

Newsletter

Jan-Feb 2024



HORTIFRESH
FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES ASSOCIATION



HortiFresh



At Harvest Money Expo

WE SUCCESSFULLY PARTICIPATED IN THE THREE DAYS ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION (HARVEST MONEY EXPO) ORGANISED BY THE VISION GROUP, THIS WAS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO MEET DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SECTOR AND ALSO SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT THE SECTOR TO THE ATTENDEES.

HortiFresh is the umbrella association of growers, exporters, and input service providers of fresh fruits and vegetables in Uganda, working closely with inline ministries and departments to better the sub-sector, founded in 2019 and currently located along Balintuma Road Mengo Kampala.

Plot 669 Balintuma Road
Mengo - Kampala

Email: admin@hortifreshffv.org

www.hortifreshffv.org

Tel: +256 393248395



@hortifreshffv



HortiFresh Association Uganda Limited

INSIDE

**TRAINING OF EXPORT
COMPANY DIRECTORS AND
PACKHOUSE OPERATORS**

HARVEST MONEY EXPO

**OUR ED FRED ZAKE VISITS
HORTICULTURE ASSOCIATION
IN ETHIOPIA**

**TRAINING OF
HORTICULTURAL VENDORS IN
NORTHERN UGANDA ABOUT
FOOD SAFETY**

SECTORIAL INFORMATION

**ABOUT HORTIFRESH
MEMBERSHIP**



TRAINING OF EXPORT COMPANY DIRECTORS

In collaboration with MAAIF, GIZ, Technoserve and Swisscontact, we kicked off the fruitful year 2024 with training sessions for export company directors, quality controllers and produce sorters on methodologies of sampling of consignments (ISPM31), Food safety, agrochemical safe use and handling in the export business of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The trainings aimed at increasing collaborations for compliance with SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary Issues) and reduce MRLs (Maximum Residue Limits) to Mitigate Interceptions and Enhance Food Safety.

Over 500 participants attended the trainings, which was facilitated by the Department for Crop Inspection and Certification Inspectors under Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries.

This was a great opportunity, especially for the directors of new companies in the export business, to extensively learn about SPS, MRLs, and Interceptions, which are key aspects requiring maximum attention in the export business of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Furthermore, the directors were updated on the state of interceptions so far and the need to build the capacity of their teams to ensure that interceptions, both locally and in the international markets are reduced for the benefit of their companies and the country's reputation at large.

HORTIFRESH PRESENTED AT HARVEST MONEY EXPO ON EXPORT REQUIREMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES.



Mr. Baguma Joshua Presenting about Export Requirements of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables at the Harvest Money Expo

The event spanned three consecutive days from Friday, February 23rd, to Sunday, February 25th. The Association presented about export requirements and different market opportunities for Uganda's fresh fruits and vegetables.

In the presentation delivered by the Head of Compliance and Agronomy Department at HortiFresh, Mr. Joshua Baguma, he made it clear that the country's produce is still at high demand in the international markets but faces low and inconsistent supply.

He mentioned capsicums and pineapples as the most identifiable and outstanding products from Uganda on international markets due to their delicious and unique taste accompanied by other products such as Hass Avocado, Garden eggs, Matooke, among others.

He informed the participants about the unexploited opportunities in the value chain of fresh fruits and vegetables, starting from agroinputs to gardens, harvest, and export hence urging anyone interested in joining the business to reach out to the association's offices along Balintuma Road in Mengo for support and advisory.

The presentation also cited poor agronomy practices and lack of traceability as some of the major challenges leading to the interception of exporters' consignments, resulting in significant losses. However, he promised that the association is working diligently to neutralize these challenges through rigorous training and information sharing.

The presentation took place in the Horticulture Village hosted by TechnoServe, who are also pushing for a safer value chain in horticultural produce and market linkages in Uganda through their HortiMAP project, which has benefited most of the outgrowers in the FFV subsector across the country.

Hundreds of participants in the Expo reached out to the association's table to learn more about fresh fruits and vegetables, most of whom were farmers and those aspiring to enter into the export business.

Farmers were advised to form groups, which can ease HortiFresh's efforts to offer trainings in good agricultural practices for enhance compliance, increase production and Market linkages.

