



The EXPORT AGENDA

NUTS EDITION



Export Procedures And
Standards For Exporting
Macadamia Nuts And Its
Products

Coconut Farming In Kenya

Value Addition Key To Kenya's
Exports Markets Agenda

◀ **INSIDE**



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The Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA) is a State Corporation established under the State Corporations Act Cap 446 through Legal Notice No.110 of August 9th, 2019 following the merger of the Export Promotion Council and Brand Kenya Board. Its Core Mandate is to implement export promotion and nation branding Initiatives and policies to promote Kenya's export of goods and services.

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THE EXPORT AGENDA

ISSUE 7, 2022

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Editorial



MAUREEN MAMBO
Editor-in-Chief

Dear Reader,

Nuts are well-known for their rich health benefits such as vitamins, proteins, minerals and fiber. They are also an important ingredient in skin care and edible oils.

This edition focuses on Kenya's coconut and macadamia nut production. The two are well-established and fetch the country significant income. Read on and learn a thing or two about nuts and government efforts to grow the subsector.

Enjoy!

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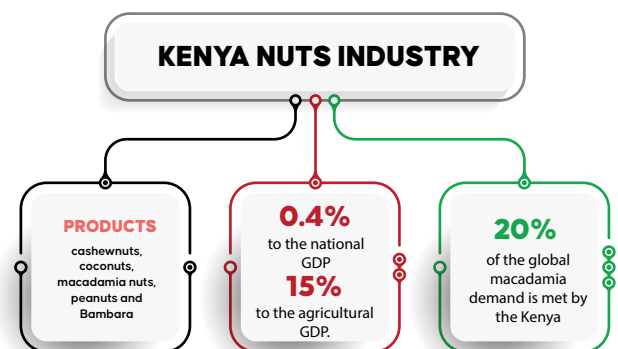
FOREWORD

The global nuts market is currently experiencing exponential growth. The global turnover for nuts was 54 billion US dollars in 2021 and is expected to grow steadily in the coming years. Peanuts accounted for the largest market share globally with almonds and cashewnuts experiencing growth in popularity.

Kenya produces cashewnuts, coconuts, macadamia nuts, peanuts and Bambara, among others. The nuts and oil crops subsector contribute 0.4% to the national GDP and 15% to the agricultural GDP. The country supplies around 20% of global macadamia demand. Key export destinations for Kenyan nuts include the United States, the EU, China, Canada and Japan. About 95% of locally produced macadamia nuts are exported, making it one of the country's most lucrative cash crops.

The Government of Kenya has put in place various measures to increase the production and export of nuts. The ban on exportation of unprocessed macadamia nuts imposed in 2009 was lifted. In addition, the acreage under nuts has increased, replacing traditional subsistence crops like maize in the country's breadbasket areas.

This issue covers various aspects of the growth, processing and export of macadamia nuts and





Export Procedures And Standards For Exporting Macadamia Nuts And Its Products

By Dorcas Isaboke

Over the past decade, the global demand for nuts has drastically increased, thanks to its known health benefits when consumed or processed into human drugs, hair and other beauty products. And the organic nature of Kenya-grown nuts has endeared many buyers to its doors from as far as America, European states, Japan, China, Hong Kong and Canada.

Export of coconut is regulated by the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) Nuts and Oil Crops Directorate who are charged with the mandate of promoting best practices, regulate the production, processing, marketing, grading, storage, collection, transportation and warehousing of agricultural products.

The nut sector in Kenya is regulated by the Nuts and Oil Crops Directorate (NOCD), an arm of AFA, mandated to develop, promote and regulate the nuts and oil crops industry in Kenya. AFA and by extension its Directorates was commissioned to spearhead the development of scheduled crops as delineated in the First Schedule of Crops Act 2013. Other than coconut, this Directorate handles other nuts and oil crops such as Macadamia, Cashew nuts, Ground nuts, Sunflower, Sesame

Oil, Rape seed, Safflower, Jojoba, Castor bean and Linseed.

For quality assurance, one has to go through the following procedures and attain the set standards in order to export nut and nut products:

PRELIMINARY REGISTRATIONS, LICENCES & CERTIFICATES

Register as an exporter and acquire a manufacturing licence

A trader intending to export nuts and nut products must first register with AFA NOCD who issue a processing and export licence. The licence is valid for a period between, 1st July to 30th June.

Register with Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)

Fresh and dry produce is regulated by Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS), who issue a phytosanitary certificate for each consignment for export.

Register with Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI)

Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) is the umbrella body of the private sector in Kenya. The Chamber is an autonomous, non-profit,

membership-based and private sector lobby institution. Membership to the Chamber is not mandatory however, membership is diverse and has benefits such as networking opportunities, training consultancy, customer referrals and credibility in business to mention a few.

Train and register with Kenya TradeNet System (KESWS)

The Kenya National TradeNet System (KESWS) is an electronic platform that facilitates the processing and issuance of permits, import declaration forms (IDF) and declaration of goods. Traders are required to register with Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade) as either exporters or importers and get trained on how to lodge documents on KESWS. The traders are then issued with user credentials which enable them to login and access the System.

Register with KRA Rules of Origin section

This procedure applies to first time traders who require to obtain a preferential certificate of origin during export. Traders are required to register with the Kenya Revenue Authority's (KRA) Rules of Origin

Section to obtain a registration letter. The letter confirms the country of origin of the goods to be exported and is a requirement when applying for the preferential certificate of origin.

Food hygiene licence

A food hygiene licence is required for all facilities that process and package products that are for human consumption, e.g. packhouses. The licence is issued by Port Health Services Kenya (PHS) or by Public Health Officers, from the respective County Governments where the premises are located. The licence is valid for one (1) calendar year.

country. Traders are required to obtain a phytosanitary certificate for each consignment, and are expected to know the market requirements of their intended export market. The certificate is issued by (KEPHIS).

Certificate of origin

The Certificate of Origin (COO) is an international trade document which certifies that a certain product being exported is wholly manufactured, produced, processed or obtained from the exporting country. It is divided into the following categories:

Non-preferential certificate of origin

A non-preferential certificate of origin is an export document issued by KNCCI that confirms the country of origin of goods being exported.

Preferential certificate of origin

This is divided into the following categories:

COMESA certificate of origin

The COMESA certificate of origin is required for goods obtained, manufactured, produced or processed in Kenya, and are to be exported within the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region.

AGOA certificate of origin

The African Growth & Opportunity Act (AGOA) certificate of origin is required for goods obtained, manufactured, produced or processed in Kenya, and are to be exported to a country within the AGOA trade Act.

GSP certificate of origin

The Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) certificate of origin is required for goods obtained, manufactured, produced or processed in Kenya, and are to be exported to a member state.

EAC certificate of origin

The EAC certificate of origin is required for goods obtained, manufactured, produced or processed in Kenya, and are to be exported within the East African Community (EAC) region.

EU certificate of origin

The European Union (EU) certificate of origin is required for goods obtained, manufactured, produced or processed in Kenya, and are to be exported within the European community.

The certificates stated above are issued per consignment.

CLEARANCE

This is the process one needs to follow in order to export their products through the Port of Mombasa

PROCEDURES FOR A FIRST-TIME TRADER

This procedure sequentially compiles the licences, permits and clearance steps to be fulfilled by a registered business owner exporting a consignment of nuts of more than \$2,000 of value, for the first time out of Kenya, via the Port of Mombasa to the EU.

PERMITS

Nuts & oil produce product export declaration form levy

The export permit is issued per consignment of nuts; traders must be licensed, by the Directorate, prior to application of the permits.

Phytosanitary certificate (for dry produce)

A phytosanitary certificate certifies that plants & plant products are free from regulated pests and conform with other phytosanitary requirements of the importing



Global demand for Kenyan Nuts Pushes it off the Shelves and Soon into 'Oblivion'

Adriene Mureithi (amureithi@apn.co.ke)



A quick walk along the snacks' aisle in any supermarket, various brands of nuts stand out and are exorbitantly priced. Over the years, prices for this savoury snack have increased with its supply to local snacks' shops and retail outlets now largely a preserve for high end clientele.

Mostly, most nut varieties are sold within tourism establishments, convenient stores at petrol stations and as takeaway snacks at high-end stores.

Ironically, nut processors are enjoying a boom for growing demand for their products but nut farmers suffer poor producer prices, delayed payments and diminishing gains due to poor quality of nuts.

In the coastal region, cashew nuts that once dominated the scene earning locals notable gains and enabling thousands to gain jobs along the value chain are long gone, thanks to mismanagement and misappropriation of finances of the once giant Kenya Cashew Nuts Limited.

Where the industry recorded production of 36,000 tonnes in the seventies annually, last year, a paltry 300 tonnes was sold to private processors amid calls by local farmers that Kenya Cashew nuts be revived (See separate story).

Across Kenya, a fever pitch scramble is brewing with county governments and national institutions joining the fray to empower farmers to indulge in macadamia nut farming.

“The Chinese offered KSH.40 per kilo which was twice the price offered by local processors for the raw unprocessed macadamia nuts.”

The commercialisation of Macadamia nut began in the 1970s thanks to Bob Harris who was commissioned by the government to and the 1990s, however, dramatic interest in the farming of the crop began in the late 1990s to the early 2000s. This

was catalysed by the lucrative pricing of the nuts that sold for KSH.30 per kg. Further, growing demand from the Chinese who later flocked to the Eastern part of the country enticed former coffee and tea farmers to warm up to the crop. However, the same problems faced by cashew nuts farmers began affecting the macadamia nuts producers. The Chinese offered KSH.40 per kilo which was twice the price offered by local processors for the raw unprocessed macadamia nuts. USDA Foreign Agriculture service estimated that 60% of the macadamia had been exported in-shell in 2008 which implied that the Chinese exporters had purchased most of the crop from Embu and Meru companies that led to the ban of exports in 2009.

