



# EASEED

## Africa's Best

East African Seed Co. Ltd.

Vol. 26, Newsletter July 2014

### MD's Message



On behalf of EASEED staff and management, I am pleased to present the 26th edition of EASEED Newsletter.

Agriculture sector in Kenya had challenges, with long rains delayed in many parts of the country followed by poor spatial and temporal distribution of the rains during April. This resulted in a prolonged dry spell eventually retarding crop development. This will affect the overall production of Maize, the staple food crop of the region resulting in shortages. Tanzania on the other hand witnessed torrential rains, disrupting harvesting and sowing of next crop.

Climate change, which is a worldwide phenomenon, affecting the food security of the region calls for new technologies/ products which can insulate the effects of climate change. EASEED through investment in R & D is addressing these issues. The result is already out with a new Maize Hybrid, "TOSHEKA" (MH 401), an early, high yielding hybrid which can perform well under low rainfall situations. A couple of early maize hybrids are already in NPT in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. In addition, EASEED is also actively involved in R & D of other field crops such as Hybrid Sorghum, Hybrid Sunflower etc, which will broaden the cereal crop base, ensuring food security of the region even during adverse climatic conditions.

Another key factor in ensuring food security is insulating the problem of climate change through irrigation. The Government of Kenya has taken a bold initiative in this direction by launching a US \$ 3 billion irrigation project in Galana-Kulalu in Tana River and Kilifi counties, which will bring in one million acres under irrigation. Once completed, this project would see 500,000 acres of land put to maize production.

Vegetable seed is the only agri input under the purview of VAT in Kenya. The proposed VAT @ 18 % for all agri inputs in Uganda would result in increased cost of inputs, thus making the inputs unaffordable to small farmers. With huge agricultural subsidies offered to farmers in developed countries, the farmers in this region cannot compete with those countries in international markets.

The concerned Governments need to address this and help the farmer of the region to compete in international markets by not only exempting agri inputs from VAT, but also by subsidizing on other inputs, which are very costly in this part of the world.

We at EASEED are relentlessly trying to deliver the best quality seeds at reasonable prices to customers in East Africa and beyond. We are grateful to our customers (farmers, stockists and distributors) for their continued support. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions which will help us to serve you better.

**Jitu Shah**  
Managing Director

### Current Trends in Agriculture



**We cannot feed the world of tomorrow with yesterday's technology**

#### Agriculture: Challenges ahead

- Global Population by 2050 AD: Over 9 billion
- Shrinking area of cultivated land
- Diminishing water resources
- Malnutrition and undernourishment
- Deterioration in soil quality
- Climate change (global warming)

#### Recent Trends in Agriscience Research in Developed World

- Single cross hybrids
- Pest/disease resistance genes
- Drought Tolerant Hybrids
- Heat Tolerance – Wheat, Tomato
- Improved Nutrition – QPM (Maize)
- Nutrient Efficient crops
- Herbicide tolerance
- Automated Phenotyping
- Transferring genes using MAS
- QTLs for polygenic traits

#### Genetically Modified Crops (GMOs)

Cost of discovery, development and authorization of a new biotech crop/trait is ~US\$135 million.

Area under GM crops in 1996 - 1.7 million hectares.

Area under GM crops in 2013 - 175 million hectares in 27 countries.

About 60 % of world's population live in these 27 countries.

18 million farmers benefit from biotech crops - 90% were small resource-poor farmers

GM crops is the fastest adopted crop technology, over 100 fold increase in 18 years.

10 GM crops commercially grown - Maize, Soybean, cotton, Canola, Sugar Beet, Papaya, Squash, Alfalfa, Sweet pepper and Poplar.

Pesticides saved by using GM crops - 497 million kg active ingredient.

Carbon dioxide emission reduced in 2012 by using GM crops - 26.7 billion kg, equivalent to taking 11.5 million cars off the road for one year.

Major GM technologies - Herbicide resistance, insect resistance, drought tolerance, improved nutrition

In Africa, GM crops are grown in S. Africa, Burkina Faso and Sudan. Seven African countries (Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria and Uganda) have conducted field trials of GM crops in Cotton, Maize, Cowpea and Banana.