Author: Richard Ssebulime

SECTORIAL INFORMATION



The fresh fruits and vegetable sector is a vital component to Uganda's agricultural industry and economy. The country boasts diverse agro-climatic zones, enabling the cultivation of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the year. Hortifresh being the Umbrella association of growers and exporters of fresh fruits and Vegetables in the country, it is working hard to ensure that the sector drives more revenue to benefit the stakeholders and the country at large.

Uganda cultivates a wide range of fruits and vegetables which are suitable for local, regional and international market, these among others include; bananas, Pineapples, Mangoes, Citrus fruits, Tomatoes, Onions, Eggplants, and Peppers, Chilli, Okra among others.

The country has significant export potential for its fresh produce exports to regional markets such as Kenya, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and at the international market to Europe, Middle East and beyond.

With an increasing global demand for organic and ethically sourced produce, Uganda's fresh fruits and vegetable sector has the potential to expand its market reach by focusing on quality, certifications, adhering to the market standards and sustainable farming practices, Uganda's climatic condition favours the growth of unique products which almost outcompetes others on the market.

Though the sector is steadily growing, a significant portion of fruit and vegetable production still occur on small-scale farms, with most of the exporters relying of these small holder farmers to supply them with goods for export. However, there's ongoing effort to improve productivity and access to markets for these smallholder farmers and encourage large scale farming of fruits and vegetables.

There's a growing interest and advocacy for organic farming practices, meeting the demand for organic produce both locally and internationally, though it is a bit expensive to go organic, but the market for organic produce is also profitable as compared to the other market.

However, Despite its potential and the efforts to better the FFV sector, the sector still faces challenges such as post-harvest losses due to inadequate storage facilities and infrastructure, inconsistent quality standards, limited value addition, and sometimes, unreliable market access.

At the export end, the issue of interception is still a major challenge to the country's produce and this is mainly due to Pesticide residues, Maximum Residue Limits, Documentation among others.

Mitigating the above challenges, Hortifresh in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries together with different partners have tried and still pulling resources to build capacity among the stakeholders to ensure that these challenges are addressed and solved.

The sector presents opportunities for growth and development, but addressing Interceptions, infrastructure, improving post-harvest handling, and enhancing market linkages remain crucial for further success and sustainability.

MEMBERSHIP

WHY BECOME A MEMBER OF HORTIFRESH?

HortiFresh is an Umbrella association for fresh fruits and vegetables Exporters, Growers, Processors and service providers (Input services, Airlines, Banks, Transporters, Cargo handlers, Clearing Agents among others) aimed at achieving Sustainability and Economic Development for the sector through;

- » Collaboration
- » Inclusion
- » Accountability
- » Sustainability
- » Compliance

HortiFresh has established good governance structures with checks and balances to protect members' interests, plus offering access to information in key markets.

Credibility, accountability and transparency are a key at HotiFresh, together with value for money through effective service delivery for the good of our members.