Despite the ban, the macadamia nut sector continued being disorganised and there was

lack of support from both national and county governments. Further, the local demand for the crop declined drastically as new and more macadamia producing countries increased globally. Stringent market regulation policies from the European Country have also continuously harmed



the market elicited from poor notion of low quality macadamia nuts from Kenya. Despite both Cashew and Macadamia nuts being affected by the liberalisation of the economy. By virtue of Kenya Nuts Co.Ltd being part of the private sector, it could not be privatised, hence, spared from the decay that led to the downfall of the cashew nut sector.

One of the opportunities in reviving the industry is supporting extension service providers such as KARLO to increase the capacity of farmers as well as distribute improved and high-yielding macadamia seedlings to farmers. Another key opportunity is adopting an effective traceability system of the farmers. This could be realised through creating a registry of farmers that encompass, size of farm, number of macadamia trees and variety as well as traders who buy through them.

Lack of improved seedlings is a cross cutting problem across the nut industry

that includes Macadamia, Coconut and Cashew nuts industry. There's little or no improvement in the seedlings that end up taking a long time to mature and ones that bear little produce. This further hinders market access to international markets such as the European Union.

Lack of policies and regulations that govern this sector is another major hindrance to their revival. There are no clear laws that dictate how the sector is regulated thus affecting the quality of produce and pricing of the raw materials. Further, lack of government support and delayed enforcement of regulations has contributed to the deterioration of the 3 sectors. Budget allocations to revive the sectors is critical to its rejuvenation and advancement of the Kenyan Agricultural sector.

Investment opportunities in the nut sub-sector in Kenya; a case study of macadamia

By Chrispine Onyango

Kenya's economic success and global presence is affirmed by its famous agricultural produce that grace breakfast, lunch and dinner tables across the world with the main exports being tea, coffee, cut flowers and vegetables.

Introduced in Kenya 50 years ago, macadamia nut exports have also been on a steep rise evidently and are fast replacing coffee as a favourite cash crop among Central Kenya farmlands. Kenya is a net exporter of various nuts at between 90 and 95 percent.



This has witnessed emergence of village brokers, well oiled foreign 'hawkers' and village-based seed propagators with larger processors injecting funds towards sensitising farmers on better farm husbandry practices, availing certified seedlings and offering prompt payments to fend off competition.

This has attracted more smallholder farmers to participate in macadamia farming starting off with a few seedlings that they keep replenishing as time goes by. Nut Traders Association (NUTRAK) chairman, Johnson Kihara, avers that Macadamia has proven to be a formidable poverty eradicator due to its high returns and it being a low-input costs crop. This has attracted new players from non-macadamia growing counties mostly in the Coastal, Rift Valley and Western Kenya regions with support from county government authorities.

Despite their huge success in many parts of Kenya, NUTRAK says more funds need to be injected into the subsector starting with formal recognition of macadamia nuts as a commercial crop that should have a fully fledged professional team assigned to guide its next phase growth from production, handling, to value addition-processing as well as marketing.

Currently is the third top macadamia producer after Australia and South Africa, with a global market share of 13 percent (7,750 tonnes on kernel basis). In 2018, exports of macadamia kernel had a value of KES 1,380 per kilo, making it one of the most lucrative cash crops in Kenya after tea.

Kenya's macadamia production increased rapidly during the last decade, from around 11,000 tonnes nut-in-shell (NIS) production in 2009 to 42,500 tonnes in 2018. Kenya's Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) estimates that, with increased acreage under the crop, production will reach 60,000 tonnes NIS by 2022.

That constitutes an increase by around 40 percent from the production achieved in 2018 with the bulk of Kenyan macadamia being produced by about 200,000 smallholder farmers. America, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Canada and countries in the European Union form some of the major export destinations for Kenyan macadamia.

Starting off with three processors, the macadamia subsector enjoys vast patronage with 38 processors now operational as at December 2021. Competition has driven prices higher with the conversation of macadamia's popularity attracting new suitors from across the world.

According to a study by the Centre for the Promotion of Imports (CBI) from developing countries, in 2018, Netherlands and Germany absorbed up to 98 percent of all macadamia grown in Kenya with small volumes being exported to Spain and Italy.

“

Kenyan macadamia shows an increasing trend, with imports growing from 1,268 tonnes in 2014 to 1,654 in 2018. The growing EU demand for macadamia, and especially organic macadamia, is rooted in a greater interest among EU consumers in food products with superior health benefits as well as natural cosmetics

”

The report observes that an estimated 80 percent of macadamia nuts are consumed as snacks with the remaining 20 percent being used as ingredients for making cookies, chocolates or ice cream.

According to financial, tax and business writing consulting firm, Blue Ocean Outsource, “one acre plantation of grafted macadamia trees can yield 5,600 kg translating to an income of Sh560,000 per harvest. After setting a minimum buying price of Sh70 per kilogram to cushion the farmers against greedy processors and middlemen, in the worst case scenario a macadamia farmer should earn Ksh 392,000 per acre.

The firm adds that farmers need to stop selling their produce to middlemen who are likely to mislead them into harvesting immature crops leading to heavy losses in case the newly harvested haulage is rejected by a processor.

“Unscrupulous middlemen rip farmers off their hard earned cash by buying nuts at a throwaway price and selling to processors at a high price. This challenge can be addressed by selling the nuts to the processors directly,” It adds.

CBI projects that global demand for macadamia nuts is poised to rise to 700,000 tonnes annually by 2025.

Largely, macadamia nuts' kernels are consumed as a dessert nut, in raw or roasted form while a small percentage that is sent to factories is used for making confectionery products, soaps and cosmetics. The by-product realised after an oil press is used as a livestock feed additive while the shells are used for making charcoal. When harvested, macadamia's tree trunk has also been harvested for production of timber.

Kenya's rising macadamia production means availability of raw materials for extraction of oils that are exported abroad for making cosmetics, soaps and skin-care products. Among them is Athi-River oil Africa EPZ Ltd and Fair oils EPZ Ltd.



SUCCESS IN MACADAMIA NUT FARMING WOOS MORE INVESTORS

James Kariuki (jkariuki@apn.co.ke)

Massive multi-billion investments across the country on processing mainly macadamia nuts and coconut are behind renewed interest in the two crops being fronted for recognition as 'national' cash crops besides tea, coffee, cotton and sugarcane.

A close scrutiny of available data from the Horticultural Crops Directorate (HCD) reveals a fierce battle between established macadamia nut processors and newly registered companies located in the heart of macadamia producing areas. This has contributed to heightened interest among Kenyans on growing macadamia nuts due to availability of a ready market for the crop.

According to HCD, Kenya has 38 established macadamia nut processors whose main task is to contract farmers to grow macadamia for local semi-processing and eventual export to foreign companies that eventually use Kenyan grown macadamia as a key raw material in the manufacture of different products.

Globally considered as the 'Queen of the nuts', macadamia nuts are used in confectionery, baking, ice cream, and snack

food industries. Once extracted, its oil's rich, cushiony skin feel, and high oxidative stability has seen macadamia also used as a key ingredient in making heavy creams and skin care formulas.

Kenya boasts of two companies Fair Oil EPZ and Athi River Oil Africa EPZ that extract macadamia oil for export to various factories across the world.

Macadamia farming in Kenya continues to attract global attention due to the organic nature of farming practices that ensures all produce is safe for use in food industries as well as in cosmetic industries with no reported cases of chemical use.

According to the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries (CBI), established in 1971 by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya has the potential to quadruple production of macadamia and benefit from

the growing global demand for organic macadamia.

“

Demand for macadamia nuts in Europe is driven by the popularity of healthy snacking and nuts as substitutes for animal proteins. Macadamia nuts are seen as premium and luxury products compared to most other nuts consumed in Europe. There are opportunities for new developing country suppliers in large markets such as Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, and Switzerland

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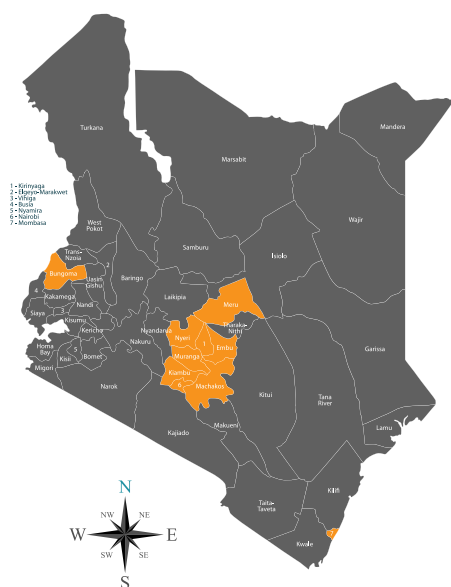
CBI latest report asserts that emerging producing countries must be able to compete with already established offers from South Africa, Australia, and Kenya.

For Kenya, increased participation of processors across the value chain, from contract farming, provision of seedlings and offering a ready market for mature macadamia is a magnet for new investments coming from the public and private sector players. Up to 95

percent of macadamia nuts processed is destined for export markets.

The processors have partnered with local traders while some have employed extension workers to train farmers on effective husbandry practices that will lead to higher yield and high-quality macadamia nut production.

The factories are strewn across Kiambu, Nairobi, Kirinyaga, Machakos, Embu, Nyeri, Mombasa, Murang'a, Meru and Bungoma counties with the established companies setting up satellite branches to service their new macadamia nut suppliers.



The attractive returns received by farmers has also attracted the attention of county governments that have injected new funding for propagation of high yielding macadamia varieties that are later sold to farmers at subsidised prices. Taita Taveta, Meru, Embu, Bungoma and Busia County governments are actively involved in establishing macadamia tree nurseries within their areas with support from some European Commission members. For the Coast Region, proliferation of newly established coconut oil processing companies has re-ignited interest in the trademark fruit known to do well around the coastal region. Farmers in Kwale, Kilifi, Athi River, Mombasa and Lamu counties are actively involved in coconut growing with support from their respective county governments.

