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TEGEMEO INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

Press Release:

Title

Agri benchmark Cash Crop Conference 2016, Bangkok, Thailand

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Key Messages

Tegemeo Institute was represented at the 2016 Agri benchmark Cash Crop Conference by Mr. Kevin Onyango. The conference held between 26th and 30th June 2016 at Eastin Hotel in Sathorn, Bangkok, Thailand was attended by researchers, economists, advisors, producers and specialists in key sectors of Agriculture and Horticulture from around the globe with representation from Africa, Europe, Asia, North America and South America. The conference also attracted participation from both government and non-government officials from Thailand and other countries.
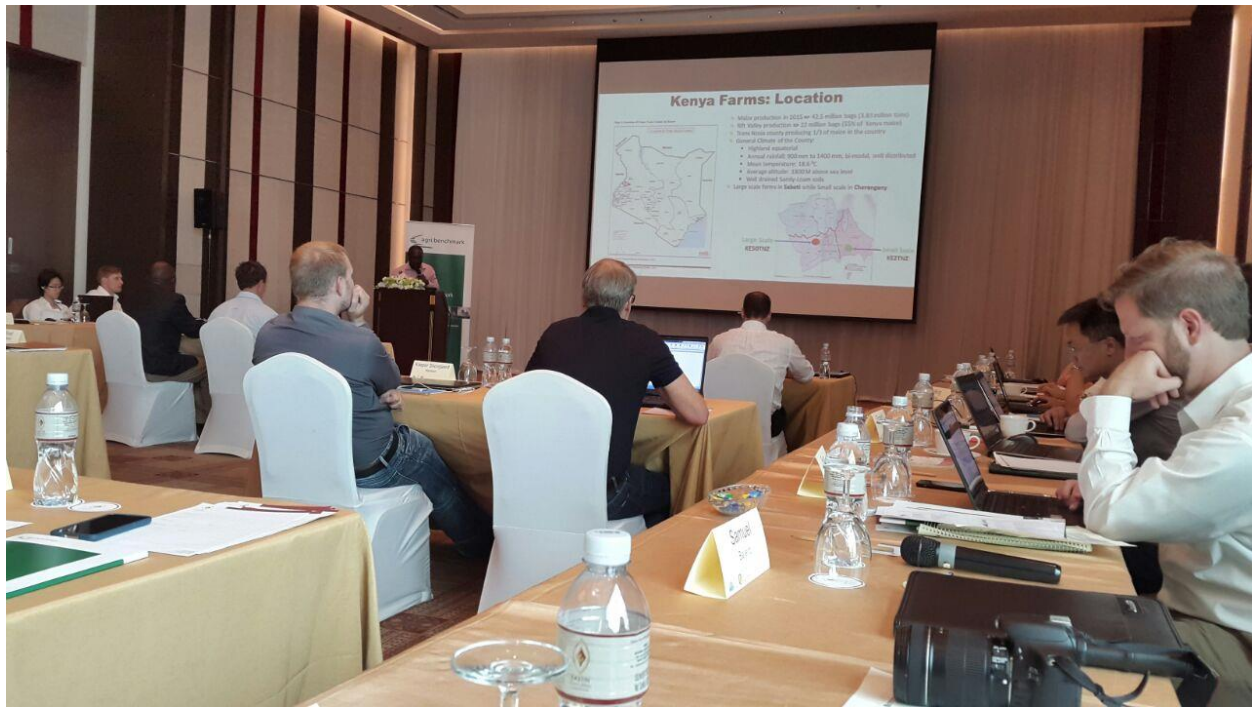
The conference covered an array of topics and discussed pertinent issues and challenges facing global agriculture including climate change and variability and its potential mid- and long term effects on agriculture, technology use and adoption, farm level profitability, input and output prices, trade and competitiveness, drought and its impacts on the sector, and many more. The participants engaged in these issues with several mind stimulating presentations being made and participants having sessions to critically evaluate and contribute to various research works and results presented.

The institute contributed at various stages and in different sessions of the conference. Mr. Kevin Onyango made a presentation titled *'Crops in Africa: The Case of Maize Production in Kenya'* on the third day of the conference in the session titled "Crop Production in Africa". The

presentation highlighted maize production systems in Kenya and the farm level profitability and cost analysis results based on the data from the two Agri benchmark typical maize farms. The presentation also highlighted the key challenges in the Kenyan maize farms including the relatively high cost of production emanating from high cost of labor and inputs despite the existence of a Government fertilizer subsidy program aimed at reducing fertilizer prices in the country. The other challenges discussed included relatively low productivity levels mainly attributable to the rain-fed nature of the production system characterized by poor agronomic practices, low input use, relatively high soil acidity levels, increasingly limited access to extension services and credit access related challenges. Mr. Onyango emphasized the need for an integrated evidence based approach in tackling the challenges. He outlined the role of research and the need for the government to invest in agriculture for its eventual transformation to take place.

Mr. Kevin Onyango at the meeting

Part of the Agribench gathering

Mr. Onyango also presented the results of an ongoing research at the Institute titled ***"Socio-economic determinants of choice and efficiency of mechanization technology use among small holder maize farmers in Kenya"*** during the poster session. The poster session had several posters from across the world showcasing different research works. The session was organized as a competition with a tablet up for grabs for the best poster selected in a vote. Tegemeo Institute's poster was voted among the best two globally and the best poster from Africa. The poster highlighted the critical factors that determine whether a maize farmer chose manual, draught animals powered or engine powered machinery for farm mechanization. These factors included age of the household head, level of education, commercial orientation, slope of the farm, household income levels, land size and access to credit. Initial findings highlighted in the poster also showed that factors that improved maize production efficiency included use of engine power technology, fertilizer application or a combination of use of draught animal power and fertilizers.

Mr. Kevin Onyango makes his poster presentation

Lastly, interested participants were trained on Agri benchmark's typical farm approach and accurate data collection, transcription and validation. The institute participated in the training session seeking clarification on points that were initially not well understood. The knowledge gained from the training will go a long way in validation and correction of the already existing maize typical farm data for Kenya.