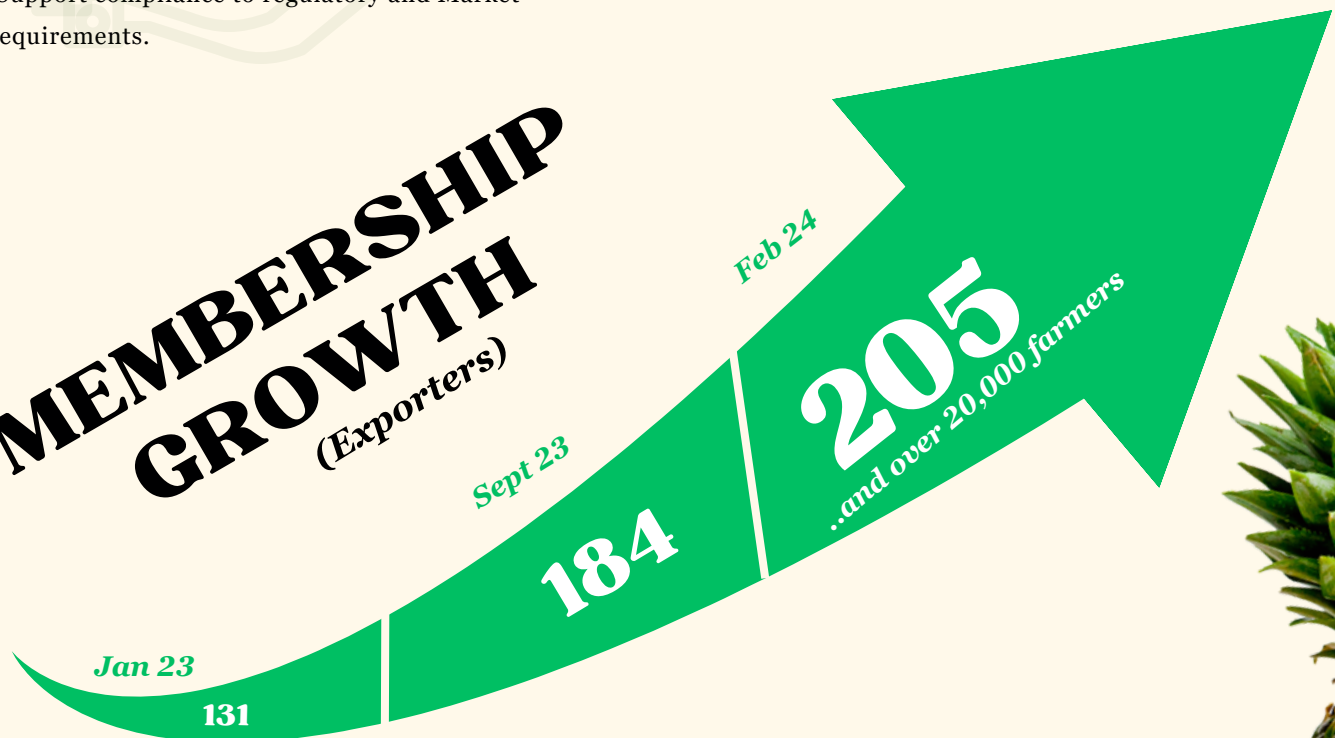
KEY SERVICES

- Membership Training and Capacity Building
- Market Information
- Stakeholder Representation
- Lobbying and Advocacy
- Access to business financing solutions
- Support compliance to regulatory and Market requirements.

Who Can Become a Member

- Farmer Groups (Growing Fruits and Vegetables)
- Export Companies
- Service Providers (Airlines, Banks, Clearing Agents.....)

**MEMBERSHIP
GROWTH**
(Exporters)

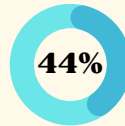


MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION BY GENDER

Our member company ownership stands at 30% being owned by Female, 44% by Male and 26% have shared ownership.



