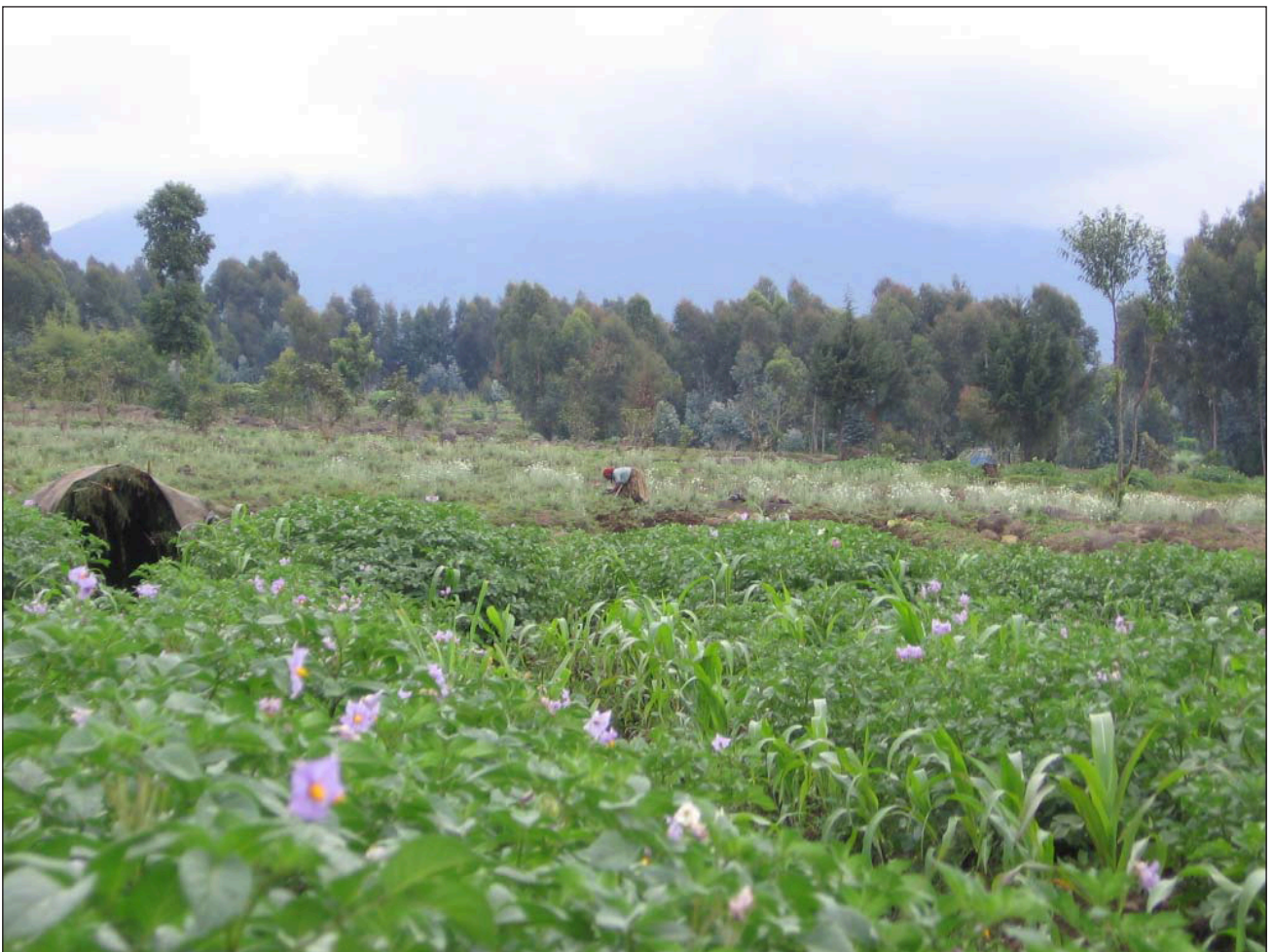


OVERVIEW OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN RWANDA AND OPTIONS FOR POLICY AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT



ABSTRACT FOR TRADE INFORMATION SERVICES

ID=40632

2008

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International Trade Centre (ITC)

Overview of Organic Agriculture in Rwanda and Options for Policy and Trade Development.

Geneva: ITC, 2008. iv, 31 p.

Doc. No. SC-09-161-E

Report providing an overview of organic agriculture in Rwanda and options for its future development - outlines Rwanda's agriculture policies, and the status of the organic sector in the country; looks at organic agriculture sector in East Africa, focusing on production, markets, standards and certification; highlights market access issues in the main export destinations, and their implications for Rwanda; examines constraints and opportunities i for Rwanda in the export market, and makes recommendations.

Descriptors: **Organic Products, Export Marketing, Standards, Certification, Rwanda, Eastern Africa, Africa.**

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(<http://www.intracen.org>)

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ITC supports developing and transition economies, and particularly their business sector, in their efforts to realize their full potential for developing exports and improving import operations.

ITC works in six areas:

- Product and market development
- Development of trade support services
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- International purchasing and supply management
- Needs assessment, programme design for trade promotion

ITC's technical assistance concentrates on the three issues for which it believes the need for national capacity-building is most critical: helping businesses understand WTO rules; strengthening enterprise competitiveness; and developing new trade promotion strategies.

ITC supports the development of exports in organic and natural products from developing countries through technical assistance to trade support institutions, government bodies, the private sector and producer organizations.

www.intracen.org/organics

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Acknowledgements

This technical paper was written by Gunnar Rundgren of Grolink (www.grolink.se). It is the outcome of a three day seminar in Kigali, Rwanda in October 2007 organized by ITC and the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources of the Government of Rwanda.