(Source:- ISAAA - International Service for the Acquisition of Agri Biotech Applications)

#### Impact of Agriscience Technology

- Hybrid technology in Maize increased the yield by more than 2 times
- First GMO gene/crop: Flavr Savr™ Tomatoes in 1994
- Bt Technology in Cotton has reduced the chemical usage by >40%
- Roundup ready soybean has increased the yield by >30%
- Improvement in quality and quantity of crop produce
- Efficient utilization of water and nutrients
- Reduction in cost of production

# Product News

## New Releases



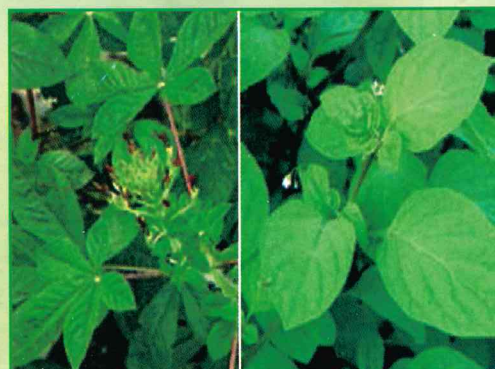
### HYBRID MAIZE – MH 401(TOSHEKA)

- An excellent early maturing hybrid for mid and low altitude areas
- Early maturity of 100-110 days
- High yield potential of about 35 bags/acre
- Tolerant to GLS, Rust, MSV and Leaf Blight
- Drought tolerant - suitable for low rainfall areas
- Cob droops when mature preventing ear rots
- White semi-dent grains, good for milling and also for green maize



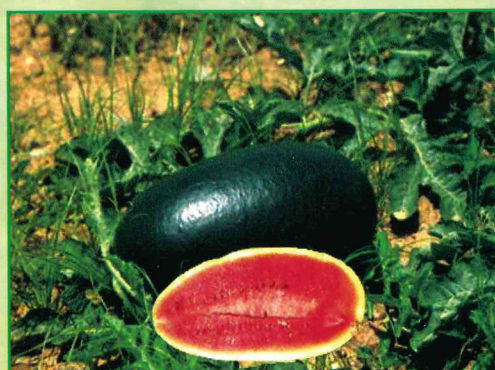
### INDIGENOUS VEGETABLES (AFRICAN EGGPLANT (NGOGWE)-DB3 & TENGERU WHITE)

- Adopted to a wide range of ecological zones and very easy to grow
- Fruits are rich in calcium, phenols, vitamin C, antioxidants and sugar
- This crop is notable for high yield of about 20 tons per acre and high market potential
- Mature fruits are either boiled or roasted with onions and tomato and consumed with ugali or steamed rice. The fruits are also boiled with other vegetables and then mixed with boiled meat, chicken or fish to make a soup popularly known as "mchemsho"



### INDIGENOUS VEGETABLES (SPIDER PLANT, BLACK NIGHT SHADE, ETHIOPIAN KALE, CROTALARIA)

- These vegetables are well adapted to harsh climatic conditions and easy to grow
- They have a short growth period, ready for harvest in 3-4 weeks
- They contain high levels of minerals (calcium, iron and phosphorous), vitamins and proteins
- Contains substantial amounts of chemicals as anti-oxidants
- These anti-oxidants help promote optimal health by lowering risk of occurrence of chronic diseases like cancer



### HYBRID WATERMELON - ICE BOX TYPE

- Icebox watermelons are gaining in popularity as they are ideal for small families and fit easily into a refrigerator
- Matures in 60-65 days after sowing
- The ice-box watermelon weighs 2 to 4 kg
- These Watermelons vary in shape from round to oblong, with light to dark green rind with or without stripes
- Flesh is very sweet (TSS 12-14 %) and crispy
- Suitable for long distance transportation and excellent keeping quality



### HYBRID MAIZE – MH 501

- A good medium to late maturing hybrid suitable for altitudes ranging from 1000-1900 m
- Tolerant to GLS, Rust, MSV and leaf blight
- Uniform cob placement with white semi-dent grains
- Medium maturity of 130-140 days
- Very high yielding, 35-50 bags/acre

# EASEED Top Customers Meet 2014

## Kenya

Top Customers meet is a unique annual event of EASEED. The 13th TCM was organised in Nairobi on 22nd March. EASEED brought together farmers, agro dealers, regulator, policy makers and scientists under one roof to discuss the issues related to Kenyan Agriculture and share their experiences.

Mr. Eliud Karoba, a former street boy from Nyahururu and a progressive farmer and teacher at present, emotionally narrated how EASEED financed his education through cultivation of tomatoes and cabbages of EASEED. Mr Ignatius Wafula, a farmer from Bungoma briefed on his experience of growing Nuru F1 tomatoes, which is a very high yielder with tolerance to diseases.

Her Excellency, Hon. Madam Rachel Ruto, the Chief Guest urged the young people to take up Agriculture as a profession instead of migrating to urban areas. Mrs. Ruto appreciated the efforts of Mr. & Mrs. Jitu Shah in providing the best quality seeds to farmers in Kenya and East Africa.

Dr. Prasanna, Director, Global Maize Program, CIMMYT explained the role of CIMMYT in tackling the deadly MLND disease of Maize and said EASEED is a partner in this program. Dr. James Onsando, Director KEPHIS complimented EASEED for the excellent work through a professional approach

Jitu Shah, MD of EASEED stressed the importance of women and youth in Agriculture and complimented the role played by Mrs. Rachel Ruto in women empowerment through (JOYWO). He highlighted the challenges in Kenyan agriculture and the role of EASEED in addressing these challenges.