Female



Male



Shared

MEMBERS' CATEGORY



Export Companies



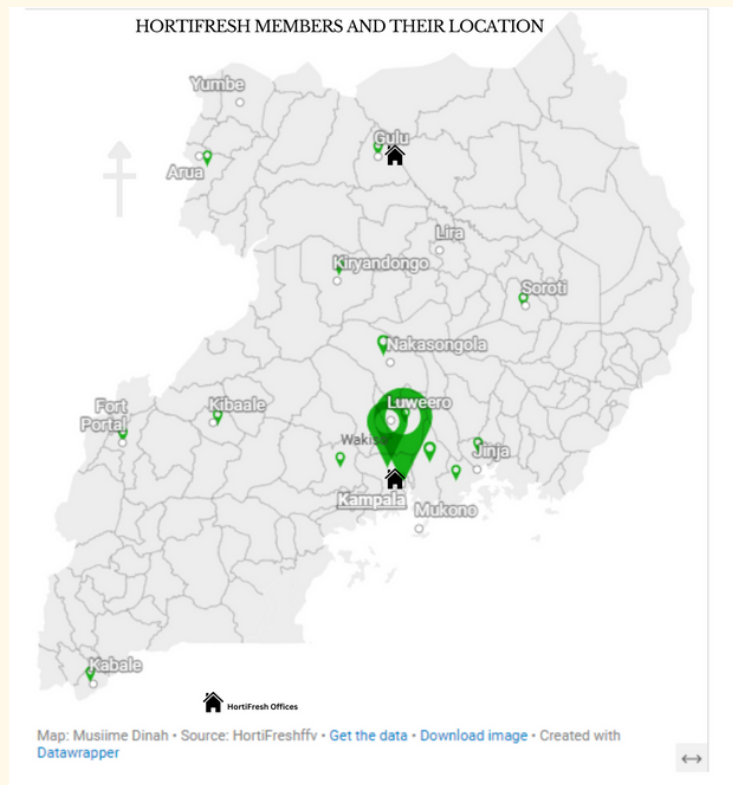
Input Suppliers



Farmer Groups



Consultancy Firm



Membership Officer

Membership Fees

<i>Membership Type</i>	<i>Membership Reg Fee UGX</i>	<i>Annual Subscription fee UGX</i>
<i>Farmer Groups</i>	<i>100,000</i>	<i>100,000</i>
<i>Core Members</i>	<i>500,000</i>	<i>500,000</i>
<i>Associate Members</i>	<i>1,000,000</i>	<i>500,000</i>

MR. FRED ZAKE VISITS THE HORTICULTURE ASSOCIATION IN ETHIOPIA

In February, our Executive Director, Mr. Fred Zake, paid a courtesy visit to Ethiopia to learn from the nation's inline association and how they operate.

The Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association (EHPEA), unlike Hortifresh, covers the entire horticultural sector with flowers, fruits, and vegetables combined. The association started in 2002 and currently has 126 registered members.

The members mainly grow on a large scale, and most exporters source from their own farms for export, which makes it easier for traceability and meeting international market standards.

The country's major produce, as far as fruits and vegetables are concerned, includes strawberries, table grapes, passion fruits, and vegetables such as green beans, snow peas, tomatoes, eggplants, among others.

In 2023, the country derived a revenue of \$91.93 million from fruits and vegetables, totaling \$658.30 million with floriculture inclusive. (Source: Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture)

As a young association, like Hortifresh, we need to enhance information sharing, encourage large-scale farming, and widen the exportation base of our products to the outside world.



SEAMPEC PROJECT WITH GIZ

HortiFresh in partnership with GIZ, Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, GFA consultants and the East African Community launched a project called SEAMPEC (Support to East African Market driven and People Centered Integration).

HortiFresh is supporting the project activities with the major aim of reducing Increasing compliance and reduce interceptions of Ugandan produce especially the fresh fruits and vegetable at the export market, and also promote food safety both locally and the international market.

The project runs on a theme: **Working together to increase food safety, reduce interceptions and open regional and International markets for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.**

The project targets the stakeholders in the value chain such as the export company directors, Agronomists, Students, Sorters as well as growers of fresh fruits and vegetables



Trainers, HortiFresh Staff and Trainees after a Training of Farmers in Ntungamo District on Good Agricultural Practices.

.The project further extends to the general public, in form of public awareness about food safety to ensure that we not only focus on what is being export at the outside world, but also ensure that safe food is consumed locally.

Mr. Joseph Mukisa the HortiFresh project coordinator says the aim is building capacity through training, information dissemination, creating awareness on why Ugandan products are getting intercepted to be able bring down the interception late to at least 25% by the end of the six months of the project.

But also looking forward to bringing this to zero interceptions in the near future and also boosting the exportation of Ugandan produce at both regional and international markets.



Senior Zonal Agricultural Inspector Asiimwe Ronald showcasing proper use of protective gears

So far under the **SEAMPEC Project** we have conducted a series of events, among which includes the training of Agronomists that happened at HortiFresh Secretariat office in Mengo Kampala and several up country districts, among other districts include; Luwero, Kayunga, Wakiso, Mpigi, Namayumba, Nakaseke, Mukono, Buikwe, Jinja, Mayuge, Kamuli, Lira, Gulu, Ntungamo, Kabale, Masaka, Gomba, Kyotera, Kanungu, Mubende, Mityana among others.



Training of Agronomists at HortiFresh offices in Mengo

HORTIFRESH AND TECHNOSERVE ENGAGED PASSION FRUIT FARMERS IN GREATER MASAKA

HortiFresh, in partnership with TechnoServe, NARO, and Quality Chemicals, engaged farmers in the growing business of passion fruits in the Greater Masaka sub-region (Masaka, Lwengo, Butambala, and Kyotera Districts).

The key topics of the training were the control of pests and diseases, the proper use of agrochemicals, following safety standards while spraying, and post-harvest handling.

The training was also attended by different Agricultural Extension Officers from the above-mentioned districts.

These staff members serve as a source of information to the farmers, and empowering them with relevant knowledge was very important in the training.

