

## KEPHIS Laboratory Re-accredited to Meet International Plant Export Requirements

By **Peter Kamuti**  
Analytical Chemistry Laboratory

**N**airobi - Kenya's global horticultural markets can rest assured of fruits and vegetables that meet international requirements after the government laboratory that tests for the presence of chemical pesticide residues was re-accredited.

The KEPHIS Analytical Chemistry Laboratory was given a clean bill of health to test for produce to major markets such as the European Union (EU), where Kenya exports most of her flowers, fruits and vegetables. The re-accreditation means that

the laboratory's competency can be assured; therefore the pesticide residue monitoring program which is key to export to the EU meets the requirements of obtaining reliable and valid data. The EU has set standards for importing produce which Kenya has to adhere to. The re-accreditation was done by the South African National Accreditation Service (SANAS).

SANAS is the national body responsible for carrying out accreditations in respect of conformity assessments, as mandated through the Accreditation for Conformity Assessment, **Cont. Page 2**

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*Peas being graded before export*

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Calibration and Good Laboratory Practice Act. These include accreditation of:

- (a) Calibration, testing and verification laboratories
- (b) Certification bodies
- (c) Inspection bodies
- (d) Rating agencies, among others

Kenya's produce such as beans and peas that are exported with pods have been under increased scrutiny recently due to exceedances of pesticides.

Re-accreditation also means that Kenya will be able to assure quality of produce before it is exported. KEPHIS in collaboration with the horticultural industry is implementing a national program which aims at ensuring early detection of pesticide residue and addressing the challenges before they are detected in the market. Accreditation of the laboratory also means the laboratory is able to carry out the analyses locally thus adhering to importing country requirements.

The re-accreditation means that Kenya's multi-billion horticultural industry which is supported by the KEPHIS laboratory can be confident that the level of compliance to market access requirements is continuously being monitored and therefore can continue to have access to the European trading bloc.

Kenya exports baby corn, snow peas, French Beans, passion fruits, sugar snaps, snow peas, among others to the EU. In 2014, Kenya earned approximately KES 90 billion in foreign exchange from the produce. KN



*Top and above: Analytical Chemists at the KEPHIS Analytical Chemistry Laboratory conducting various analyses of horticultural produce. The laboratory was recently re-accredited by the South African National Accreditation Service (SANAS)*



# Kenya to Host International Plant Health Conference in September 2016

By **Catherine Muraguri**  
PR and Communications department

**N**airobi - Kenya will for the first time host an International Plant Health Conference in September 2016, where delegates from all across the world will gather to

discuss matters pertinent and emerging in plant health. The event is slated from the 12th-16th September at KEPHIS headquarters in Nairobi and is expected to bring together about 100 delegates.

KEPHIS is the National Plant Protection Organization of Kenya.

Several challenges will be addressed including trading

in agricultural commodities in changing market requirements, exceedances of Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs), invasive species and pest outbreaks. Diseases such as the Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease have threatened to wipe out harvests of staple foods such as maize. There have also been challenges in communicating plant health issues to stakeholders. The conference under the theme *Phytosanitary Regulation for Improved Food Security and Trade Facilitation* will discuss

how to address these issues and chart the way forward. Participants will share their successes and challenges.

Delegates will be drawn from national plant protection organizations (NPPOS) and policy makers and horticultural industry experts. Specifically, the participants will be drawn from government (food safety, agricultural policy, horticulture, and extension), farmer and exporter organizations, the International Plant Protection Organization (IPPC), IAPSC, EPPO, NAPPO, regional economic blocs such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Corporation (SADC) and the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS); the Food and Agriculture Organization, donor agencies, and others.

The event is sponsored by the Government of Kenya, KEPHIS and the Centre of Phytosanitary Excellence (COPE), among others.

