



## OUR AGENDA

**P**hew, 2007 is indeed jam packed with monumental events in the Kenya horticultural sub sector.

The year started with carbon miles debate heating up in our UK market, and moved on to industry realization that we needed to get more involved in the then frustratingly slow-pace of the economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations between our regional countries and

the EU. We then moved on to launch KenyaGAP, the now GLOBALGAP (formerly EUREPGAP) benchmarked Standard for flowers, vegetables and fruits, the first comprehensive international stand-ard in Africa. In March 2007 we launched the Horticultural Council for Africa (HCA), Central and Southern African Countries which is coordinated by FPEAK Secretariat. It is however the launch of Kenya Horticultural Council, which brings together FPEAK and Kenya Flower Council, in October 2007, that is bound to have the highest impact on how Kenyan horticulture trade facilitation business is conducted.

The FPEAK secretariat is focused on timely service delivery to members and the horticulture sector in general. The Board of FPEAK, under the able Chairmanship of Tiku Shah, is providing fantastic and constant guidance on what needs to be done to enhance horticulture development. To this end, we continue to set ambitious agenda for the sub sector.

On carbon emissions and global warming, FPEAK continues to expound the fact that on the whole, our horticultural production is greener than many other parts of the world: it is largely manual (meaning less fossil fuel dependency), and a lot of our freight cargo is incidental, transported as belly cargo in passenger (tourist) planes that would have flown anyway (even without our horticulture produce). By and large, carbon footprint of Kenyan horticultural produce is at least 4-6 times less, even with airfreight, than that of fresh produce in temperate lands, which require much more energy for temperature, daylight correction, and field activities. Quite simply put, we are 'grown under the sun', and 'air freighted

for consumer freshness'.

On the Economic partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations with the EU, the horticultural sector continues to work closely with the Ministry of trade and Industry, and through our Horticultural Council for Africa, with other regional Governments to ensure that the market access aspects of the EPA are signed (between the EU and regional countries including Kenya) before 31st December 2007. This is because any failure to conclude these negotiations in a timely manner would result in Kenya paying tariffs of about 8-15% FOB value, which would almost shut down the sector. We are glad to note that great progress has been made so far between the two sides, and the current agreed trade liberalization has been able to protect domestic agricultural sector from cheap imports. Kenyan horticulture exports contribute over 700 million US\$ in forex 92006(, involve 4.5 million people directly and indirectly, and 80% of the production is by small scale farmers.

On standards, FPEAK is happy to have KenyaGAP, Africa's only comprehensive standard for fruit, vegetable and flowers. We believe that 'compliance to Standards is the passport to international trade' It is important that our farmers, particularly the small and medium scale producers, produce strictly under the same standard if they are to bulk their produce together to achieve volumes that can be traded collectively for economies of scale. None standardized production means no bulking and this could lock out small scale producers from participating in international marketing. FPEAK seeks to mobilize KenyaGAP compliance across the country, to ensure quality and tradable products.

Horticulture in Kenya is a tough, large sector. FPEAK is up to the task, and....this is our Agenda.

*Dr. Stephen Mbithi*  
CEO, FPEAK