According to HCDA, the region boasts of 27 coconut edible and non-edible oil processors who sell their produce locally and abroad as well as a wide array of companies that use coconut by-products to make furniture, wood carvings and roofing material (makuti) among others.

Coconut oil is processed for cooking and for cosmetic purposes from making soaps, lotions, creams and cosmetic oil for hair application. Women and youth groups have also formed cottage

industries now licensed to make charcoal pellets, candles, brooms, shell lamp shades and mats.

Rising local demand for coconut oil has also seen HCD licence five importers who make virgin cooking oil as well as hair and beauty products. Kenyan farmers could benefit immensely from growing coconuts for sale to coconut processors thereby reducing importation of coconuts.

Women, farmer and youth self-help groups are actively involved in different commercial activities across the coconut value chain from raising seedlings, extraction of virgin coconut oil, group selling of mature coconuts and production of coir fibre for use in roofing.

Sadly, while Coconut and macadamia nut farming are enjoying a good run, cashew nuts- long considered an important cash crop in the coast region have been on a downward trend especially after export of raw nuts was banned.

According to HCD statistics, there are only five companies based in Kilifi, Mombasa, Machakos and Nairobi counties that buy and process cashew nuts. This has been blamed for lack of interest among farmers on cashew nut farming with HCD licensing one cashew nut importer.

COCONUT FARMING IN KENYA

James Kariuki (jkariuki@apn.co.ke)

Kenya's coconut farming is on track for a voluminous evolution following the successful trials of a high yielding and fast maturing hybrid coconut species imported from India in 2017.





The India variety, dwarf sampona seedlings, now planted in 275 farms in Kwale, Taita Taveta, Tana River, Mombasa, Kilifi and Lamu counties has responded well to Kenya's climatic conditions yielding its first fruits at a Malindi farm within two and a half years unlike the traditional East African varieties that take up to six years to mature.

"These are model farms under constant surveillance from a multi sectoral public-private sector committee tasked with overseeing introduction of the new variety. The India variety is two metres tall and bears up to 300 fruits every three years compared to local varieties that rise from a minimum of six metres while yielding about 100 fruits every six years," says Serah Nzau, a Value Chain Officer working with the local implementation agency, Micro Enterprise Support Program Trust(MESPT).

In an interview, Ms Nzau said with funding from the Danish International Development Agency(DANIDA), they imported 6,000 hybrid coconut seedlings that were taken to KALRO Matuga for phytosanitary certification before local distribution to farmers.

"This is a glorious journey that we are happy to have DANIDA funding this long term project. It will transform livelihoods, generate more coconut fruits for industrial processing as well as create more jobs and businesses along the value chain," she said.

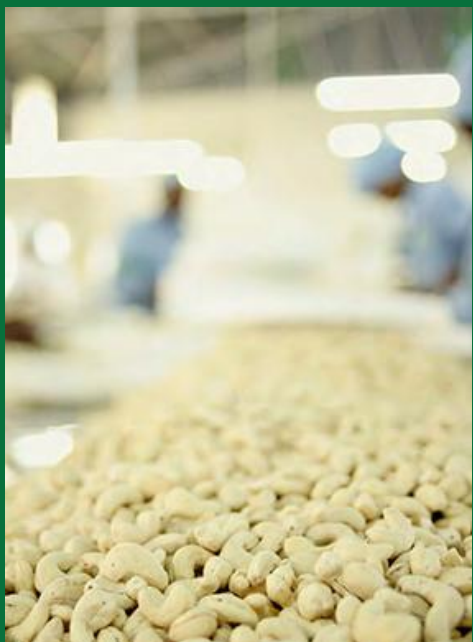
In 2018, another 6,000 seedlings were imported by the same supplier, with 3,000 seedlings bought by Kilifi County Government distributed to farmers within the county while the rest were sold at a subsidised price to farmers in the six counties.

Ms Nzau said there was local demand for the seedlings but the price of importing the hybrid variety and propagation before distribution to farmers was a major hindrance to faster adoption.

"We are calling on agri-investors to inject funds into this venture since the demand is there and we have a technical working committee(TWC) that will facilitate importation and there is land for quarantine control at KALRO Matuga before the same is sold to farmers. Participation of county governments in funding importation could also help revive coconut farming as a commercial enterprise within their areas," she said.

The MESPT officer said that Kenya was also researching the possibility of using the parent coconut stock in the model farms to conduct coconut embryo multiplication as importation was expensive and bulky.

Ms Nzau said farmers were being discouraged from selling their produce to middlemen and instead focus on selling mature coconuts to processors as they stood to earn more while generating new jobs and attracting more investments into their regions.



Kenya Nuts and Macadamia Nuts Development Story

James Kariuki: jkariuki@apn.co.ke

The Kenya Nut Company (KNC) is best known for its national contribution to introducing and distributing certified Macadamia seedlings to farmers for over four decades. The KNC-farmer relationship has been cemented by KNC's ability to provide farmers with a ready market for their produce.

While the macadamia sub sector has grown to include over 38 processors, independent dealers and traders, KNC has lived to its founding motto of helping farmers access new macadamia certified seedlings, as well as facilitating farmer education seminars across Kenya with the latest meetings being held in Busia and Kakamega counties.

"We have been engaging county governments with a view to forming a united front towards deepening farmer participation in cash crop farming. KNC does not do this to benefit itself but for the overall posterity of the sector," said Mr David Waithaka, Quality Assurance Manager at the Thika based company. In an interview, Mr Waithaka said that since inception, KNC has been actively engaged in research and development of new varieties leading to selection and propagation of three varieties found to be high yielding, disease and pest resistant.

"The new seedling varieties that we sell to farmers are meant to improve yields and enhance quality, hence higher returns for our farmers. We want to see livelihoods improve across Kenya from farmers' engagement in cash crop farming.

With over 4,000 employees, the company operates seven farms on over 8,000 acres, the company that started in 1974 has a complete production system from seedlings to ready-for-sale products and an international market.



Mr Waithaka says the involvement of private sector players along the macadamia value chain has promoted the crop's propagation exciting farmers across Mount Kenya and has since spread to other parts of the country.

"Private sector participation brings an element of urgency for any individual keen on making money. The processors seeking macadamia are many and the demand for Kenya's macadamia is huge globally. Such an approach could also benefit cashew nuts with the government facilitating access to land to any investor to establish a nucleus

farm within the Coast region and related processing facilities," he adds.

Mr Waithaka says this could spur interest among Coastal people who currently treat cashew nut trees as wild trees with some allowing cutting down of mature cashew nut trees for production of charcoal.

"Lamu, Kwale, Kilifi, Tana River, Mombasa and Taita Taveta county governments have a very big role to play in helping their people engage in cashew nut farming but this requires assurance that there is a factory and a buyer for their produce. This would mean new job



opportunities, investments and hence better livelihoods.

Kenya, he adds, must formalise growing of macadamia and cashew nuts by employing extension officers to guide propagation activities to curb current practices where nursery operators sell uncertified seedlings to farmers yearning to get into cash crop farming.

While the private sector injects money into projects and employs trained staff to train farmers on proper farm husbandry practices, national and county governments lack adequate staff to police and enforce regulations put in place to enhance cash crop farming, processing and marketing practices.

“For instance, between January to June, during the peak season for harvesting macadamia nuts, KNC mobilises its core staff to crisscross the country buying macadamia nuts

from farmers and the same team is engaged in farmer field schools during the rest of the year. The government should consider hiring more extension workers,” he says.

Mr Waithaka says KNC has established five branches in Meru, Thika, Embu, Kiminini and Karatina to deal with farmers across Kenya. Their Thika farms act as nurseries and nucleus farms as well as host their factory and warehouses.

On recent developments where Kenya announced export of processed tea to Ghana, Mr Waithaka says this is the best decision ever and should be emulated by other exporters adding, “Kenya needs to promote exporting of processed products for sale in foreign supermarkets and not for delivery as raw materials to foreign factories.”

He adds that the increase in Macadamia processors is good for the sector since farmers have a better choice on who to sell their produce to but adds that there is a need to introduce new legislation that could guide contractual farming.

“As it is, brokers, traders and processors are in fierce competition in buying macadamia nuts from farmers. This is causing farmers to sell off their immature crops since there is no one to sanction harvesting. We need to come on with timelines allowing harvesting that should be uniform to all.

“While major developments for better seedlings have been made at Thika Industrial Crops Research Institute, we need more county or national government officers to sensitise farmers on the best seedlings. Only then will we guarantee our buyers of the best high quality crop,” he says.

Mr Waithaka says Kenya can earn five times more from macadamia farming if the government prioritised setting aside funds to improve macadamia farming.

“Kenya macadamia has the best taste in the world and it stands out against produce from leading macadamia exporters in Australia, South Africa and Hawaii. We need to help our farmers understand how grading and harvesting mature crops can better their income,” he says.





Macadamia Farming And Environment Protection

On their Facebook page ,Meru Nuts has chosen to speak Spanish to woo their customers” ,En Meru tenemos un propósito simple ,seleccionar las mejores nueces de árbol combinándolas con ingredientes naturales haciendo que lo indulgente y lo saludable coexistan naturalmente.

Amamos lo natural.

It reads “ ,At Meru we have a simple purpose ,to select the best tree nuts by combining them with natural ingredients so that the indulgent and the healthy coexist naturally.

We love nature”.

The firm’s assistant quality assurance manager **Dan Wambua** spoke to **James Kariuki** about Macadamia farming.

For how long have you been dealing with macadamia farmers and have you or the firm you work for been involved in raising macadamia seedlings?

