



## KEPHIS Wins Again at the Eldoret Show

*By Jane Boit  
Eldoret Office*

Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County – KEPHIS won two trophies at this year's Eldoret National Show. These were in The Best Regulatory Authority Stand and The Best Stand in Strategies of International Trade and Exports. The winning trophies were presented by Mr. Willy Bett, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to KEPHIS MD Dr. Esther Kimani. KEPHIS is a regulatory agency in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries that assures the quality of agricultural inputs and produce; the Corporation regulates the seed sector in the country to ensure that farmers get the best quality seed to maximize their harvests. The Corporation also leverages various technologies to fulfill



CS Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr. Willy Bett (right) presents the trophy for The Best Regulatory Authority Stand to KEPHIS MD Dr. Esther Kimani (3rd right) during the Eldoret National Show. Looking on is Uasin Gishu Governor H.E. Jackson Mandago (2nd right) and KEPHIS Kitale Regional Manager Mr. Charles Onyango (left)



The winning team with the trophies after the show

her mandate including the use of the highly acclaimed Electronic Certification System used to facilitate the export of flowers.

Eldoret is a strategic cosmopolitan town that has seen increased agricultural activity over the years. It also has an airport, the Eldoret International Airport, used by farmers and traders to transport their produce all over the country. The show therefore allows farmers to showcase their produce to stakeholders, farmers and the public. KEPHIS has an office in Eldoret that is managed by the Kitale regional office.

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# KEPHIS TRAINS SEED GROWERS IN IRRIGATED PRODUCTION SCHEMES

By Ephraim Wachira  
Nakuru Regional Office



Seed growers from 12 seed production irrigation schemes around Lobo in Baringo County

**Lobo, Baringo County** - Lobo is a centre at the entrance of Lake Bogoria in Baringo County. There are 12 irrigation schemes here which grow seed crops for various seed companies. These irrigation schemes - namely Sandai, Eldume, Kapkuikui, Lobo, Kapnai, Mbechot, Lesencho, Kapsandala, Kamoskoi, Murda, Kamaech, Kesubo and Kamongong grow maize, rice, beans and green grams seed crops. KEPHIS certifies all the seed crops according to the seed certification standards laid out in the Seeds and Plants Varieties Act. KEPHIS trained the seed growers on best practices and on the requirements of the Seeds and Plants Varieties Act to assist them increase their yields and reduce rejections due to non-conformity to the standards.

Two hundred and ten growers participated in the training. These were representing the irrigation schemes with each of the schemes represented by at least 10 farmers. Other participants were from the Baringo County Department of Agriculture, Boresha Sacco and seed companies that grow seed in these schemes. Seed companies were Olerai Seed Company, Kerio Valley Development Authority (KVDA), Freshco International, Kenya Seed Company, East African Seed Company, Pannar Seeds Company and Ultravetis East Africa.

Experts drawn from the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Irrigation Board (NIB) advised the farmers to conduct soil tests on their irrigation schemes to find its status so that they can be advised on the best fertilizers to use and the recommended rate. The NIB experts trained the farmers on the best irrigation practice to make maximum use of the available water. The seed companies trained the growers on contracting and on the best practices in seed crops production. KEPHIS Inspectors enlightened the farmers on the requirements of the Seeds and Plants Varieties Act and the standards they should maintain



Acting KEPHIS Nakuru Regional Manager Mr. Kepha Oganda addressing the seed growers during the training





*A seed grower joining the training*

continuously to ensure that their seed crops are approved. They were also trained on the market standards for fresh produce intended for export. Boresha Sacco trained the farmers on accessing financing for seed production while Acre Africa sensitized the farmers on the need to insure their crops.

KVDA informed the seed growers that the company has registered a pasture grass variety that is resistant to drought and hence is suitable for Baringo county as well as other Arid and Semi-arid (ASAL) counties.

## Feedback from the participants

Farmers were pleased that KEPHIS took time to train them instead of rejecting their seed crops. They requested that the training be an annual event. The seed growers were also concerned about the Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease which has led to several rejections of their seed crops. They were advised to plant maize in the main season and observe a closed off season. KN



*Irrigation scheme leaders being introduced to the seed growers*

# KEPHIS Signs MOU with the China Academy of Agricultural Sciences



MD KEPHIS Dr. Esther Kimani and the Institute of Plant Protection, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (IPP-CAAS) sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at CABI Offices in Nairobi for joint research, technology sharing and capacity building. Others who signed the MOU were CABI, KALRO and Egerton University. KN

# Seed Post Certification Quality Monitoring

By Ephraim Wachira  
Nakuru Regional Office

The Seeds and Plant Varieties Act requires that a seed inspector or analyst conducts regular monitoring of all seed stored for sale by licensed sellers. Seed post certification monitoring is an exercise, conducted by KEPHIS inspectors at least once a year in the whole country. It assures that the quality of seed being offered for sale to farmers meets the minimum prescribed standards and reaches the farmers in good quality. This ensures food security in the country and good economic returns for farmers.

