



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

6th African Grain Trade Summit

Towards creating an enabling environment for grain trade in Africa

Kigali, Rwanda, October 1, 2015 -- On October 1, Rwanda Prime Minister Anatase Muekezi and Rwanda Minister of Trade and Industry Hon Francois Kanimba officially opened the African Grain Trade Summit -- a biennial, high-level, multi-stakeholder event organized by the Eastern Africa Grain Council with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through its project the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, and other partners.

The Summit attracted more than 200 international and African-wide stakeholders from along the grain value chain for discussion on key grain industry issues and developing trends in grain trade on the continent. The summit provided a platform for the public and private sector to agree on mechanisms for enhancing the enabling environment for grain trade in Africa.

Since the first African Grain Trade Summit, held in Nairobi in 2005, stakeholders have successfully advocated for policy interventions that have supported grain trade and improved grain structures. For instance, the African Grain Trade Summit supported the establishment of harmonized grain standards for the East African Community, improvement of warehouse receipting and commodity exchanges, and influenced Tanzania to lift its maize export bans.

The 6th Africa Grain Trade Summit will address the issues that limit trade in grains and staple foods in the eastern Africa region and Africa at large. The focus is on what needs to be done for grain trade to thrive - between producers and traders through to processors and to the final consumers - in an efficient and effective manner that will reduce transaction costs and increase earnings to the value chain actors, while making food affordable to consumers.

The focus will be technology, information and services. These are some of the major factors hindering the competitiveness and productivity of grain sector value chains in eastern and southern Africa. The 6th AGTS, like previous editions of the summit, aims to gain high-level commitment to improving the policy environment for regional grain trade.

“Long-term strategies and commitments from both the public and private sector are needed, combined with action across a wide range of policy areas, to create an enabling environment for structured grain trade in Africa,” said Hon. Kanimba. “Structured grain trade can be well managed and governed in an efficient and principled manner through effective cooperation among countries and the various trading blocs.”

“We expect the Summit to deliberate on the above key issues and come up with practical recommendations that the various stakeholders will commit to follow through in a coordinated, collaborative and concerted manner, towards achieving the shared vision of a vibrant trade in grain and staple foods in Africa for a sustained, sufficient, and food secure Africa,” said Gerald Masila, Executive Director Eastern Africa Grain Council..

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About Africa Grain Trade Summit (AGTS)

The Africa Grain Trade Summit (AGTS) is a biennial event organized by Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC). Typically, the event is held in the countries of the EAGC area of operation.

This summit is a continentally-recognized grain industry conference that attracts stakeholders along the grain value chain from around the Africa continent for discussion about key grain industry issues including strategies for sustainable growth in grain production, new post-harvest technologies, marketing challenges and developing trends in the grain trade.

In addition to the opportunity to listen to and interact with grain industry experts addressing a wide range of issues and trends affecting grain trade, delegates benefit from enhanced networking opportunities for concluding concrete business with a vast array of players in the industry attending the event.

The 1st AGTS Summit held in Nairobi in 2005, AGTS Key stakeholders have successfully lobbied for policies that enable successful grain trade, from various heads of states, of the host countries. The Summit has therefore achieved numerous policy interventions and improved grain structures in many of ESA member countries,

2nd African Grain Trade Summit, held in April 2007 in Nairobi, Kenya. *Structured Grain Trading and Commodity Risk Management - “Staying the Course”*. During this summit, the delegates called for greater initiatives in financing agriculture and addressing post-harvest challenges. As such, the Warehouse Receipts System (WRS) was piloted by EAGC in Kenya in 2008 and has continued to grow from strength to strength over the years

The 3rd African Grain Trade Summit was held in November 2009 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania under the theme *Linking Farmers to Markets: Stimulating Agricultural Productivity in Africa*. The Summit called for harmonisation of National and Regional Grain Trade Policies. One of the outcomes was the gazettelement of EAC Staple Food Standards in 2013, a process that commenced in 2010 soon after this Summit

The 4th African Grain Trade Summit, October 2011, Kampala, Uganda, with the theme *Accelerating Growth in Grain Trade: Opportunities for Strategic Partnerships and Investment*. The Summit was graced by H.E. President Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda. The Summit resulted in renewed focus on warehouse receipting and commodity exchanges as means of promoting structured grain trade. During the Summit, the Government of Tanzania pledged to stop export bans of staple foods. The ban was lifted in 2012

The 5th African Grain Trade Summit, October 2013 Mombasa, Kenya, hosted under the theme *Africa; the emerging frontier for Global Investments in Grain Trade*. The Summit witnessed the launch of the EAGC/CTA Structured Grain Trading Systems in Africa Handbook, the first of its kind in Africa. The Summit also renewed focus on addressing policy constraints to investment in grain trade.

<http://graintradesummit.com/index.php/about>

About Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC)

Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) is a regional private sector membership organization representing stakeholders in the grain value chain including producers, traders and processors in Eastern and Southern Africa with a vision to be the leading voice of the grain sector in Africa. The mandate of EAGC is to develop, promote, and influence structured grain trading system in the Eastern Africa region including Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zambia, Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Our program interventions include: Promotion of Regional Structured Grain Trade including Warehouse Receipt Systems; Enhancing market access through the Provision of Market Information Services through the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network, RATIN (www.ratin.net); Capacity building & Strategic support to stakeholders and evidence based Policy advocacy to enhance an enabling environment requisite for a thriving grain industry. The Council works very closely with governments in the region, regional economic blocs like the EAC, COMESA and SADC and also development partners to address the various challenges in food security.

www.eagc.org, www.ratin.net,

About the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub

The East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (the Hub) is the U.S. Government's flagship project under the presidential Trade Africa initiative, launched in 2013 to boost trade and investment with and within Africa. The goal of the Hub is to deepen regional integration, increase the competitiveness of select regional agricultural value chains, promote two-way trade with the U.S. under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and facilitate investment and technology to drive trade growth intra-regionally and to global markets. In support of the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, the Hub looks to increase access, availability and utilization of East African-grown staple foods in the region. It supports regional initiatives that improve market information, increase access to inputs, and reduce non-tariff barriers that can hinder trade across borders.

Notes to the Editor.

Since its inception in 2005 under the USAID-RATES program, the Summit has gradually attracted a growing number of participants across a broad spectrum of the grains supply chain. From the summit delegates will LEARN, NETWORK and EXPERIENCE Africa, the Emerging Frontier.

Objective of the Summit.

To provide a forum where all key sector players in the grains industry will meet on a regional basis to map out a regionally focused strategy for grain trade market development.

Specific Objectives

- Highlight opportunities for grain sector investment in Africa
- Provide a platform to discuss and recommend solutions to grain trade
- Afford delegates a unique opportunity to showcase their products
- Network and share knowledge and experiences
- Expose African grain practitioners and suppliers to new technologies

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