COPE whose secretariat is at KEPHIS has

endeavored to meet the aspirations of the region for training on phytosanitary issues, produce quality standards and Pest Risk Analyses and pest listing for a number of crops such as beans and maize. The Centre has built capacity to over 500 plant health experts from various African countries such as Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda,

Burundi, South Africa, Botswana and Nigeria. However, these efforts have always brought new challenges and expectations by participants. To address some of the phytosanitary achievements and challenges, COPE in collaboration with the partners has planned to hold the conference that will bring plant matters to the fore. **KN**

“The International Phytosanitary Conference will be held from 12th-16th September 2016 at KEPHIS Headquarters Nairobi, Kenya”



# Creation of Mango Pest Free Areas in Elgeyo Marakwet County To Facilitate Mango Exports to the European Union Market



By **Jane Boit** and **Gentrix Juma**  
Kitale Regional Office

As a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the East African Community, Kenya has committed herself to pursue policies and strategies that enhance trade and investment within the regional blocks. One of the activities under the European Union's Standards and Market Access Programme (SMAP) and COMESA's Regional Integration Implementation Project (RIIP), is the creation of a Pest Free Area (PFA); and with this, KEPHIS has piloted the creation of a PFA for fruit flies (*Bactrocera invadens*) in Elgeyo Marakwet County, **Cont. Page 5**



## ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY



POPULATION DENSITY PER KM<sup>2</sup>

118	127
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Urban centres with populations of more than 2000 people

**From Page 4**

specifically in Keiyo South sub-county.

KEPHIS and Elgeyo Marakwet County are teaching and building capacity in mango farmers so their fruits can access the EU market. The presence of fruit flies in mangoes when exported are intercepted at points of entry resulting in rejections.

As a result, KEPHIS has developed a mango certification protocol to ensure that the fruits meet the EU regulations. The protocol outlines the responsibilities of KEPHIS and those of the mango exporters. In mango producing areas, with 518 hectares of mangoes and an annual production of 24,285 tonnes valued at approximately KES 383,449.

Participants were informed that KEPHIS had concentrated on fruit flies pest free areas because fruit flies account for about 63% of the total interceptions in the EU and mangoes have been restricted from accessing the EU market. Fruit flies are of high economic importance as they cause damage to the fruits and restrict access to international markets.

Further, the Elgeyo Marakwet County Government in collaboration with other partners

is promoting mango production to increase the acreage and tonnage produced.

Mr. Joseph Kosgei, the Sub-County Agricultural Officer (SCAO) is advising farmers that it is their responsibility to ensure good sanitation of their orchards.

“The trainings are important because the trained farmers will train other farmers, hence they will be trainers of trainers (TOTs),” he stated.

“In order to do business, one needs to know the rules and regulations, market requirements and food safety,” said Mr. Shadrack Yatich, the CEC for Agriculture in the county during one of the trainings.

He added, “Buy traps from agents recommended by KEPHIS. It is the responsibility of the farmers to ensure that the mangoes are clean in order to get good size, shape and good quality fruit, Please make use of KEPHIS offices at the Eldoret International Airport to export your mangoes to the EU market and ensure that the fruit is not infested by the fruit fly,” he stated. He also encouraged young farmers to plant mangoes. Finally, he praised the good cooperation between KEPHIS and the county government. **KN**



*Dominic Kiambi (left) from KEPHIS Plant Inspection Unit makes a presentation to farmers in Elgeyo Marakwet County on how to manage the mango fruit fly*

# Focus on the Creation of Fruit Fly Pest Free Areas in Elgeyo Marakwet, Tharaka Nithi and Makueni Counties

*Elgeyo Marakwet Governor H.E. Eng. Alex Tolgos when he officially launched the fruit fly traps in the county. KEPHIS is working with counties which grow the fruit to create pest free areas to facilitate exports*



## Questions And Answers (Q&A) On The Creation Of Pest Free Areas

**Question:** What is a Pest Free Area?

**Answer:** A Pest Free Area (PFA) is an area in which a specific pest does not occur as demonstrated by scientific evidence, and in which, where appropriate, this condition is being officially maintained. A pest free area can be the entire country, an un-infested part of a country which a limited area is infested or an un-infested part of a country situated within a generally infested area.