The activities conducted during the post certification monitoring exercise are:

- ✓ Monitoring the quality of seed offered for sale to farmers, ensuring that only certified, valid, intact and genuine seeds are sold to farmers.
- ✓ Monitoring seed storage conditions to avoid deterioration of seed in stores.
- ✓ Inspection of seed sellers premises and registration of new seed sellers (seed agents, sub-agents and stockists).
- ✓ Confirmation that ALL seed sellers have valid seed sellers licenses.
- ✓ Monitoring seed handling practices and the condition of the seeds offered for sale.
- ✓ Advising and updating seed sellers on new developments in the seed sector.
- ✓ Obtaining feedback from seed sellers and farmers.
- ✓ Sampling seed of doubtful quality for further tests.

## Seed quality

In each seed seller's premises, the inspectors check the quality of the various seeds offered for sale. During this inspection, the inspectors want to confirm that:

- No uncertified seed, such as cereal oats or farm saved seed, is offered for sale in a licensed seed store. No licensed seed seller is allowed to sell grain cereals.

- All seed offered for sale has KEPHIS generated lot numbers.
- All seed offered for sale is valid i.e. has not exceeded 9 months from the date of sampling/packing in the case of vegetables, herbage grass, legumes, root crops and stimulant crops seeds, and 1 year in case of cereals, oil crops and fibre crops.
- Seed packets have not been tempered with either by opening or tearing.
- All seed offered for sale is labeled. Seed packets larger than 5 kilogrammes are labeled using a paper label that is sewn at the top of the bag, while seed packets less than 5 kilogrammes use sticker Labels which have scratch pads. When scratched, a code is revealed which when sent to SMS no. 1393 returns a message with the details of the seed lot such as the variety, weight, seed lot number and date of packing.



A seed packet with a KEPHIS sticker label



## Seed handling practices

During the monitoring exercise, inspectors visit seed selling premises and observe seed handling practices that may affect seed quality. Inspectors also advise the seed sellers on best seed handling practices. A seed seller may be de-registered for persistently not handling seed correctly.

Best seed handling practices include:

- ✓ Acknowledging that seed is alive and avoiding any practice that may break or otherwise destroy it. This includes throwing seed packets or placing them under heavy objects.
- ✓ Storing seed away from livestock salts and fertilizers which may be dehydrating to the seed.
- ✓ Storing seed in a cool but dry environment. Seed should be stored on shelves and pallets, away from the walls and the floor and away from heat sources or hot roofs.
- ✓ Seed should not be exposed to weather elements such as rain or direct sunshine. Seed sellers are advised to use dummies for display outside their shops.
- ✓ Seed should be transported in covered vehicles.
- ✓ Controlling rodents and weevils in the seed selling premise.