Meru Equatorial Nuts has been dealing with farmers since its inception five years ago .With earnings rising from sale of in-shell macadamia nuts to us and other processors ,this has



Dan Wambua Meru Nuts assistant quality assurance manage

are also intercropping it with other crops like coffee and avocado .Most farmers in Meru opt to grow mainly the grafted varieties .The grafted varieties have a faster maturity rate as well as production of high-quality kernels.

For how long can farmers benefit from growing macadamia trees and what are its uses?

The macadamia nut trees have a lifespan of over thirty years if well protected from pests and diseases.

Macadamia farming promotes apiculture since the trees produce sweet nectar that bees can forage and produce honey. Beekeeping helps improve pollination since the bee’s transfer pollen grains as they forage for nectar .Inturn, this means higher food productivity within our region.

Macadamia shells and big twigs pruned from overgrown macadamia trees serve as an alternative source

of fuel for firewood and charcoal .The green materials and hulls are raw materials for production of dyeing compounds used in leather tanning. The macadamia trees also provide shade and shelter around homesteads as well as being an effective windbreaker for the houses and other crops from strong winds.

Is it a good income earner for macadamia tree nursery operators, transporters, traders ,farmers to companies like yours?

Its returns are very good .Its value adds include access to credit for buying farm inputs as well as soft loans .The increased volumes of macadamia nuts harvested from the farms has led to an increased number of processors who buy and process the nuts .This has created a lot of jobs for factory workers, transporters ,nursery operators, traders as well as dealers of farm inputs .The jobs have helped alleviate the problem of unemployment and poverty.

As a company ,how have you helped farmers to improve on their ‘macadamia ‘enterprises?

encouraged emergence of highly valued’ private forests .Macadamia nut trees are increasingly being grown on exclusive plots while some farmers

For over five years ,Meru Equatorial Nuts has been dealing with farmers and this relationship has seen seamless sharing of information between the company and farmers .We sensitise farmers on the importance of organic farming of macadamia nuts .By dealing with farmers directly ,their earnings have increased as opposed to past dealings they had through middlemen. We encourage farmers to harvest mature macadamia nuts and have trained them on the importance of record keeping thereby enabling them to keep track of their input expenses and proceeds received from macadamia nut sales .We closely monitor partner farms and advise farmers on good farm husbandry practices on how to deter both pests and diseases.

What are some of the recent investments made by your company?

We have installed macadamia nut drying and processing capacity of 100 tons at a time that enables us to receive large amounts of produce from our network from small scale farmers and aggregators who are paid using the mobile payment systems .The payment system enhances product traceability by identifying the suppliers.

Is Macadamia tree good for the environment?

Macadamia *integrifolia* is a good sequester of carbon)iv(oxide from the environment and this helps in reducing the effects of greenhouse gases .It protects farmlands from soil erosion since the tree roots grow laterally holding the soil particles together and also the mulching materials used help in reducing surface runoff. Increased macadamia tree growing also supports Kenya's quest for increased forest cover .Macadamia husks and pruned materials are converted into compost manure that is later used within the farmers to increase soil fertility.

As an ornamental and evergreen tree ,Macadamia trees improve the aesthetic beauty of homesteads and farms.

Lastly ,is Meru suitable for macadamia farming?

The climate is conducive and farmers are turning to Macadamia farming in droves .The trees thrive best at altitudes 2000 -0 m above sea level and Meru is at an altitude of approximately 1500 m .Macadamia does well at a temperature range of 15 to° 29 C ,Meru has an average annual temperature of° 20.1 C .The main varieties grown in Kenya are macadamia *tetraphylla* and macadamia *integrifolia* with their hybrids have been found to perform well across Meru .Expect higher yields from Meru especially after the county government established a 200,000 macadamia tree nursery that will help subsidise the cost of seedlings to farmers.

Ends

Value Addition Key To Kenya's Exports Markets Agenda

More than a decade ago, President William Ruto, then Minister of Agriculture banned the exportation of cashew nuts to increase raw material supply for local cashew nut factories.

Cashew nut farmers had been at the mercy of unscrupulous middlemen who made a profit at the expense of farmers. Despondency hit and most farmers cut down their orchards when the factory collapsed in 1998.

The industry has been on a slow but steady rise since with an eye towards value processing and exports.

Sector Outlook - An increasing market size

Since the ban, the production of the nuts has risen from an annual production of 11,000 metric tonnes and four processors to over 45,000 metric tonnes and 30 processors by 2018 - representing 20% of global production according to the Food Business Africa outlet.

Market Intelligence Platform Index Box reports that Kenya's total output value of nuts increased at an average annual rate of +3.9% from 2012 to 2021.

However, for the sixth consecutive year, the Kenyan nuts market recorded a decline in sales value, decreasing by -8.7% which portends for a sound marketing strategy to drive the demand needed to soak up the growing supply and boost nut sales.

The Nut Processors Associates of Kenya (NutPAK) estimates that Kenya has about 200,000 small farms currently producing an estimated 42,500 tonnes of in-shell nuts.

In 2020, Kenya earned 57.4 million dollars from nuts including macadamia, cashews, and coconuts. The following year saw a sharp increase in export quantities of nuts and oil crops Production surged from 6,065 tons in 2020 to 6,720 tons coupled by high demand of the products globally, earning the country close to KES 7.9 billion shillings according to the Nuts and Oil Crops Directorate.

Cashew Nuts

Since the glory days of Kilifi - Kenya Cashew Nuts Limited, the cash new industry has slowly awakened to life, transforming the lives of cashew nut farmers at the coast.

A 2020 report by the Nuts and Oil Crops Directorate indicates a total of 22,690 hectares of land in Kilifi, Kwale, Lamu, Tana River, and Taita Taveta counties is covered by cashew nuts -- a slight increase from 22,686 hectares in 2019.

The report released by the directorate, further indicates that 12,667 tonnes of cashew nuts valued at Sh587.2 million were produced last year.

There is hope for better export volumes in the coming years, with the construction of a KES 240 million processing factory by the European Union construction which would help both farmers and exporters fetch better prices during the harvest seasons in January and February. The new factory will have a capacity to process 5,000 metric tonnes of cashew nuts, a third of the country's current total production.

Macadamia

The macadamia nut is the most expensive nut in the world, retailing at close to KES 500 per kilogram. Between 90 to 95% of Kenya's macadamia nuts are produced for exports.

Kenya, the third biggest producer of macadamia in the world, adopts small-large scale producers in Embu, Muranga, Meru and other parts of Central. Macadamia and coffee enjoy a symbiotic relationship and farmers usually plant macadamia trees to shade their coffee bushes.

Competitor countries such as China, South Africa and Australia deal with large-scale plantations. More recently

According to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs agency CBI, key export destinations for Kenya's macadamia nuts are the U.S, E.U, Japan, China, Hong Kong and Canada. The agency also notes that Kenyan macadamia enter the EU mainly through the Netherlands and Germany, accounting - 98 percent of the imports - small volumes also go to Spain, the UK and Italy.

The agency further notes growth in export volumes for Kenyan macadamia in Europe, with imports growing from 1,268 tonnes in 2014 to 1,654 in 2018.

However, export volumes took a dip in 2020 as the pandemic affected logistics and markets worldwide. Macadamia nuts prices in Kenya went down to the lowest in the recent past,

with the companies that remained operational buying in-shell nuts for as low as KES 40 per kilo.

Coconut

In 2018, Kenya produced 92,560 tonnes of coconut from 82,921 hectares (about 200,000 acres) of plantation. In 2019, coconut acreage increased to 86,843 and output jumped to 109,889 tonnes with a value of KES 6.8B compared to Sh4.7B in 2018.

Volza, an export data platform, shows that Kenya's top coconut export markets are USA, Spain, Belgium, neighbours Uganda and Tanzania, Rwanda and Egypt earning the country close to half a billion annually.

In 2021, a Senate Committee Report recommended for more research and value addition for coconut products which could increase Kenya market share

Opportunities

Despite Europe taking the large share of nut markets Kenya is working to expand its nut markets in Asia, particularly in China, according to the directorate, stemming from several bilateral agreements to expand the trade of agricultural products, including macadamia nuts, to the Chinese market.

Challenges facing the sector

Despite commendable progress, stringent regulations, negative perceptions and low brand visibility present barriers that need to be addressed.

The notion prevails among EU buyers that Kenyan macadamia is of inferior quality while Kenyan processors regard the EU market regulations as more stringent than those of the U.S.

To address poor market access, experts have recommended the creation and marketing of a Kenyan macadamia brand should to revamp the image of Kenya as a macadamia producer.

