation Strategy (ASTGS) emphasizes the critical role of agricultural transformation in growing the economy by reducing the cost of food and alleviating poverty. This is anchored in three outcomes: increasing small-scale farmer incomes, increasing agricultural output and value-addition, and boosting household food resilience projected to be achieved in 10 years (ASTGS, 2019). This will contribute to delivering the government's commitment of 100% food and nutrition security, which is one of the pillars of The Big 4 Agenda of the government of Kenya. Good nutrition catalyzes food production and manufacturing as well as reducing the cost of healthcare (ASCU, 2011).

Cassava is a major factor in food security across sub-Saharan Africa. In Kenya, cassava is grown in over 90,000 ha with an annual production of about 540,000 tons. It is estimated that Africa produces about 42% of the total tropical world production of the crop (FAO, 1990). Cassava can grow in marginal lands, requires low inputs, and is tolerant to pests and drought (Githunguri et al., 1998; Nweke et al., 2002). Despite its great potential as a food security and income generation crop among rural poor in marginal lands, its utilization remains low in Kenya.

The National Root & Tuber Crops Development Strategy (GoK, 2019) intends to provide a roadmap for the development of the root and tuber crops subsector in Kenya. The 4-year strategy provides a stimulus for private sector investment in the roots and tuber crops subsector. It aims at transforming the subsector into a commercial and vibrant industry that contributes to the country's food and feed security needs, the development of agro-industries, employment creation and improved livelihoods. The strategy hopes to generate the following outputs:

1. Self-regulating institution with diverse linkages to provide agri-business information and financial services.
2. Increased and sustainable production and supply of quality roots and tuber crops and their products.
3. Market access for roots and tuber crops and their products increased.

Root and tuber crop value chains developed are sensitive to gender, youth and Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWD) and cognizant of environmental sustainability.

Self Help Africa, the Roots and Tuber Crops Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives, and KALRO in collaboration with other stakeholders plan to hold annual conferences on Roots and Tuber Crops value chains. This year's conference will focus on the cassava value chain. The Conference will create an opportunity to promote cassava as a critical value chain in increasing income, food and nutrition security among smallholder farmers and Kenyans in general.

## Rationale of the 2021 Roots and Tuber Crops Conference & Trade Fair: A focus on cassava value chain

The Government of Kenya is committed to 100% food and nutrition security by 2022 in the first pillar of its big four agenda which seeks to achieve the following critical food related outcomes; accessibility, nutrition, affordability and smallholder value addition. It is against this background that the conference will create a platform for relevant stakeholders to share experiences and scalable innovations and approaches to promote the cassava value chain.

Cassava, having been an ignored, food security crop for a long time; without well-developed value chain structures; and traditionally considered a low-value crop, has recently attracted the attention of many development agencies and government, whose collaboration with research institutions has not only exposed the health value in cassava, but also the crops' suitability to moderately harsh climatic conditions and its flexibility to climate variability making it a reliable crop in the face of climate change. This role as a key food security crop, combined with its industrial potential for the manufacture of flour, starch and ethanol amongst others, makes it a key crop in the diversification of the agricultural base of the country. To realize this potential, there is a need to commercialize the value chain by increasing and strengthening private sector participation by enhancing national awareness among the different actors and general public.



## Objective of the 2021 Roots and Tuber Crops Conference & Trade Fair: A focus on cassava value chain

The general goal of the conference and trade fair is to increase knowledge and uphold innovative positive values and attitudes, about the economic, social, environmental and food & feed benefits of cassava and provide a platform for various cassava value chain stakeholders to share their experiences with one another for scale-up.



### Specific Objectives

1. Increase awareness, knowledge, and understanding on the different products and value of cassava, business opportunities in the value chain and different forms of cassava utilization;
2. Mobilize key actors to share and gain new intellectual, practical, and professional skills and interventions that have proved successful in strengthening the cassava value chain elsewhere;
3. Share innovations and new technologies within and outside Kenya that inspire all actors for increased engagement along the value chain.

**Theme: Innovative Promotion of Cassava Value Chain Initiatives for Wealth, Food and Security in Kenya**

## Approach Methodology

The 5 -day conference targets 150 participants per day for the conference and between 1500 – 3000 persons at the exhibitions for the five days. This number of people will depend on the effectiveness of publicity. The team to make use of mass and social media.

The expected participants will comprise of farmers (producers & seed entrepreneurs), micro-small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), artisanal processors, research organizations, universities, equipment fabricators, development organizations and other cassava value chain actors.

## Conference Thematic Areas

### Theme 1: Processing, Product Development & Market Access

- Agro processing and value addition
- Flour blending
- Markets

### Theme 2: Best practice Dissemination, Learning and scaling up

- Scalable case studies
- Evidence based research findings on cassava

### Theme 3: Innovation & Technologies

- Youth and ICT
- Seed systems
- Mechanization (planting, uprooting, processing)

## Expected Outcomes

- Sustainable development of demand driven cassava products
- Improved knowledge sharing strategies and scale up of cassava interventions
- Establishment of national and county cassava engagement platforms

## Contacts

For more information, please visit:

[www.rootsandtubers.kilimo.go.ke](http://www.rootsandtubers.kilimo.go.ke)

<https://kilimo.go.ke/conference/>

E-mail: [rootsandtubers@kilimo.go.ke](mailto:rootsandtubers@kilimo.go.ke)



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