Well arranged seeds at a seed store

## Registration of new seed sellers

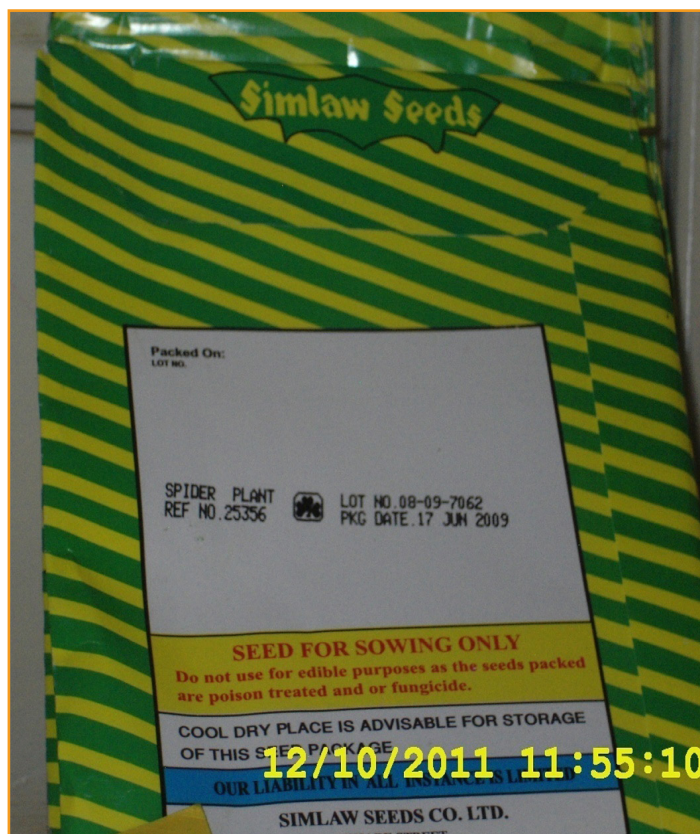
Traders interested in selling seed apply for the seed sellers license from KEPHIS using the prescribed application form. The required details include contact details of the applicant, the name of the business, the location of the business and the seed company that will supply the trader with seed. The application form is submitted to KEPHIS along with a recommendation letter from the local agricultural officer and a stockist appointment letter from a preferred seed company. The application should also be accompanied by payment of the seed sellers licensing fees. Fees are charged as per the

*category of the seed seller as shown:*

Seed seller category	Application fee	Annual renewal fee
Seed merchant/company	75,000	10,000
Seed agent	30,000	8,000
Sub agent	10,000	5,000
Seed stockist	1,500	1,000

Once the application is received, KEPHIS conducts inspection of the premises to confirm that it has good storage facilities and that the seed seller is knowledgeable in agricultural matters. If the premises do not meet the requirements, the seed seller is advised on improvements; if conditions are met, the inspector approves the application form and the seller issued with a license. The license is valid for one year and must be renewed at the beginning of every year.

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A seed packet showing the variety name, lot number and the packing date





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### ACCOMMODATION ROOMS



### FINE DINING



## Contacts:

KEPHIS Conference Centre  
Tel: 020 661 8000 / 0709 891 000  
[director@kephis.org](mailto:director@kephis.org)  
[kephisconferences@kephis.org](mailto:kephisconferences@kephis.org)  
[www.kephis.org](http://www.kephis.org)



# KEPHIS Producing Sweet Potato Vines for Health and Food Security

By Florence Munguti  
Plant Quarantine and Biosecurity Station,  
Muguga

Plant Quarantine and Biosecurity Station, Muguga - The Plant Quarantine and Biosecurity Station (PQBS) in Muguga plays an important role in plant protection by facilitating the safe transfer of plant genetic materials. This prevents the introduction of plant pests, diseases and noxious weeds. The station is also the centre of excellence in germplasm exchange and distribution.

In collaboration with the International Potato Centre, under the second phase of the Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa (SASHA), the station is producing disease-free sweet potato planting material (cuttings). These vines are produced through tissue culture techniques and virus indexing. The tissue culture plantlets are then multiplied in the screen houses to produce cuttings for sale.

Currently, two sweetpotato orange fleshed varieties-vitaa and kabode-are in production. These varieties are early maturing, rich in  $\beta$ -carotene content and high yielding. The vines are sold as cuttings of about three to four nodes (approximately 20 to 30 centimeters long). The price of a sweet potato cutting is currently Kshs. 35 per cutting. However, the price varies depending on the time that orders are placed. <sup>KN</sup>



*Disclaimer: for sustainable production of sweet potato planting material, the proceeds from these sales are channeled back to meet recurrent production.*

**For sales, please contact:**  
**The Officer in Charge**  
**Plant Quarantine and Biosecurity Station, Muguga**  
**Tel: 0722 845 895/0722 445 084/0722 209 504**  
**Email: [pqs@kephis.org](mailto:pqs@kephis.org)**

# Common seed offences and their charges

The Seeds and Plant Varieties Act provides legal guidelines for the trade of seed and outlines some practices which are considered criminal offences. These include:

1. Offering uncertified seed or seed not meeting prescribed minimum standards for sale
2. Giving false information to a seed inspector, seed analyst or plant examiner with intent to defraud
3. Making a false statement or false advertisement or displaying false certificates
4. Offering seed for sale without a valid seed sellers license
5. Importing, processing or packaging seed for sale while not registered as a seed merchant
6. Offering for sale seeds of plants whose validity test result certificate has expired.
7. Obstruction of KEPHIS inspectors or failure to comply with a lawful order given by a seed inspector in execution of his powers or duties under the Seeds and Plant Varieties Act
8. Offering for sale seeds not labeled with a certification label
9. Removing a label or opening seed packets before sale
10. Failure to issue an official receipt
11. Selling seed before it has been tested and issued with a unique seed lot number.