Chief Guest H.E Hon. Rachel Ruto, MD, EASEED with other guests



Stockists and farmers follow proceedings

## Uganda

TCM in Uganda was held on 13th June in Kampala. The event was presided over by Commissioner, Crop Protection, Mr. Komayombi Bulegeya, who stressed the need to increase the rate of growth of agriculture in Uganda above the population growth. He emphasized that quality seeds, effective use of fertilizers and water will contribute immensely in achieving this and appreciated the role of EASEED in providing quality seed in Uganda.

Mr. Jitu Shah, MD, EASEED in his captivating speech drew the attention of the gathering on the areas of concern for increasing agricultural productivity in Uganda, such as role of youth in agriculture, agricultural finance, access to markets, innovation and technology and availability of quality seeds. Mrs. Nima Shah spoke about agriculture and education playing a vital role in improving the standard of life through self sustaining activities.

Mr. Vincent Nsanvu, stockist from Jinja said the secret of winning is hard work, honesty and working smart by embracing the hybrid technology whose benefits are high yield, low production cost resulting in high returns to farmer.

The event was attended by stockists from Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan and several farmers from Uganda. Other guests of honor were Mr. Bazaale Joseph, Asst. Commissioner, Crop Protection and Head of National Seed Certification Services, Dr. Asea Godfrey, Head of Cereal Crops Research and Maize breeder, NARO and Mr. Walter Anyanga, Head of Oil Seeds Crop Research, NaSSARI.



Traditional dancers entertain guests at the TCM



Stockists and farmers witnessing the event

# EASEED® Events



Farmers trained by EASEED agronomist on best farming practices at Wambugu farm ATC Field Day- Kenya



EASEED Agronomists showcase their products to Min. for Agriculture Mr. Shadrack Mubea of Nyeri County - Kenya



EASEED agronomist takes farmers through our products at Kigali Agricultural Show -Rwanda



EASEED agronomist briefing farmers about our products during ADDECO field day in Masaka -Uganda



EASEED Hybrid Maize "TOSHEKA" demo plot at the Nakuru County Agricultural Show - Kenya



EASEED stand showcasing its products at the Nakuru County Agricultural Show - Kenya



Minister of Agriculture, (centre) Dr. Tress Buchanayandi appreciates the best performing Maize Hybrid KH500- 43A during 21st Source of Nile, Jinja Agricultural show-Uganda



Director EASEED Ms. Nima Shah (Centre), ANAFE and K.U representatives during an Agri-Business talk held at the Kenyatta University-Kenya

AVRDC Director General Dyno Keatinge and Douglas Pachico, Chair of the Center's 8th External Program and Management Review of AVRDC visited EASEED (T) Arusha in April- 2014. New areas of collaboration such as promotion of dietary kits of seeds, sharing common promotion material for AVRDC products being sold by EASEED were discussed. AVRDC also confirmed that they would work along with EASEED and regional NGO's in co promoting the indigenous African Vegetables. The discussions were also focused on AVRDC's facilitation of sharing their new varieties for field trails.



EASEED (T) had conducted a field day at Songea during May 2014 on their premier maize hybrid KH-600-15A. About 150 farmers participated and appreciated the hybrid. The demo-farmer has in detail shared his experience on the performance of the product. An international developmental finance organization has committed to supply 25 tons of KH600-15A to its beneficiaries.

EASEED (T) is actively collaborating with World Vision and its partners such as Farm Concern International. It also participated in their farmers event where 300 farmers were briefed on the products of EASEED. Hybrid Watermelon Sukari F1 has specifically caught the attention of the farmers.



EASEED (T) has taken an initiative with its stockist in Sumbawanga and developed a small showcase plot in front of the shop to display its key products for the customers of the region.

High yielding Maize Hybrid KH500-43A suitable for mid altitude maize growing areas of Tanzania was released in July 2014.



## International Events Participation



SYOVA is an EASEED group company involved in Research and development of high quality vegetable hybrid seeds suitable for African conditions. SYOVA thrives to deliver the best quality hybrid vegetable seeds not only in East Africa, but also beyond.

We are delighted to apprise our respected customers that all Vegetable hybrid seeds will be launched and marketed under the "SYOVA" Brand and with our continuous efforts we strive to strengthen and widen our global partnerships to serve farmers in Sub Saharan African region.

Our premium quality seeds and extended services will reach to the doorsteps of the farmers and improve their livelihoods by embracing innovation, value and progress.



AFSTA President Jitu Shah addresses delegates at the 2014 Congress in Tunisia



AFSTA Leaders in Tunisia:- 2014



AFSTA Secretary General, President, EASEED Director and Moderator at EASEED Stand



Minister of Agriculture of Tunisia H.E Lassaad Lachaal, AFSTA President Mr. Jitu Shah and others at EASEED stand.



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