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Made In Kenya?**



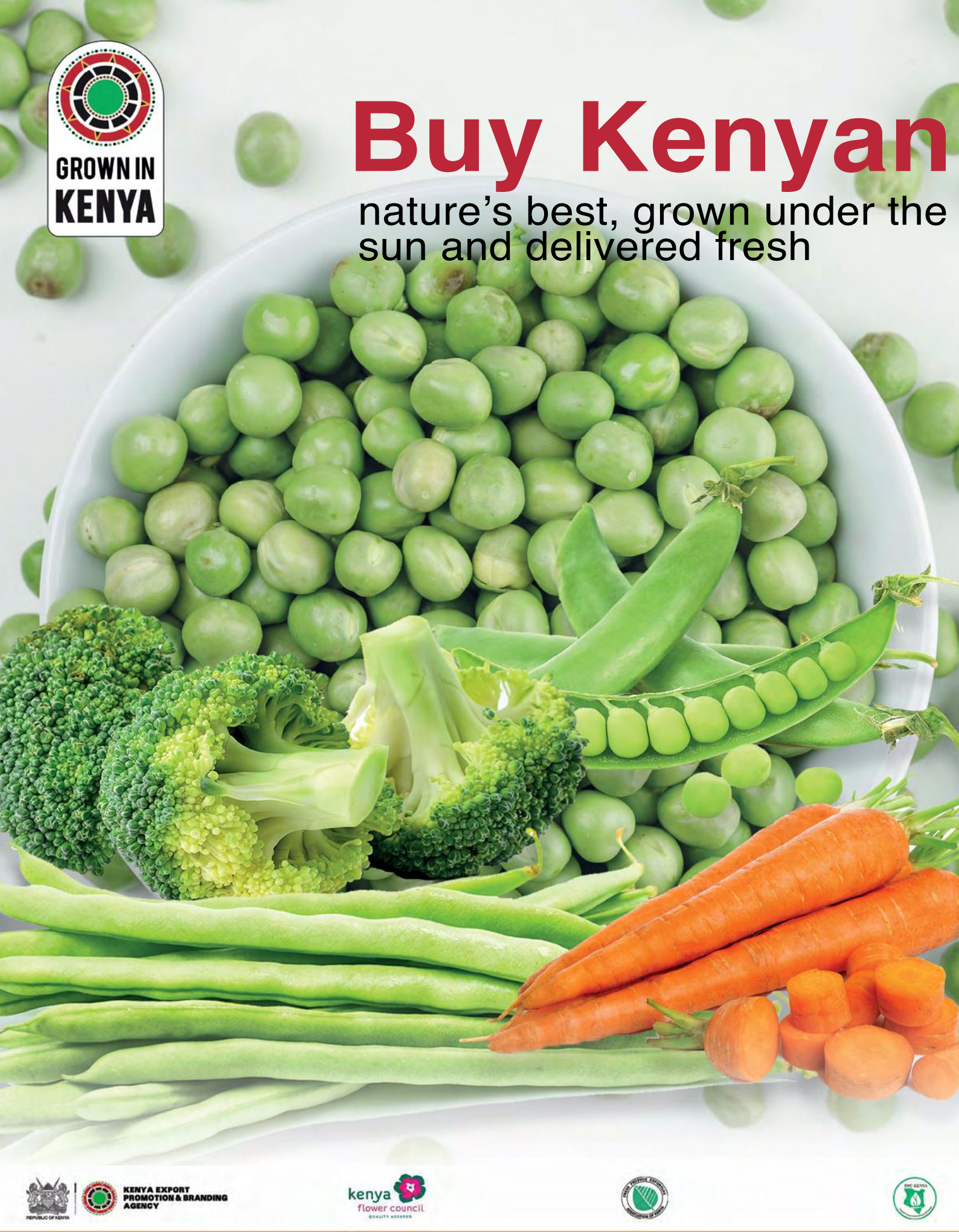



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Nuts Statistics

James Kariuki :jkariuki@apn.co.ke

Macadamia ,coconut and Cashew nut farming continued to attract interest among small scale farming in various parts of the country.

Macadamia

Area under cultivation of Macadamia has been on an upward trend buoyed by better farm gate prices as more and more farmers shun coffee farming in favour of macadamia farming.

While former coffee zones were the early adopters of Macadamia farming ,the crop is fast gaining traction in non-traditional growing zones where the crop is being introduced as a new enterprise.

Coconut

Coconut farming suffered a major setback when area under the crop shrunk by 9 percent from 906 ,84 hectares reported in 2020 to an estimated 77,566 hectares reported in .2021 The dry spell however had more adverse effects in Kilifi county where a substantial number of trees were reported to have dried up.

Cashew Nuts

The performance of the cashew nut subsector in Kenya has been on a decline with rampant tree felling reported for supply of firewood for domestic and industrial use .The problem has been worsened by low farm gate prices for cashew nuts contributing to depressed interest among local cashew nut farmers.

Year	Crop	Ha	MT	Earnings (Millions)
2017	Cashew Nuts	23,034	12,848	744.9
	Coconut	81,162.57	92,322	4,764.9
	MacadamiaNuts	16,153	41,614	5,198.2
2018	Cashew Nuts	22,655	13,852	518,172
	Coconut	82,921	92,569	4,772
	MacadamiaNuts	16,936	44,883	6,052,7
2019	Cashew Nuts	22,686	12,801.7	583.08
	Coconut	86,843	109,889	6,847
	MacadamiaNuts	17,589	39,814	5,633.6
2020	Cashew Nuts	22,690	12,668	587.25
	Coconut	84,906	110,013	5,038
	MacadamiaNuts	17,642	39,133	2,271
2021	Cashew Nuts	23,158	91,21	457.35
	Coconut	77,566	86,554	5,525
	Macadamia Nuts	-	42,562	2,786

Nut Traders Association Call for Recognition of Macadamia Nuts as a Cash Crop



This will help to diversify Kenya's cash crop portfolio

By James Kariuki

Kenyan-grown macadamia nuts are globally recognised for their versatility that enriches many recipes for foodstuffs, human drugs, cosmetic products and can be processed into cooking oil.

Roasted, salted and raw macadamia nuts have also become a must-have snack at cocktails and have been incorporated into giveaways snacks for travellers.

While macadamia nuts have risen to become a success within many regions in Kenya today, the Nut Traders Association (NUTRAK) avers that the government is yet to grant them commercial crop status, and to allocate the nut a fully-fledged expert team to oversee its development.

"A public authority will not only champion further research and development of better macadamia nuts varieties but will open doors for multi-billion investments in factories that need macadamia nuts as raw materials," he says.

Mr Kihara says that Kenya is globally celebrated as the third largest producer-exporter of macadamia nuts but sadly, farmers lose most of their earnings to nut processors who export the same after grading only to pay farmers based



“A public authority will not only champion further research and development of better macadamia nuts varieties but will open doors for multi-billion investments in factories that need macadamia nuts as raw materials,

on in-shelled nut weight.

The raw macadamia nuts are sold to foreign factories that make soaps, sunscreens, shampoos, animal feed, chocolate, milk, cooking oils and for confectionery-baking, ice cream as well as for skin related drugs.

In an interview, Mr Kihara said that an authority will

help to streamline the sector and formalise macadamia nuts trading. This will further improve access to region-tested seedlings that perform well within their areas and control the

sale of different varieties thereby helping farmers to get the most 'loved' varieties.

"Farmers buy all manner of seedlings, and this hurts the quality of macadamia nuts they sell to processors. Processors have this knowledge but reserve it for their own benefit. Some processors have contracted farmers to raise their preferred varieties but hardly disclose why they want only those varieties," he says.



Mr Kihara says an authority could also spearhead scientific research on production of on-demand varieties thereby helping farmers realise higher earnings. Such a public entity could also streamline macadamia trade that is largely controlled by processors who freely dictate the price of in-shell macadamia nuts.

In April 2020, farmers sold macadamia nuts at Sh220 per kilo, the highest price ever making it one of the most lucrative cash crops in the country after tea. Despite this indication, the prices fall below top producers South Africa and Australia

farm gate prices which range between Sh400 and Sh600 a kilo respectively.

Mr Kihara says cash crops such as cotton, coffee, tea, coconut, cashew nuts and sugar have received government and private support from development partners due to their positive impact on communities.

"The government has employed experts in these fields and recently, high yielding cotton varieties were distributed to farmers. Coffee and tea research stations are working hard to propagate new disease resistant and high yielding varieties, why not macadamia nuts?" he posed.

The NUTRAK boss adds that poor farm prices dictated by processors are adversely hurting macadamia nut farming since prices have been falling. In 2020 farmers earned SH2.7 billion for 39,134 tonnes produced down from the glorious Sh5.6 billion earned a year earlier for 39,814.9 tonnes exported abroad.

NUTRAK welcomed opening up of the subsector to more processors saying the current 33 processor-exporters had played a part in promoting propagation of macadamia nuts and shoring up prices for farmers.

Mr Kihara adds that South Africa and Australia farmers have boosted production of macadamia nuts due to availability of extension officers, full government support and strict marketing guidelines that ensure pricing is based on the grading of final produce.

"Such an authority could come up with regulations to guide farm husbandry practices from seed propagation, on-farm inspections to setting harvesting regulations. We must ban harvesting between October 1st to March 15 of every season to avert instances where processors buy immature nuts which hurts the quality of nuts from Kenya," he said.

The chairman adds that Kenya has enough macadamia quantities to support multi-billion shillings investments in processing and this requires government goodwill to usher in a revolution in the sector.




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Additional Budgetary Allocation for Cashew Nut Propagation Key to Revival of once vibrant Cashew Nuts Sub-sector

JAMES KARIUKI: jkariuki@apn.co.ke



Kenya's quest for higher food productivity lies in allocating direct budgetary funding for research and propagation of region-specific, drought and pest, and disease resistant seed varieties that will be sold to farmers at subsidised prices.

This means that Kenya has to review the current policy that allows international seed companies to use local research farms and manpower

Sh2,000. Its fruits are three times more and its gestation period is half the period taken by traditional Kenyan coconut varieties," says Market Research and Product Development Senior Officer, Innocent Masira.

In an interview, Mr Masira who has travelled across the world in search of export markets for locally produced nuts and oil crops says that many countries have invested heavily

“

“Kenya's path to greater food productivity lies in investing direct budgetary funds into research and propagation of region-specific, drought and pest-resistant seed varieties, sold to farmers at subsidized prices. This necessitates a review of current policies that allow international seed companies to exploit local research farms and manpower for profit.

”

to develop high quality seeds that are later multiplied for commercial sale to Kenyan farmers for a handsome profit.

“A case in point is the improved hybrid coconut varieties imported from India and have produced tremendous results in the Coast region. A seedling imported into the country costs

in research and development enabling their farmers to access hybrid seedlings cheaply as opposed to relying on imported seedlings and improved seeds.

