

National Horticulture Taskforce in Kenya

Timeframe: 2002 to date

CASE STUDY



LED BY

PUBLIC SECTOR

Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)
 Ministry of Agriculture (Horticulture Division)
 Horticulture Crops Directorate (HCD)
 Pest Control Products Board (PCPB)
 Kenya Agricultural and Livestock
 Research Organization (KALRO)
 Ministry of Health
 (Public Health-Food Safety Unit)
 State Department for Trade
 Kenya Export Promotion and
 Branding Agency (KEPROBA)
 Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS)
 National Environmental
 Management Authority (NEMA)
 National Treasury
 Council of Governors
 (County Governments)

PRIVATE SECTOR

Fresh Produce Exporters
 Association of Kenya (FPEAK)
 Kenya National Federation of
 Agricultural Producers (KENFAP)
 Kenya Flower Council (KFC)
 Fresh Produce Consortium
 of Kenya (FPCK)
 Avocado Society of Kenya (ASOK)
 Avocado Exporters Association of Kenya (AEAK)
 Agrochemical Association of Kenya (AAK)
 Agriculture Sector Network (ASNET)
 Seed Trade Association of Kenya



PURPOSE

The National Horticulture Taskforce enhances SPS compliance for trade, safeguarding Kenya's reputation as a leading grower and exporter. It fosters public-private dialogue on regulations, builds consensus on horticulture priorities, and creates an enabling environment. The taskforce addresses issues like pesticide residues, pest interceptions, and importing market requirements, raising SPS awareness, promoting best practices, supporting risk assessments, and encouraging accreditation and market diversification. Through regular meetings, members raise concerns, drive regulatory adjustments, assign tasks, and ensure accountability among public and private stakeholders.



GOVERNANCE

The Taskforce, initially a steering committee, was created by the Ministry of Agriculture with leadership from KEPHIS and FPEAK. CEOs from public and private sectors participated, with decisions binding and Ministry approval when needed. Its terms of reference are under review, focusing on membership, objectives, leadership, and procedures. The Ministry of Agriculture currently chairs the Taskforce, with a private-sector Co-Chair.

FUNDING

Initially funded by the EU-funded PIP project implemented by COLEAD, covering only a secretary's costs. KEPHIS provided meeting space, while members covered their own expenses. After 2005, core costs were funded by KEPHIS and the Ministry. In 2019, the NHT was revamped under the EU-funded NExT Kenya Programme implemented by COLEAD, supporting specific activities like good practice guides and bottleneck studies. In 2023, additional funding came from a Trademark Africa partnership under another EU programme.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PUBLIC SECTOR

- Provide insights from the public sector on discussed issues.
- Commit to follow-up actions, with regular reporting on progress and outcomes.
- Communicate key information on sector-specific challenges, requests, and recommendations to policymakers.
- Ensure compliance of private sector stakeholders with established commitments and obligations.
- Supervise the adoption and implementation of both international and national codes of practice and regulations.

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Representing and presenting the perspectives of the private sector in discussions.
- Highlight specific areas of concern, including outdated or insufficiently tailored regulations that require review.
- Hold public authorities accountable for meeting their commitments and obligations effectively.

LESSONS

- Establishing the Taskforce as a multi-stakeholder platform with shared ownership has ensured strong buy-in and sustained engagement from members.
- Involving key “champions” who actively drive the platform has been crucial for its continued success.
- Proactive responses to evolving SPS requirements are essential for sustained compliance, rather than a reactive approach.
- Mutual respect between public and private sector members enhances collaboration, with the private sector willing to pay for public services that meet expected standards.
- Dialogue on SPS issues has built trust among stakeholders and increased recognition that national reputation often outweighs individual brand names in international markets.
- NHT’s design, guided by COLEAD, minimizes dependency on donor funding by avoiding complex requirements and per diems, keeping the platform affordable, relevant, and effective for sustained engagement.

UP-SCALING OPPORTUNITIES

- Neighbouring countries have shown interest in replicating the Taskforce model, with shared experiences supporting similar initiatives in Ghana, Rwanda, and Uganda. Tanzania’s horticultural sector is exploring the formation of a similar taskforce.
- Building on its success in green beans, Kenya’s horticulture sector has expanded to meet rising demand for other crops, such as mangoes, adapting existing infrastructure to address regulatory needs.
- In 2008, the regional Africa Horticulture Council (AHC) was established to promote collaborative research, sustainability, and collective bargaining across the continent.

RESULTS



THE NHT HAS STRENGTHENED KENYA'S HORTICULTURAL SECTOR, ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND BOOSTING MARKET REPUTATION.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:

SUSTAINED PUBLIC-PRIVATE PLATFORMS:

Ongoing collaboration has fostered shared strategies, driving growth across horticultural sub-sectors.

ENHANCED MARKET ACCESS:

Research and data collection have addressed international market requirements, removing trade barriers.

TRUSTED DIALOGUE:

The NHT provides a reliable, adaptive forum for addressing key issues and enabling long-term solutions.

IMPROVED SPS COORDINATION:

Enhanced SPS measure coordination, allowing the sector to adapt swiftly to emerging challenges.

TRADE GROWTH:

Sustained growth in the value of horticultural export