

INFORMATION ON RELEVANT ACTIVITIES

Statement by Malawi at the meeting of 17-18 March 2010

The following communication, received on 17 March 2010, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Malawi.

1. The project supported by the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) has assisted in sensitizing smallholder farmers on the standard-setting process and also on the implication of standards on international trade.
2. Export volumes of products meeting the standards in export markets has increased tremendously leading to the inflow of foreign exchange. The increase of foreign exchange at the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM) has increased by about 410 per cent.
3. An SPS workshop was held in the country in 2008 where all stakeholders were invited to attend and discuss SPS issues including the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) Tool.
4. A workshop on smallholder farmer involvement in the standard-setting process was held in October 2009 where smallholder farmers appreciated the standards as a gateway to effective trade. The workshop was funded by SACAU.
5. The farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) and NASFAM organized a workshop on SPS and standards on agricultural products. The workshop was also funded by SACAU.
6. The understanding of standards has led NASFAM to acquire groundnut shelling machines, a cereal processing plants and a plant on value-addition on chillies.
7. The Malawi Government would like to extend its appreciation to the Commark Trust for funding the participation of the Malawian delegation to the WTO SPS Committee meetings in Geneva, Switzerland and also for funding three workshops in the country.
8. Legislation on the SPS issues needs to be updated and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Malawi is assisting the Malawi Government in updating relevant documents such as the Plant Protection Act.
9. Laboratories for the identification of pests and diseases are available in Malawi but we would like them to be accredited, refurbished, and modernized.

10. The new Malawi Government has a policy of ensuring that the country moves from an importing and consuming country to a producing and exporting one. Therefore, emphasis is placed on producing and exporting agricultural products of very high quality.

11. There is an urgent need for capacity building in Malawi on SPS issues. The capacity to be improved includes the following: human resources, infrastructure, information and communication technologies, laboratories, motor vehicles and motorcycles, etc.