The budgetary allocation avails local regulatory agencies muscle to police the development, production and marketing processes. This could

see agricultural extension workers hired to help farmers improve and adopt modern farm husbandry practices that will boost production while curbing runaway costs that have been a major bane in the industry.

Mr Masira observes that the formation of public entities to spearhead revival of various cash crops has attracted interest from local farmers now eager to re-introduce various crops on their parcels of land.

"While we support self regulation, the government comes in to support farmer empowerment through provision of subsidised seeds, extension services and regulation facilitation. We have also gone further to link farmers with processing companies thereby affirming confidence that there is a ready market for their produce," he says.

Unknown to many Kenyans, the government has been actively involved in supporting macadamia nuts, coconut and cashew nut farmers and marketing activities with a view to boost farmer incomes and generate new employment as well as investment activities.

"In the coconut and cashew nut subsectors, we wooed investors into the country and facilitated establishment of cottage industries in the Coast region. Some coconut dealers have partnered with investors and are now extracting Coconut oil for export," he observes.

The development has also seen other regulatory agencies roped in to support creation of standards, importation of clean seed materials, propagation and subsequent distribution of seedlings to farmers. This has helped revive coconut farming and concerted efforts by private and public sector players to revive the sector.

"In 2011, we launched a coconut plantation rehabilitation programme where we contract nursery operators annually to raise coconut seedlings for free distribution to farmers across the Coast region. From 7.8 million coconut trees in 2011, we have 10 million trees. Production has gone up, exports of coconuts up and we have more coconut factories," he says.

He says Kenya also needs to formalise palm beer production

and promote it nationally and internationally as a Kenyan product. Currently, it is locally made and sold informally with less or no regulatory control thereby exposing locals to risks of imbibing contaminated palm beer.

The public-private sector partnerships has also supported formulation of 14 standards that guide production and processing of new products for sale locally and abroad.

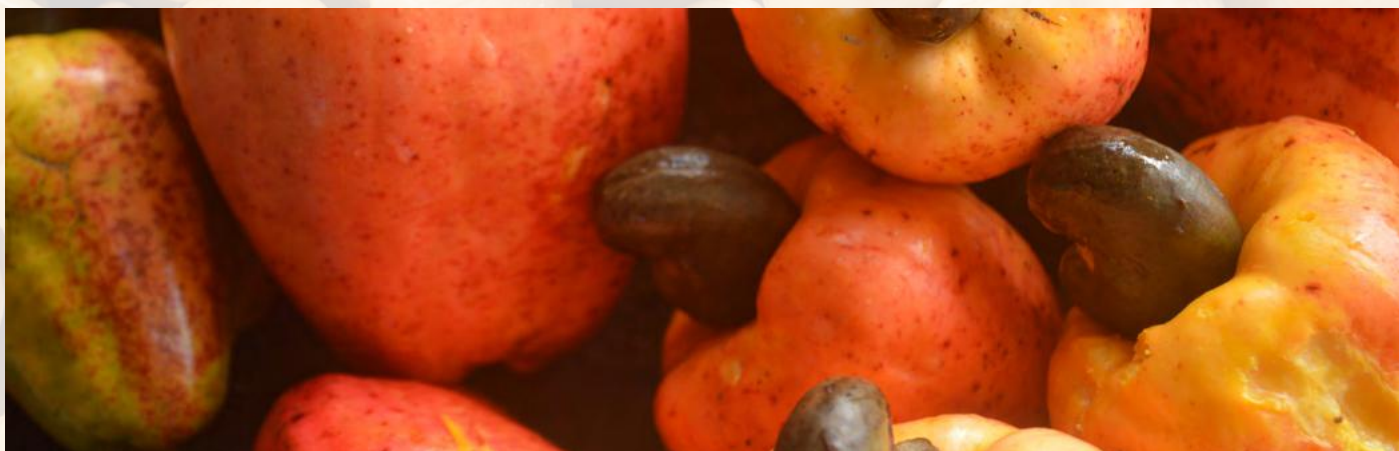
For cashew nuts, the collapse of the Kenya Cashew Nuts Company adversely affected farming of the crop as many farmers continued to be hurt by losses incurred from lost payments for deliveries made and loss of jobs for locals across the value chain.

"This is a special crop that requires direct government support since it is still in its infancy. A ban on raw cashew nut exports has adversely hurt their prices as local processors now dictate prices and set timelines for delivery payments," he says, adding cashew nut varieties are used hence the poor harvests reported in the region.

On Macadamia nuts, Kenya is experiencing runaway 'success' in the former white highlands that Mr Masira feels is way below its potential. The subsector is largely processors-led where farmers are contracted to grow and sell their produce at determined prices.

The senior marketer adds that this has led to proliferation of mixed varieties across the country as research has taken a back seat. This means farmers continue to sell their produce in kilos and not as graded nuts per kilo which could see them earn more.

"We need to re-introduce budgetary funding for agricultural research to help farmers get the right coconut, cashew and macadamia nut seedlings. While self regulation among member associations of processors, traders and farmers are welcome, the government must also affirm its authority on seedlings propagation, onsite nursery operations, produce movement and quality controls," he says.



