

CALL FOR PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

Horticultural industry is currently the fastest growing agricultural sub-sector in the country, is a major contributor to GDP, and is the second foreign exchange earner after tea. The sector contributes more than 50% of the country's export earnings and employs 80% of the population either directly or indirectly. The success of the sub-sector has seen the export of horticultural produce rising from 1,480 tonnes in 1968 to 133,232 tonnes in 2003, fetching KShs 28.8 billion, out of a total of KShs 54 billion of all production. Total exports constitute only 4%, of total production while 96% is consumed locally. The major export market is the European Union countries taking 80% of total exports. In deed Kenya is the leading exporter to the EU contributing 25% of imports. Other markets include Middle East, South Africa, Norway, USA, Canada and Japan and South Africa.

The sub sector has shown a steady 10 – 20% annual increase in production, exports and earnings over the last 5 years. The private sector has contributed largely to this steady growth with the Government providing structural and macroeconomic reforms including a liberalized trading environment. There however exist several constraints, which deter the industry's steady growth including poor infrastructure, declining productivity, inadequate extension service provision, and external market competition as well as market regulations. To sustain and improve efficiency in production and marketing processes to maintain Kenya's competitiveness, the industry needs to enhance production technology generation and dissemination as well as comply with international market requirements.

Horticultural Research Fund (HRF)

The need for the establishment of HRF arose out of the general constraints facing the industry and in particular inadequate research in horticulture including:

- Lack of industry driven and participatory research.
- Limited collaboration between research organizations and the industry when determining research priorities.
- High reliance on external funds with no contribution from the industry.
- Low dissemination and adoption by stakeholders of research findings.
- Poor research-extension-farmer linkages.

In light of emerging challenges in the international trading arena, the government and the industry stakeholders felt the need to operationalize the Horticultural Research Fund.

The HRF was established by introducing a levy on horticultural exports to generate funds to address the above constraints. In this view, Horticultural Crops Development Authority (HCDA) has constituted a Horticultural Research Fund (HRF) Committee whose membership is drawn from different stakeholders in the sub-sector to provide guidelines in horticultural research in priority areas.

The Horticultural Research Fund (HRF) Committee invites proposals from researchers to carry out research on the following priority areas:

1. Major causes of horticultural produce (flowers, fruits and vegetables) interceptions at export markets and rejections at the points of exit and provide practical, cost effective interventions to address the problems.
2. Status of horticultural produce in the domestic markets in respect to food safety to enhance policy guidelines formulation.

Requirements

The proposals should include the following;

- Demonstrate how the activities will reduce rejection, interceptions and improve food safety.
- Show how the research output will impact on productivity.
- Show how it will collaborate with other relevant institutions.
- A letter of commitment from collaborators.
- Work plan and Budget (research period not to exceed one year).

Submission of proposals in hard and soft copy should be done within 6 weeks from 18th July 2005.

Standard proposal application forms (Form HRF 001) are available from the HRF Secretariat together with guidelines for preparing proposals (Form HRF 002). All correspondence should be addressed to;

The Chairman
HRF Steering Committee
Horticultural Crops Development Authority
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