

## ACTESA hosts seed harmonization and APIEXPO meetings



First Zambian President, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda with Dr. Muyunda



Zambian Finance Minister, Hon. Situmbeko Musokotwane with Dr. Muyunda

link African honey processors and exporters to buyers from developed markets. The Expo also featured an exhibition at which ACTESA participated.

Apiexpo Africa 2010 and COMRAP seed workshop was officially opened by Zambian President, Rupiah Banda, represented by Finance Minister, Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane. Former Zambian President Dr. Kenneth Kaunda also visited the exhibition stands.

During the official opening, President Banda noted that despite having the potential, Africa had not benefited much from honey production and trade.

He said of the US\$ 200 billion worth of business, Africa's share was only one per cent when it could do more considering its endowment of a huge resource base with plenty of land, good ecological factors and the presence of a big population of healthy bees.

President Banda further acknowledged the COMRAP and its objective to improve food security and livelihood among member Countries.

And ACTESA Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Cris Muyunda, said quality seed is pertinent to increased agricultural productivity. He noted that COMRAP is building capacity for small-scale farmers, emerging farmers and agro-dealers in relation to micro-finance, fertiliser and seed development.

COMRAP is in the process of procuring laboratory equipment through National Seed Authorities (NSA) to assist in seed certification, inspections and healthy testing.

The COMRAP seed harmonization programme seeks to achieve the following by mid 2011:

- An approved way forward for the harmonization process and status of seed harmonization in other regions;
- Field and laboratory standards for selected crops;
- Seed import/export procedures manual;
- COMESA Variety Release System for selected crops;
- Document with technical agreements approved.

Following the directives of the Ministers of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, ACTESA is scaling up its honey sector support activities. In partnership with the Agribusiness Network, ACTESA hosted the APITRADE AFRICA APIEXPO 2010, under the theme, 'The role of honey in attaining food security in Africa,' Lusaka, Zambia from October 26-29, 2010.

The meeting was held back to back with the European Union (EU) supported COMESA Regional Agro-inputs Programme (COMRAP) seed harmonization workshop.

More than 500 apiculture experts attended the Expo that showcased top honey packers, service providers, equipment suppliers and innovative beekeeping initiatives in the region. It was tailored to encourage excellence across the value chain and

# ACTESA and ISU sign Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) and Iowa State University, Seed Science Center, to work together on mutual interests in seed sector development and biotechnology.

The MoU was signed on October 13, 2010 in Des Moines, Iowa by ACTESA CEO, Dr. Cris Muyunda, represented by Senior Biotechnology Policy Advisor, Dr. Getachew Belay and Dr. Wendy Wintersteen, Endowed Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The Seed Science Center of ISU is recognized in the US as a national Center of Excellence in seed research, education and technology transfer, as well as in global seed programs.

On the occasion, Dr. Muyunda indicated how ACTESA would benefit from the great tradition of seed science, and bio-safety expertise of the BIGMAP (Biosafety Institute for Genetically Modified Agricultural Products) Project of ISU.

“The partnership in the seed sector will be of great assistance to ACTESA’s ongoing activities through the COMESA Regional Agro-Inputs Program (COMRAP),” Dr. Muyunda noted.

## ACTESA forges 10 year strategy

ACTESA’s 10 year strategy is a dynamic document that will focus on ACTESA’s programme portfolio, long term programme areas, the Agency’s results framework, implementation mechanism and operational strategy among others.

Consultants supporting ACTESA on the strategy are focusing on, the SWOT analysis (DFID supported), communications (USAID supported) while the Strengthening Markets and Regional Trade for Food Security (SMART-FS) (AUSAID supported) is being designed as an anchor programme for the strategy.

The draft strategy will be presented at the upcoming ACTESA Stakeholders and Partner Forum in Entebbe, Uganda.

Dr. Wintersteen stressed the importance of seed to African farmers, and noted that ISU was pleased to partner with ACTESA the very important aspect of seed and biotechnology.

ISU is already working with ACTESA in implementing the European Union supported COMRAP.

## SMART FS design underway

The Strengthening Markets and Regional Trade for Food Security (SMART-FS) design is on course, with a final programme design expected to be finalized by April 2011.

The design process started off on October 15, 2010, with the design team conducting missions to a number of countries in east and southern African region selected as representatives for the selected SMART-FS market sheds.

The design team met stakeholders, farmer groups and the private sector in Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania regarding best practices to be included in the design of the program, what is already happening on the ground (to avoid duplication and ensure complementarities) and how best SMART-FS can be rolled out to ensure it implements its objectives as effectively as possible, thereby achieving ACTESA overall objectives.

The activity took a total of two weeks to complete and the team gathered in Lusaka and met with ACTESA CEO Dr. Cris Muyunda on October 31, 2010.

SMART FS, supported by Australian Aid is meant to create a trade and market facility in the region in order to strengthen regional markets and food security. The programme envisages operating a business model facility that will engage the private sector, public sector and agribusiness.



# COMRAP trains 52 agro-dealers



An agro-dealer training of trainers' workshop for Rwanda and Burundi was held from 7th- 15th, October, 2010 in Kigali, Rwanda. The workshop, which had a total of 36 participants from Burundi and Rwanda, was officially opened by Mr. Jean Damascene Nyamwasa, the IFDC Regional Coordinator for Communication and Training in Rwanda.

During the training workshop, a field trip was organized in order to avail an opportunity to trainers to interact with practicing agro-dealers, who are the target of the COMRAP agro-dealer programme. Talking to some agro-dealers in Kigali's Kabuga Township, Mr Ken Shawa, the COMRAP's agro-dealer training coordinator, encouraged them to be focused in their work and encouraged them to enroll in the COMRAP agro-dealer programme.

The last COMRAP agro-dealer training of trainers' workshop was held from 11th-18th October, 2010 in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was officially opened by Mr. Piero Nardi, a member of the European Union delegation to Kenya. A total of 16 potential trainers from Ethiopia attended the training workshop.

The COMRAP Manager, Mr. Julius Mathende, in his closing remarks, emphasized the synergies in the COMRAP components stating that an agro-dealer programme could only be meaningful if agro-dealers are linked to finance and to a viable quality seed system.

He further explained that the COMRAP is important in contributing to the development of capacity of rural based small and medium enterprises, in improving smallholder farmers' access to agricultural inputs and in enhancing skills of agro-dealers in rural markets.

The first phase of the COMRAP agro-dealer training workshops were meant to equip trainers with the relevant knowledge and necessary facilitation skills.

COMRAP has now embarked on a series of specific, in-country agro-dealer and agent training sessions in all the targeted countries. Thus far training workshops are already underway in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Swaziland.