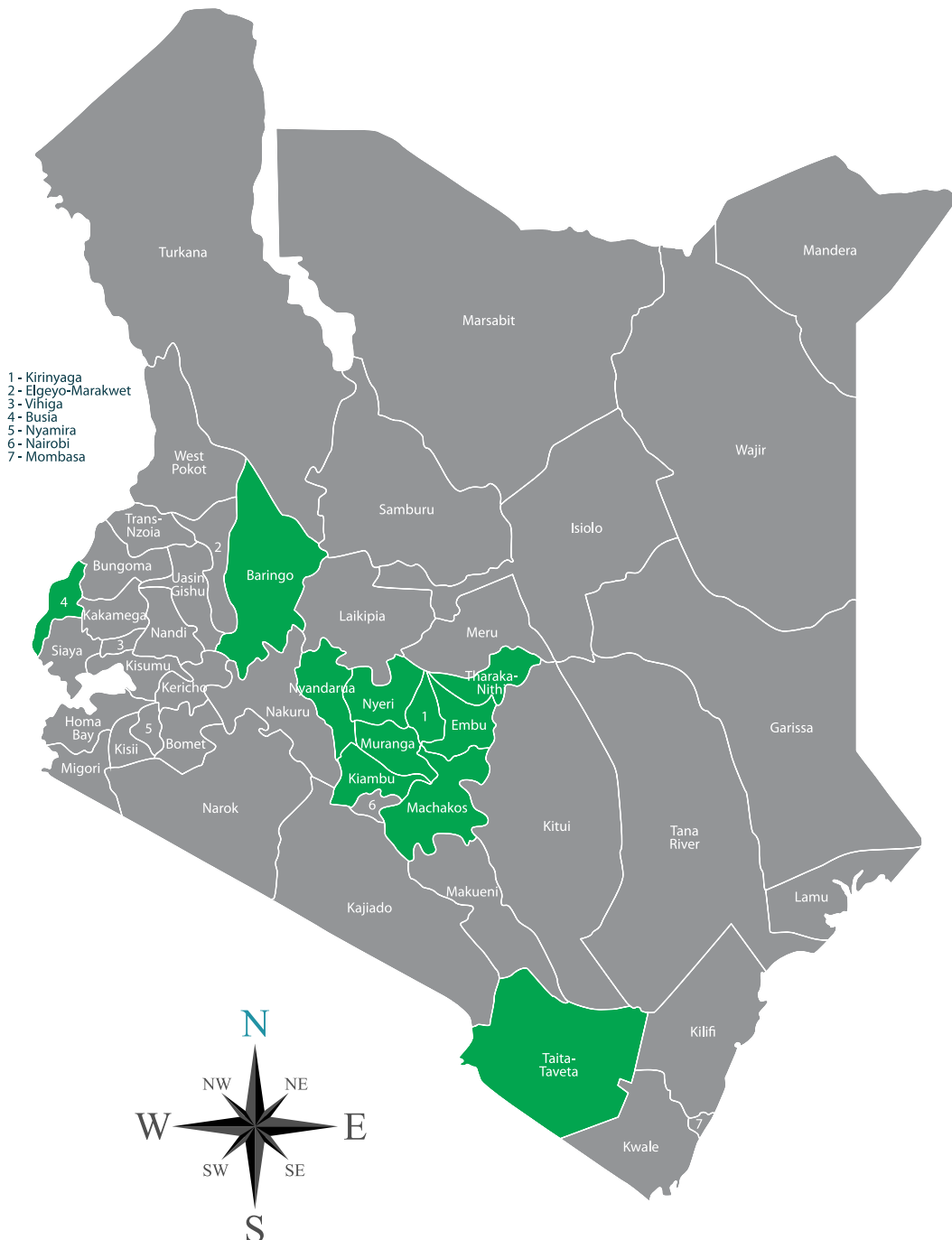
MACADAMIA PRODUCT PROFILE

By Sammy Mutwiri

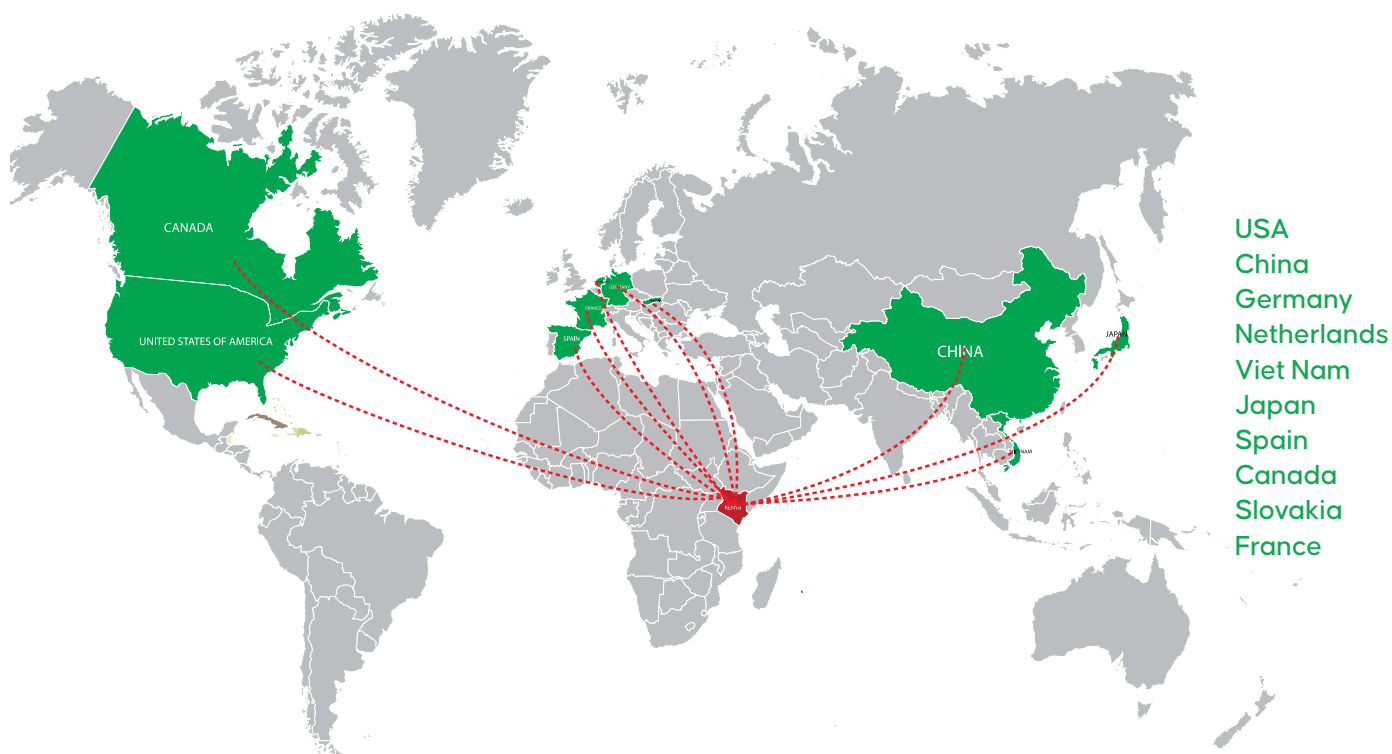
Product Varieties:

- 1) Macadamia integrifolia
- 2) Macadamia tetraphylla

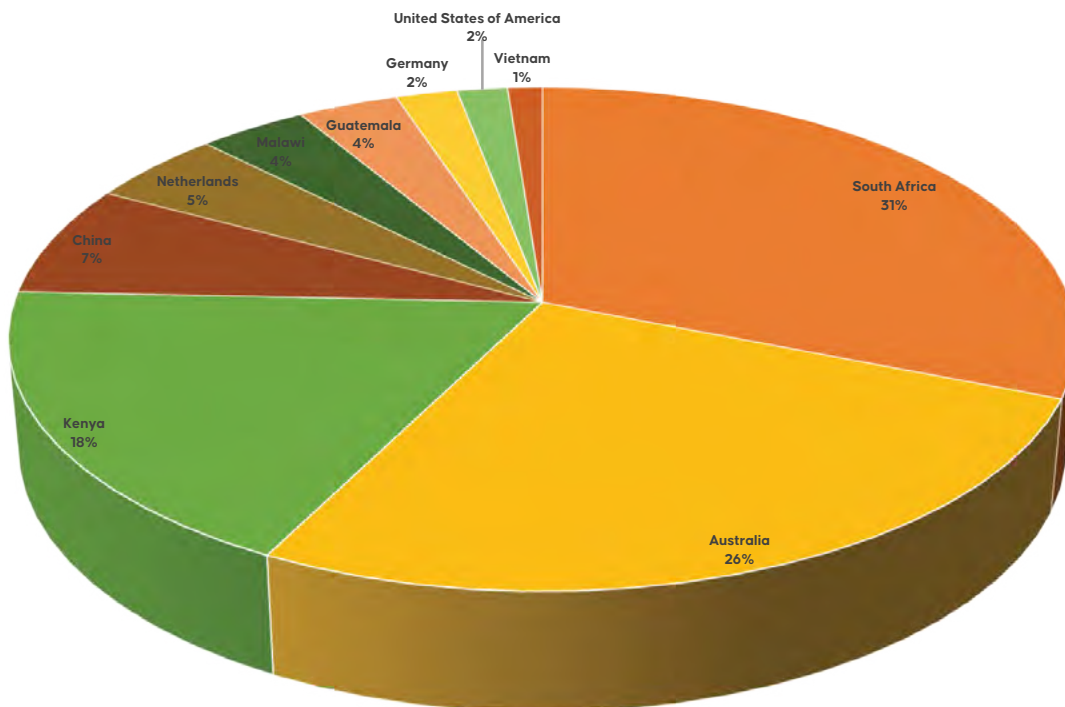
MACADAMIA COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION REGIONS IN KENYA



CURRENT EXPORT MARKETS



SHARE OF PARTNER IN WORLD MARKET



Emerging Markets identified

- i. The East African Community is in advanced stages of integration, the stage of a common market. The market has been a lead consumer of Kenyan goods and services. The market portends huge opportunity for future growth for nut exporters.
- ii. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is a free trade area with twenty-one member states stretching from Tunisia to Eswatini Kenya can make use of this huge market to export Nuts and Nut products.
- iii. The European Union (EU) is also among Kenya's main trading partners. Due to trade preferences extended under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPAs), the market is poised to absorb additional arrays of goods and services including nuts and nuts products.
- iv. The United Kingdom has been a bedrock and star performing market within the EU. However, due to the ongoing socio-economic and political dynamics associated with the BREXIT, the market will, as a distinct consumer, continue absorbing Kenyan export of goods and services, and with the current bilateral negotiation on going, Kenya can push for export of Nuts and nut products to the UK.
- v. The United States of America (USA) is already a strong partner and as a result of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), and the ongoing bilateral negotiation, if successfully concluded, the products potential and market share is poised to increase as a result of better uptake of Kenyan products and maximization on the possible 6400 tariff lines which includes Nuts and Nut products.
- vi. The African Continental markets are integrating under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) which has set the tempo for a vibrant market environment that will absorb an increasing portion of Kenyan Products, both goods and services gives Kenya an opportunity to export the Nuts and Nut products.
- vii. The rest of the European Continental market is a potential market for Kenyan export of goods and services. New demand for Nuts and Nut products is likely to come from the former economies in Eastern Europe, Eurasia and Russia that were once constrained by ideological considerations.
- viii. China and India are emerging as Kenya's leading trade partners especially as lead import sources resulting in widening trade deficits. Populations and market sizes of the two markets have the potentials of igniting strong Kenyan export flows in the medium term.



Challenges facing the sector

- i. **Pests and diseases:** Macadamia trees are susceptible to various pests and diseases, including macadamia nut borer, fungal infections, and root rot. These can significantly affect yield and quality if not properly managed.
- ii. **Limited access to markets:** While Kenya is a major producer of macadamia nuts, accessing international markets can be challenging for small-scale farmers and processors. Lack of market information, high transportation costs, and trade barriers can hinder market penetration and export growth.
- iii. **Price volatility:** Global macadamia nut prices can be volatile, impacting the income of farmers and industry profitability. Fluctuations in prices can make planning and investment decisions difficult for farmers and businesses within the sector.
- iv. **Lack of processing capacity:** The macadamia sector in Kenya is still developing its processing capacity. Limited infrastructure for value addition, such as processing facilities and equipment, can restrict the ability to produce higher-value macadamia products, thereby reducing potential earnings.
- v. **Inadequate extension services:** Access to quality agricultural extension services is crucial for farmers to improve their macadamia cultivation practices. However, the availability of extension services in remote macadamia-growing areas may be limited, affecting farmers' ability to adopt best practices and address challenges effectively.
- vi. **Climate change and water scarcity:** Climate change poses risks to macadamia production, with changing weather patterns and increased frequency of droughts affecting water availability. Macadamia trees require adequate water, and water scarcity can impact yields and overall orchard health.
- vii. **Lack of farmer education and training:** Many smallholder macadamia farmers may lack access to proper education and training on modern macadamia farming techniques. Insufficient knowledge about optimal orchard management practices, pest control, and post-harvest handling can limit productivity and quality.
- viii. **Regulatory and policy challenges:** Inconsistent or unclear regulations, licensing requirements, and policy frameworks can create uncertainties within the macadamia sector. Streamlining regulations and providing a conducive policy environment can support industry growth and attract investment.
- ix. **IX. Quality control and standards:** Maintaining consistent quality and meeting international standards is crucial for market competitiveness. Ensuring effective quality control measures and adherence to food safety standards can be a challenge, particularly among small-scale farmers and processors.





In The World Of Nuts, Macadamia Is Just As Valuable As Gold

By Gertrude Mirobi

Kenya is the third largest exporter of macadamia nuts after Australia and South Africa. It is grown by an estimated 200,000 smallholder macadamia farmers across the country while the rest is cultivated under plantation farms. Macadamia nuts are grown in Embu, Meru, Machakos, Kirinyaga, Kiambu, Taita Taveta, Tharaka Nithi, Baringo, Murang'a and Nyeri, Uasin Gishu, Elgeyo Marakwet and Nandi Counties accounting for 20% of the global supply.

Macadamia nuts are cultivated in the mineral-rich highlands of Kenya. Although macadamias may grow in a variety of soils, they thrive in those that are well-drained, preferably 1-2 meters deep, and have high levels of organic matter. The Muranga 20 variety of macadamia trees are quite adaptable to different climatic conditions and can be grown in most parts of the country.