We believe that slowly but surely, we will achieve high and safe yields of Ugandan agricultural produce, properly handled to benefit individual farmers, the sector, and the country as a whole.



Farmers during the training at Golf Lane Hotel Masaka

ASSESSING INFRASTRUCTURAL LOGISTICS FOR HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS



HortiFresh, PACEID, MAAIF, NARO, and UAA teams conducted field outreach on ZARDIs (Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institutes) in parts of western Uganda with the aim of establishing regional production zones for fresh fruits and vegetable produce.

The places visited included Rwebitaba ZARDI offices in Kabarole District - Rwenzori region, covering 10 districts; Mbarara ZARDI, covering districts in the mid-western part of Uganda; and Kachwekano ZARDI in the southwestern region.

Among other reasons included:

Assessing the conditions, opportunities and infrastructural logistics of establishing horticultural production zones and linking NARO research component to FFV Export value chain.

Decentralize production and packaging for exports, in order to increase production of fresh fruits and vegetables by identifying and collaborating with ZARDIs to utilize the available land,

And lastly, To bridge the gap between production and research in the FFV sub-sector.

SORTERS AND QUALITY CONTROLLERS' TRAININGS



Sorters and Quality Controller during the training.

We have organized several trainings for sorters, quality controllers, and agronomists from different export companies. The trainings targeted new companies in the export business as well as existing ones whose employees are not coded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries. Over 100 beneficiaries were trained about their roles in the value chain concerning the safe handling of exportable produce and methodologies of consignments sampling (ISPM31).

All trainees were coded by Agricultural Inspectors from MAAIF.

We would like to applaud all those who managed to attend and also advise other members to always embrace such opportunities as they are of great importance.

TRAINING OF HORTICULTURAL VENDORS IN NORTHERN UGANDA ON FOOD SAFETY

In a bid to improve food safety in Uganda and outside, HortiFresh Association in partnership Technoserve under NU-HortiMAP Project conducted rigorous trainings among vendors of fresh fruits and vegetables in the eight districts of the North.

Market vendors play an important role in maintaining food safety across the food value chain, and their actions can have a substantial impact on the food's safety.

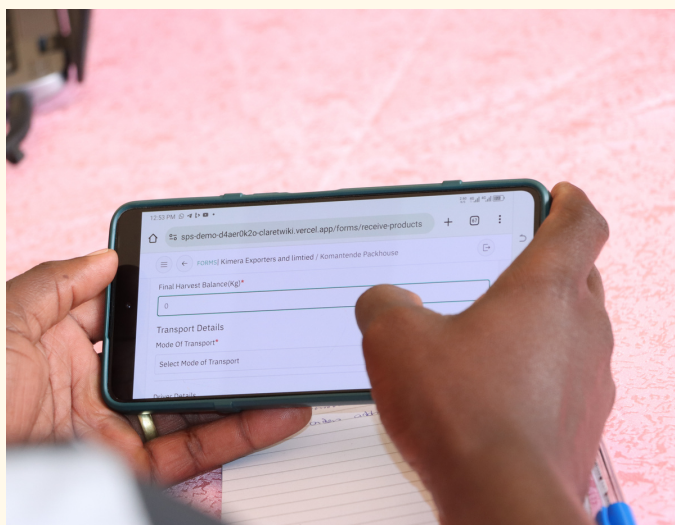
The trainings took place in Gulu City at Hortifresh Offices, Kabedopong Centre covering FFV market Vendors from Nwoya, Amuru, Gulu and Lira City Other districts that benefited from the trainings were, Oyam, Kole, Pader and Kitgum.

The NU-HortiMAP project is currently running in eight (8) districts of Northern Uganda mentioned above working with over 7,000 farmers of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The project mainly focuses on the growers and dealers of fresh fruits and vegetables for both local and International market.



DIGITIZING INSPECTION



Trainees trying out RUSH Online Platform

HortiFresh, MAAIF, and Swiss Contact collaborated on a training program to implement the Re-engineering of Uganda's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Inspection of Horticulture Exports (RUSH Online Platform). The alliance, along with MAAIF, is partnering with the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Cooperatives (MTIC) to introduce an electronic, risk-based SPS inspection system. This system will utilize an open-source database to accumulate and consolidate inspection data, assessing risk levels to exporters and evaluating their performance.