**Question:** What are the main components of creating a pest free area?

**Answer:** The main components of establishing and maintaining a pest free area include the following:

- a) Systems to establish freedom (IPM components)
- b) Phytosanitary measures to maintain freedom (regulatory controls)
- c) Checks to verify freedom has been maintained (monitoring and evaluation)

**Question:** What are the management strategies?

**Answer:** Fruit flies management strategies include:

- a) **Orchard sanitation** - Removal and destruction of fallen fruits because they may harbor larvae that could form a next generation of fruit flies. This is done by:

**Cont. Page 7**



**From Page 6**

- Burning, or
- Deep burrowing (at least 0.5 metres below the surface) or
- Putting the fruits in dark-coloured plastic bags and placing them in the sun (so that the inside temperature rises and kills the larvae)
- Raking or disturbing the soil below the fruit trees will expose the puparia, leading to desiccation or predation by other organisms

With good orchard sanitation fruit flies can be managed by 70%.

b) **Male Suppression**- This is where males are attracted to traps that are laced with pheromones (female hormones) and the insecticide inside the trap kills them. They are effective in reducing the population of the fruit flies because of less mating with females. Very effective if the recommended number of traps are placed in the orchard.

c) **Field monitoring**- this is carried out by placing traps in the orchard. The recommended number of traps is 4-5traps/km .

d) **Chemical control**- if the mango fruit flies are more than two per trap recommended chemicals can be used to kill the fruit flies.

e) **Mechanical fruit protection**- This is where the fruits are sleeved when they are egg sized and ensure that all the bags do not have holes.

f) **Public awareness**- all the communities should be aware of the FF-PFA activities in the area. For example, KEPHIS is engaging farmers through print and electronic media, *barazas*, training and other stakeholder forums.

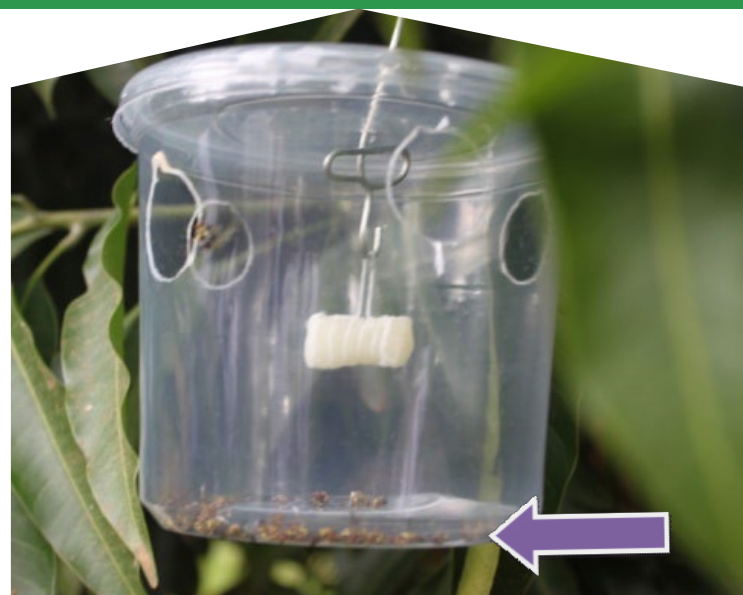
g) **Documentation and record-keeping** -records of surveys, detections, occurrences or outbreaks and results of other operational procedures should be retained for at least 24 months. Such records should be made available to the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of the importing country on request. **KN**



*Orchard Sanitation*



*Use of Traps*



*Dead male fruit flies*



## KENYA PLANT HEALTH INSPECTORATE SERVICE (KEPHIS)

### MESSAGE FROM THE Ag. MANAGING DIRECTOR, KEPHIS, DR. ESTHER KIMANI TO KENYAN FARMERS DURING THE EARLY PLANTING SEASON 2016

This year's early planting season that will run from March - May 2015 requires that farmers prepare their farming inputs well. KEPHIS is the National Plant Protection Organization whose responsibility is to assure the quality of agricultural inputs and produce, certifying seeds of all crop varieties to ensure that only seed of highest quality is sold and planted by farmers. The result is increased and enhanced harvests leading to food availability in the country.

#### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ABOUT CERTIFIED SEED

##### 1. **What is certified seed and its benefits to Kenyan farmers?**

Certified seed is that which has met the minimum national set quality standards after undergoing field inspection(s), laboratory tests and post certification tests by KEPHIS. The use of certified seed guarantees the following:

- High yields, quality crop produce and better returns when all other factors of crop production and agricultural practices are optimal (i.e. good soil fertility, conducive climatic conditions, adequate soil and irrigation and proper water/fertilizer usage). Farmers are advised to confirm the quality of agricultural inputs (fertilizers, manure, pesticides, water, irrigation water and soil) used through laboratory tests conducted by reputable laboratories such as the KEPHIS Analytical Testing Laboratory (ACL) at KEPHIS headquarters in Karen and Kitale.