The seminar brought together exporters, farm organization, trainers, public sector officials, donors and international organizations to discuss the opportunities for and constraints of the development of organic agriculture and exports from Rwanda. The paper provides an overview of organic agriculture in Rwanda and options for its future development. ITC is supporting this process during 2008 with a programme of technical assistance.
See http://www.intracen.org/organics/policy_support.htm

February, 2008

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADF	US African Development Foundation
EAC	East African Community
EAOM	East African Organic Mark
EAOPS	East African Organic Products Standard
ICS	Internal Control Systems
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
ITC	International Trade Centre
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
NOAM	National Organic Agriculture Movements
NOP	National Organic Program (of the USA)
NUR	National University of Rwanda
PGS	Participatory Guarantee Systems
RBS	Rwanda Bureau of Standards
RHODA	Rwanda Horticulture Development Authority
ROAM	Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement
RSSP	Rural Sector Support Project
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

1. Purpose, Scope and Methodology

This report should be seen as an input to Rwanda's Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources for the development of an action plan for organic agriculture and trade. It can also be an input to a more comprehensive policy for organic as well as giving some guidance for existing or future organic projects.

The report focuses on matters that are specific for organic agriculture. Many challenges in the agriculture sector are the same regardless if the products are organic or conventional. For instance, the need for good infrastructure, cooling facilities, and financial services is more or less the same for organic and conventional farming and is not delved upon here.

The report doesn't elaborate on WHY Rwanda should support organic agriculture, or what the benefits are for organic production. There is a wealth of literature on that. A good summary can be found in Twarog 2006.

The report is based on the following input:

- Presentations at the Stakeholder meeting in Kigali 16-17 October 2007.
- Discussions and results of the Stakeholder meeting in Kigali 16-17 October 2007.
- Observations from a field trip 18 October.
- Internet searches.
- Official policy documents for Rwanda, notably:
 - The fertiliser policy, April 2007.
 - Strategic Plan For Agricultural Transformation In Rwanda, October 2004.

Other reports:

- Assisting Rwandans with entry into the international market place for tropical fruit. (Turner 2001)
- IFOAM study on organic markets in Africa. (Rundgren 2007)
- The UNEP UNCTAD CBTF report, Best Practices for Organic Policy - What Governments of developing countries can do to promote the organic agriculture sector (UNCTAD 2007), of which the consultant was the main author.
- The IFOAM report, Building Sustainable Organic Sectors (Källander 2007) of which the consultant was a co-author.
- Personal experiences from the development of the organic sector in a number of countries, including the East African countries.

Obviously, with limited field research the possibility for the consultant to make sound proposals is limited.

2. Background

2.1 Agriculture policies of Rwanda

The Government of Rwanda has developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan For Agricultural Transformation In Rwanda. This plan emphasise:

- Intensification
- Professionalisation
- Regionalisation
- Commercialisation

The Fertilizer Policy (April 2007) is largely about the increased use of chemical fertilisers. However, the policy does contain recommendations and actions targeting the better use of organic fertilisers:

- To improve extension system to create farmers' awareness on the importance of organic fertilizer.
- To demonstrate better methods of producing and applying organic manure.
- To reinforce investment in soil erosion control measures particularly radical terraces that are efficient.
- To reinforce integration of livestock production with crop production. Animals produce manure for crop & crop by products act as feeds to these animals.

The Seed policy emphasis organic seeds. The programme «One cow per poor household » is an indirect support for organic farming. Soil Conservation and terracing are also promoted. (Muvura 2007).

The Government of Rwanda is engaged in promoting agro-business through (i) commodity chains development, (ii) transformation and competitiveness of agricultural products to facilitate access to markets (www.minagri.gov.rw). Organic market initiatives fit well into this.

All in all, Rwandan policies are not per se pro-organic, but they acknowledge that organic agriculture can play an important role, side-by-side with conventional agriculture, and some of the practices promoted are supporting organic agriculture.

2.2 The status of the organic sector in Rwanda

2.2.1 History

Like in many other countries (Källander 2007), organic agriculture has been developed and promoted in two parallel tracks, an NGO track and a commercial track, driven by companies. Quite uniquely for Rwanda the government is involved already in the early stages.



Figure 1: At the Gako Training Centre

On the NGO side, organic farming idea was introduced 1999 by SEND A COW UK who had seen it working in Uganda and had appreciated the impact created on the lives of peasant farmers. One person was sponsored by SEND A COW UK for an organic farming training outside of Rwanda and various study tours to places like Uganda. That person, Richard Munyerango, came back fully inspired and in the year 2000, he started the first organic farming and demonstration centre in Gako of Kicukiro district. In the year 2001, they started community mobilization and thereafter, the first training course which lasted one month. (Munyerango 2007)

On the commercial side, the first organic production developed in the late nineties with production of organic fruit by Emballage Rwanda/Rwanda Volcano Export Produce. In 2001, a USAID funded project ADAR introduced support to emerging organic exports from Rwanda (Turner 2001). Some of the companies that were supported are still in business.

2.2.2 Extent of production and marketing

There are still very few organised commercial organic projects. Those identified are:

Company	Products	Market/Volume
Floris	Organic apple bananas	1-2 tons per week to Belgium, could expand to 10 tons per week if there was demand
Urwibutso	Passion juices	1 tone per week and our export projections after the new passion juice

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