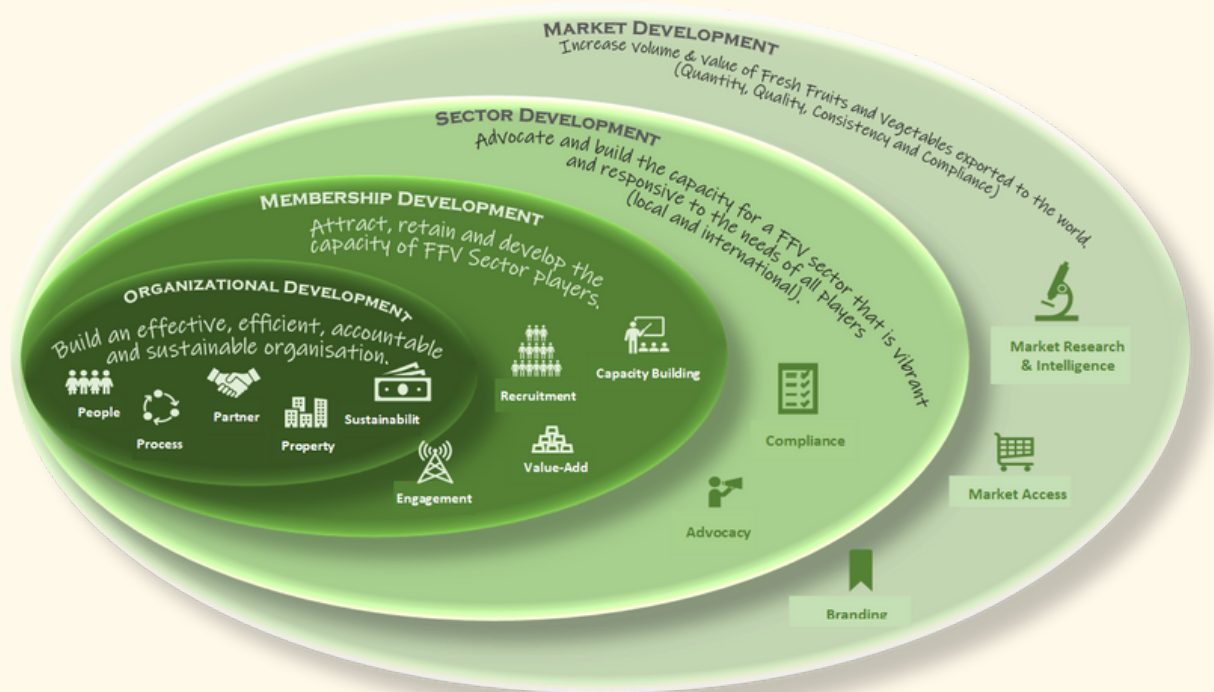
One of the primary purposes of the system is to reduce waiting times during inspections, which was a significant challenge in the physical mode. The training targeted agronomists, export company directors, and inspectors from MAAIF.

The trainees received a demonstration on the technical step-by-step operation of the digital platform.

Over 100 participants successfully received this training, and it directly benefited different companies.

WHO WE ARE?

HortiFresh Theory of Change



Key Priorities

- Organisational Development
- Membership Development
- Sector Development
- Market Development

Core Values

- Collaborative
- Accountable
- Sustainability
- Inclusive

VISION

A Horticulture sector that produces and sells safe and good quality fresh fruits and vegetables



MISSION

To build the capacity of fresh fruits and vegetable value chain players to meet safety, quality and market requirements.

PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

As we conclude february, We are filled with immense gratitude for the invaluable partnership and unwavering support you have extended to us. Your collaborative spirit, dedication, and shared commitment have been instrumental in making a remarkable success.

Reflecting on the challenges and triumphs we've encountered together, it's evident that our shared journey has been defined by resilience, innovation, and mutual trust. Your contributions have not only propelled the Association forward but have also inspired us to reach new heights of excellence.

We deeply appreciate the trust you have placed in us. Your confidence has been the driving force behind our achievements, whether through groundbreaking projects, sustainable initiatives, or collaborative endeavors that have made a positive impact on sector and beyond.

From the Apex Association of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, We thank you for supporting the sector and looking forward for many other collabolations .



CONTACT US!

www.hortifreshffv.org

Email: admin@hortifreshffv.org

Tel. +256 760 055402



PICTORIAL INDEX