##### 2. **How can a farmer identify certified seeds?**

Certified seeds are packed in containers or packets which are clearly labeled and contain the following information:

- **Seed lot numbers** to allow for easy traceability of seed lot in the event of crop failure



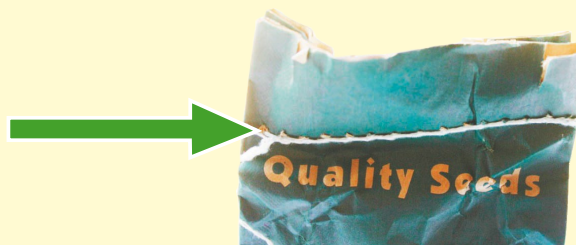
- **Weight** of the seeds, e.g. 2kg, 10kg



- Name of the crop species, for example seed beans



- Labeling and sealing of the containers or packets is done in such a way that seeds cannot be removed without damaging the seal or label



- Packaging date

##### 3. Farmers can avoid fake seeds by:

- Purchasing seed(s) from seed merchants and seed sellers who are licensed by KEPHIS and prominently display their seed seller's license.
- Buying seeds packed in official company packets containing Variety Name and Lot Number; **DO NOT PURCHASE SEEDS FROM OPEN CONTAINERS.**
- After planting, keep the packet and receipt as these may be required as evidence in case you suspect fake seed.
- Not exposing seed(s) to extreme weather conditions, for example heat, moisture, light, otherwise the quality of the seed will be compromised.

**NOTE:** Report all cases of suspect seed(s) to the nearest police station, nearest KEPHIS offices or the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, State Department of Agriculture.

##### 4. Plant recommended seed varieties for your area

Farmers are advised to purchase and plant recommended seed varieties for their particular areas.

SMS 20441 to get the recommended maize seed varieties to plant in your area. For example, SMS maize#division to 20441, for example, maize#Maragua to 20441 and you will get the appropriate response.

This service is available for maize, beans, wheat, cowpeas, sorghum and potatoes\*

For more information, please contact:

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\*service available at Ksh.10 per sms





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### NOTICE TO EXPORTERS OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Kenya has in the recent past faced increased scrutiny of her horticultural produce to the European Union (EU) market, specifically on beans with pods, peas with pods, roses, karella (bitter guard) and chillies. Currently, the produce is subject to checks of exceedances of pesticides residues and presence of harmful organisms (pests) before entry into the EU.

While the country has made great strides in ensuring that its produce meets requirements of the trading partners, exporters are advised to adhere to the following when exporting produce to ensure compliance and entry into the EU market:

#### 1. Exceedances of Pesticide Residues on Export Produce

- The use of **dimethoate, omethoate** and **Chlorpyrifos** on fruits and vegetables is not allowed
- For other pesticides, observe **Pre-Harvest Intervals(PHI)**; when observing PHI, do not include the first day of spraying
- Read the label( Soma Lebo ) before spraying; this includes understanding the colours and pictures on labels on how to use the pesticide before spraying
- If you have any questions or do not understand how to use the pesticide, speak to any KEP HIS or Pest Control Products Board(PCPB) officers nearest to you
- Continuously adhere to **Good Agricultural Practices**
- Farmers and exporters should have **quality control systems** which should be sustainable and ensures compliance of produce. This includes conducting periodic laboratory tests of produce and monitoring of pesticide uses
- Pesticides should be sourced from credible outlets that are licensed from the Pest Control Products Board(PCPB)
- **Note: All pesticides are recommended for specific uses and there are no general uses anymore**

#### 2. The Presence of Harmful Pests/Organisms on Export Produce

- Farmers and exporters should understand the market requirements of the different countries where they are exporting their produce.
- In addition, farmers should have **proper pest management systems** which include integrated pest management approaches, relating weather patterns and pest occurrence
- Farmers should practice **proper field sanitation** to minimize pest infestation
- Farmers should ensure that produce is properly graded by ensuring that the produce is whole, sound, produce affected by rotting, or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded
- Clean, practically free from any visible foreign matter
- Free from damage caused by pests
- Free from abnormal external moisture
- Free from foreign smell or taste
- Firm and Fresh in appearance
- Free from damage caused by low temperature
- Free from stains and marked bruises
- Sufficiently developed and display satisfactory ripeness, physiological maturity and specified cut stage

