

Current Status of Organic Agriculture In Uganda

By

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Organic farming in Uganda cont'd

- Formal (certified) organic farming in Uganda started in 1993, mainly as a response to unfolding opportunities in the international markets, but the farming system has been in practice for quite along time
- Currently there are over 55,000 certified organic farmers in Uganda and over 40,000 under conversion (NOGAMU, Dec 2006), an increase from the 2002 figure of 28,000 farmers (Soel survey, Feb 2003)
- Over 185,000 ha of certified land
- Close to half of the total number of certified farmers are involved in organic cotton production

- Favourable climate in terms of weather and soils
- Uganda is among the least users of synthetic artificial fertilizers in Africa with less than 2% or 1kg/ha as compared to Sub Saharan average of 9kg/ha or less than 5% of that used in East Africa (MPFED, 2003)

Organic farming in Uganda cont'd

- The rapid development of the organic sector in Uganda has also been attributed to the founding of NOGAMU in 2001
- NOGAMU was created to coordinate and promote all stakeholders and activities linked to organic agricultural development in Uganda
- To date, training programmes in organic agriculture have been conducted at grassroots and regional levels
- National organic standards (UOS) have been developed by stakeholders spearheaded by NOGAMU, the recently the East African Organic Products standards (EAOPS) has been commissioned.

- A local organic certification body (Ugocert) has been created by the organic stakeholders to reduce on cost of certification
- The number of organic export projects has grown from 5 in 2001 to 15 in 2004 and 32 by April of 2007
- Overall there is increasing interest to engage in organic production, and in the last 2 years, more stakeholders, including government, have taken a keen interest in promotion of organic cotton production, especially in northern Uganda

Key Challenges

- Demand still outpaces supply for most products
- Lack of organized smallholder groups to consistently raise the volumes and supply the markets
- High costs of certification
- Absence of an explicit policy yet to turn the comparative advantage the country has into competitive advantage
- For organic cotton production in particular, lack of an elaborate technical package especially in soil management and pest and disease control for farmers.

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