Any person found contravening any of these rules may be arrested by government officers and charged in a court of law. The maximum fine prescribed by the Act is KES 2,000,000 and the maximum jail term of two years or both.

Where a seed inspector finds a seed seller or a seed lot that is contravening the Act, the inspector issues a stop sale order or seizes the affected seed lots until the conditions are improved or a court order is issued on the affected seed lots.

Seed sellers who have been convicted of the above offences may be struck off the seed sellers list by KEPHIS.

Inspectors are allowed, under the law, to enter and inspect any premises where seed is stored for sale, take seed samples free of charge for those lots under suspicion. Such samples will be used to carry out further tests.

An inspector who reasonably believes that the provisions of the Seeds and Plant Varieties Act or the seed regulations have been breached may seize and detain any seeds and seed processing facilities in respect of which the breach has been committed.

Seeds seized may be disposed in a manner that KEPHIS may direct under the supervision of its inspector at the expense of the owner who has consented to its disposal in writing. <sup>KN</sup>



*Seed stored in a warehouse*



*A well arranged seed shop*



# KEPHIS Launches Fruits Farming in Kericho County

By Asenath Koech

KEPHIS Headquarters, Nairobi

**Nyalilbuch, Soin/Sigowett Constituency, Kericho County** - Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Mr. Willy Bett has urged young people to embrace horticulture through the uptake of technologies to enhance their standards of living.

Speaking during the official launch of fruits production in Nyalilbuch in Soin/Sigowet constituency, Kericho County, Mr. Bett said the horticulture sub-sector earns the country approximately Sh100 billion in foreign exchange every year.

“Agri-business means that agriculture has the capacity to be a fulfilling, full time income earner. However, this can only be achieved by the uptake of new technologies and modern methods of farming,” said Bett.

The CS added that though Kericho County is well known for tea cultivation, a plan for alternative agricultural and other sectoral interventions to boost the region’s economically was welcome.

KEPHIS MD Dr. Esther Kimani said they were ready to support small scale farmers in the county access the export market thus improve their income and standards of living.



She added that they will continue to enhance the protection of Kenya’s resources by undertaking testing soils for fertility evaluation, testing water for irrigation suitability, analyses of fertilizers, manures and agro-chemicals for quality assurance to facilitate optimal productivity.

The event, attended by over 500 farmers was graced by the Governor of Kericho County H.E. Prof. Paul Chepkwony and former Minister for Roads Hon. Franklin Bett.

CS Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr. Willy Bett (left) presenting seedlings to farmers during the official launch of fruits farming in Nyalilbuch, Soin/Sigowet Constituency, Kericho County

“Agriculture is the mainstay of Kenya’s economy and currently represents 25.4 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product. Horticulture is growing at an annual rate of 15-20 per cent and provides 8 per cent of GDP,” said Bett.

The CS added that country’s focus is shifting from subsistence agriculture to practicing agriculture as a business.



The CS also gave out avocado and mango seedlings to farmer and women groups as incentives for them to practice horticulture. KN



## IMPORTANT NOTICE ON CHANGE OF KEPHIS CONTACT

### DETAILS

In order to enhance communication with our stakeholders, customers and the public, we are happy to inform you of our new phone numbers which will make it easier for you to reach and engage with us.

The new numbers are as follows:

Telephone: 020 661 8000

Cell phone: 0709 891 000

Our other contacts remain the same:

[director@kephis.org](mailto:director@kephis.org)

[kephisinfo@kephis.org](mailto:kephisinfo@kephis.org)

[www.kephis.org](http://www.kephis.org)

[Facebook.com/kephis](https://www.facebook.com/kephis)

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#### KEPHIS countrywide offices

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# Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)

**PLEASE  
DECLARE  
ALL PLANT  
MATERIALS**



## **Protect Kenya's Agriculture**

Plants, plant products and agricultural items such as soil, fertilizers, bio pesticides and used agricultural machinery from international origins can harbour plant pests and diseases, causing adverse impact to our agricultural resources and the environment.

**Please declare all such products and equipment to a KEPHIS plant inspector upon arrival at all border points.**