#### 3. Documentation

- All plant consignments **MUST** be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate
- Exporters should ensure that **correct additional declarations** are reflected on the phytosanitary certificate
- Documents must be consistent and accurate, for example indicate correct produce in the consignment, correct date, correct quantities; ensure integrity of consignments by sending what is indicated on the phytosanitary certificate

#### 4. Loss of Documents

- It is the responsibility of the exporter(s) to safeguard their phytosanitary certificate.
- Exporters should safeguard their Electronic Certification System (ECS) passwords and not issue them to third parties.

Farmers should ensure that produce is properly graded by ensuring that the produce is whole and sound

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# *Tuta Absoluta* Workshop Held to Address Control and Management Options

By Pamela Kipyab  
Projects Office

**K**EPHIS inspectors, plant protection experts and tomato growers were recently trained on how to detect and manage the tomato leaf minor, commonly known as *Tuta absoluta*, a pest that is currently affecting tomatoes in the country.

The two-day workshop, held at KEPHIS headquarters, explored ways of managing the pest that also attacks potatoes, common beans and eggplants (brinjals). The most destructive stage of the pest is the caterpillar (larvae) stage, where it feeds on the tomato plants, producing large galleries in the leaves and burrowing in the stalks. The pest can cause up to 100% of yield reduction.

Kenya confirmed the presence of the pest in 2014, and there is urgent need of the knowledge on how to deal with this highly harmful insect. KEPHIS

with The Netherlands Embassy scheduled the training to provide a general view on the biology, ecology, risk and control of *Tuta absoluta* so that local plant protection agencies can learn how to control the pest in a sustainable way.

The tomato is a common vegetable in Kenya, used for making stews and various vegetable salads and juices. It is commonly sold in markets and is an export crop.

The training was sponsored by the Government of Kenya, KEPHIS, the Netherlands Embassy, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Centre of Phytosanitary Excellence (COPE). The workshop covered cultural, physical, chemical, irradiation and biological controls which are part of the Integrated Pest Management options of controlling the pest. The participants visited a tomato farm that has been damaged by the pest to see firsthand the effects of the pest. **KN**



*Tuta Absoluta* (tomato leaf minor)



Damage on tomatoes

# Awareness Forums

## 1. KEPHIS Shines Once Again at the Kabarnet and Kitale Shows

KEPHIS shone at the Kabarnet and Kitale agricultural shows, scooping first positions in various categories in line with the Organization's mandate. At the Kabarnet show, KEPHIS was first in The Best Regulatory Authority Stand, The Best Innovation and Invention Stand and The Best Medium Government Stand; KEPHIS was first in The Best Local Stand in Strategies of International Trade and Exports during the Kitale National Show.

KEPHIS carries out seed certification surveys, trains seed growers and stockists on the importance of certified seed, and carries out soil testing and post certification surveys in the Kabarnet region. The Corporation also carries out crop inspections at the Perkerra Irrigation Scheme.

At Kenya's food basket of Trans Nzoia County, KEPHIS Kitale certifies seed maize and other seed and works with seed companies to ensure that only quality seed is availed to farmers in the region and the country to ensure good harvests for food security. The year 2015 has seen KEPHIS scoop first prizes in the various shows that it participates in countrywide, stamping its authority as the Lead Regulator and Facilitator of Globally Competitive Agriculture. KN



*The winning team at the Kabarnet show*



*Water and Irrigation CS Eugene Wamalwa (centre) presents the trophy for The Best Local Stand in Strategies of International Trade and Exports to the KEPHIS Kitale team during the recently concluded Kitale National Show*



## 2. KEPHIS Wins at the Nairobi International Trade Fair

**Nairobi** – The Nairobi International Trade Fair was held recently and KEPHIS achieved great milestones in the event. The Corporation was first in the category of *The Corporation that Best Embraces Information, Communication and Technology* (ICT). The Ag. MD Dr. Esther Kimani received the winning trophy from His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta during the official opening of the weeklong event.