The *Macadamia integrifolia* and the *Macadamia tetraphylla* species are the two most often grown variants in Kenya. The *Macadamia integrifolia* has smooth nut surfaces and is adaptable to a variety of agro-climatic situations, but the

Macadamia tetraphylla has rough-shelled bush nuts and is more adapted to cooler climates. In Kenya, the two species are grafted together to create a better variety that highly marketable and in demand.

According to global macadamia market reports, the macadamia market is projected to grow strongly, which is good news for Kenyan farmers who want to tap into this lucrative market.

Some of the world's leading players in the macadamia market include Kenya Nut Company Limited, Privamnuts EPZ Kenya Ltd, Nambucca Macnuts Pty Ltd, Royal Macadamia (Pty) Ltd, MWT Foods Australia, Wondaree Macadamias, MacFarms, Golden Macadamias, Hamakua Macadamia Nut Company, and Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut Corp.

According to Green & Gold Macadamias, one of the largest marketers of processed macadamias in the world, global growth and demand for macadamias has been on an upward trajectory and has seen a rise of exports around the world ensuring stable supply all year-round.



“

Macadamia nuts, often referred to as the ‘king of nuts,’ have seen a surge in global demand due to their delicate flavor and numerous health benefits. These delectable nuts from Kenya are not only enjoyed in their roasted, organic, salted, and chocolate-covered forms but are also integral ingredients in cakes, pastries, and sweets.

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But what is driving up this demand?

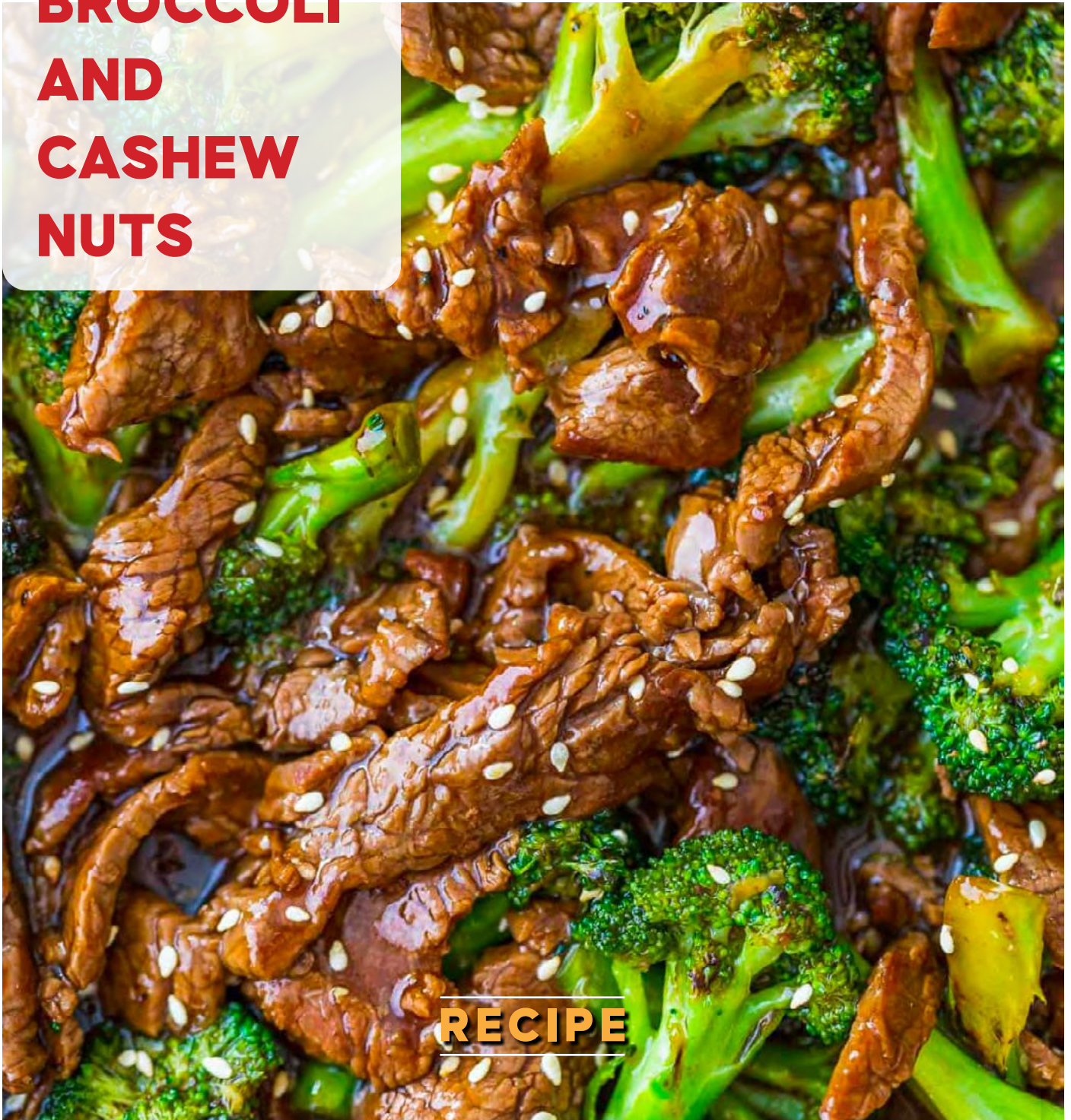
Because of its delicate flavor and various health advantages, macadamia is regarded as the world’s greatest dessert nut; it is the king of nuts.

- ✓ Roasted macadamia nuts, organic nuts, salted nuts, and chocolate-covered nuts are just a few of the delicious ways to enjoy Kenyan macadamia nuts.
- ✓ Nuts are used to make cakes, pastries, and sweets.
- ✓ Macadamia is utilized in creating natural and organic beauty products. It is prized for its hydrating, moisturizing, and anti-aging qualities.
- ✓ With a high concentration of oleic acid and palmitoleic acid, the oil found in macadamia nuts is believed to be volatile. This qualifies it for use in body lotions and sun care products.
- ✓ Anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antioxidant properties can be found in macadamia nuts.
- ✓ A variety of vital nutrients, including protein, carbs, niacin, thiamin, iron, riboflavin, and vitamin A are found in macadamia nuts.





STIR-FRIED BEEF WITH BROCCOLI AND CASHEW NUTS



RECIPE



By Irene Van De Graaf: igraaf@brand.ke

Nuts do not only taste great, but they are also among the best sources of plant-based proteins. Some of the reasons to include nuts in your diet include,

- ✓ They are rich in protective antioxidants.
- ✓ Supports gut health.
- ✓ May aid weight management.
- ✓ High in fats.
- ✓ Supports heart health.

Below is a recipe you can enjoy with your family to reap some of these benefits.

Ingredients

- ✂ 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- ✂ 2 x 200g sirloin steaks, trimmed of fat and thinly sliced.
- ✂ 2 garlic cloves thinly sliced.
- ✂ 2.5cm piece fresh ginger, finely sliced into strips
- ✂ 50g unsalted cashew nuts, chopped.
- ✂ 3 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
- ✂ 1 tbsp tomato ketchup
- ✂ 3 tbsp light soy sauce
- ✂ Pinch of chilli flakes
- ✂ 200g Chinese or tender stem broccoli

Method

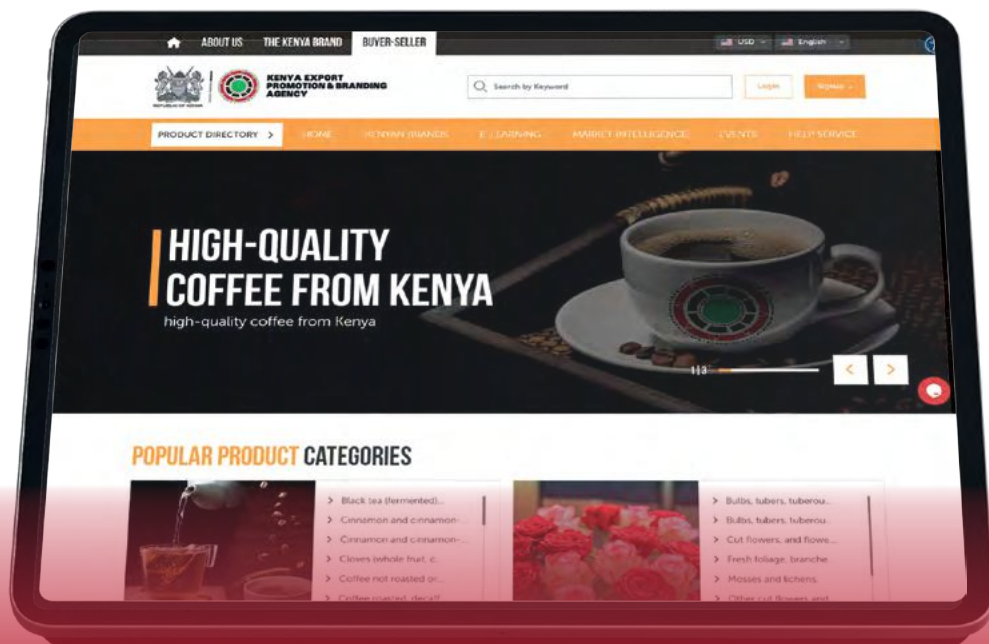
1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a high heat. Add the beef, in 2 batches, and stir-fry for 3 minutes. Remove the beef and set aside.
2. Add the garlic, ginger and cashews and stir-fry for just a minute, then add the sweet chilli sauce, ketchup, soy sauce, chilli flakes and 100ml water. Bring to boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Add the broccoli to the sauce and stir-fry for 2 minutes, then add the beef to the pan to heat through for 2 minutes and turn off the heat.

Make this with steamed rice and you've got yourself a meal in just 30 minutes!





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