KEPHIS has greatly enhanced its ICT processes, conducting some of its businesses using web based platforms; for instance, the highly acclaimed Electronic Certification System (ECS) is used for facilitating plant exports to key markets. The recently launched Plant Import and Quarantine Regulatory System (PIQRS) will track, trace and manage the import of plant consignments and regulated articles. Farmers can also know the recommended crop varieties to plant in their regions by texting the crop to the SMS line 20441. **KN**



President Uhuru Kenyatta presents KEPHIS Ag. MD Dr. Esther Kimani (3rd right) with the winning trophy for **The Corporation that best Embraces Information, Communication and Technology**, during the recently concluded Nairobi International Trade Fair.



A KEPHIS staff (left) explains to visitors the process of exporting flowers and vegetables from Kenya to overseas markets.



KEPHIS Ag. MD Dr. Esther Kimani (holding trophy) celebrating with staff after winning in the Information, Communication and Technology category during the recently concluded Nairobi International Trade Fair.

### 3. KASS Road show and Marathon

KEPHIS took part and co-sponsored the annual KASS FM road show and marathon that took place in Nandi, Elgeyo Marakwet and Uasin Gishu counties. Ten staff from the headquarters, Nakuru and Kitale regional offices took part in the event.

The three counties are areas with great agricultural potential and the event was timely as it coincided with the El-nino rains, hence farmers were preparing their farms to plant while others had already planted. KEPHIS took the opportunity to share one-on-one with farmers and seed sellers about crop variety testing, purchasing certified seed and managing pests and diseases on their farms. Farmers were particularly urged to purchase certified seed from licensed stockists and verify the status by sending a short code(SMS) to 20441 which is a free service offered by KEPHIS.

The event was sponsored by KEPHIS, Kenya Seed Company, Boresha Sacco, Transnational Bank, Jamii Millers Limited, New KCC, Kenya Power, Kenya Commercial bank, and others.

KASS FM is a leading vernacular radio station which holds the road show and marathon annually. KEPHIS works with stations such as KASS FM to disseminate information regarding its mandate.

The roadshow was conducted for four days covering Londiani, Timboroa, Eldoret, Mosoriot, Kapsabet, Iten, Turbo and Moiben.

The KEPHIS team participated in the 5 kilometre corporate race which started at the Eldoret Club and ended at the Eldoret Sports Club.

Stakeholders, mainly farmers, showed much interest in potato seed certification, how to control the Maize Necrosis Lethal Disease and seed quality monitoring. This provided valuable feedback to KEPHIS and how the Corporation can be of service to stakeholders in these regions. KN



*KEPHIS staff Edward Wanyonyi(left) and KASS FM presenter Excellency arap Kemei addressing crowds during the recently concluded KASS FM road show and marathon*

## Coming Up in February

### Youth Round Table

KEPHIS will hold a round table with young people, aged 18-35, on her mandate. The Corporation will engage the participants on the importance of planting certified seed, management of plant diseases and pests and the importance of analysing agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and water before planting. Young people will get the chance to hear from KEPHIS staff on the importance of KEPHIS in enhancing agri-business for economic growth and development, and why it is crucial for plant produce to be certified and meet global market requirements. For more information, go to the KEPHIS facebook page ([www.facebook.com/kephis](http://www.facebook.com/kephis))

### Makueni Mango Farmers Sensitization on Controlling the Mango Fruit Fly

KEPHIS is currently engaging farmers in mango growing counties on the need to have mangoes that are free from the fruit fly to meet export requirements. Farmers are required to practice orchard sanitation, use fruit fly traps, field monitoring, chemical control and mechanical fruit protection to manage the pest, hence get clean mangoes both for local and overseas consumption. KEPHIS is currently engaging the county governments of Makueni, Tharaka Nithi and Elgeyo Marakwet and local farmers on how to make this possible. KEPHIS is holding a series of barazas and other awareness forums so that farmers in these counties are assisted in meeting the standards.

### Media Engagement and Training

The media are one of the stakeholders of the Corporation who can assist in dissemination information to the public on the Organization's mandate. KEPHIS will be holding a one day consultative forum with the fourth estate to explain the importance of addressing the problem of fake seed, why the presence of KEPHIS at the border points is important, the required procedures for EuroGap and the EU market, requirements of seed production by farmers and seed merchants/seed companies, plant export requirements, Maximum Residue Limits (MRLS), among other topics.



## 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:

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Border Office | Taveta Border Office | Lungalunga Border Office |  
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