

Africa



COLEACP connects in Berlin

Interprofessional association devoted to ACP-EU horticultural trade will again be demonstrating its support for competition and increased harmonisation between business operators

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COLEACP, the Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (ACP) for fresh produce exporters and European Union importers of horticultural produce, is back in Berlin for 2011 to once again express the needs of private operators and champion the agricultural exports from some of its 312 members, while also taking the chance to meet with PIP beneficiaries.

"By participating at Fruit Logistica, COLEACP will be able to meet with companies and professional organisations that are eligible for support of the PIP," the group explains. "It will also enable COLEACP to facilitate and strengthen its network by encouraging links between ACP-EU horticultural industry stakeholders and other relevant partners.

"The association will also continue to promote African and Caribbean

companies that are able, today, to supply the EU market in compliance with all new requirements."

The organisation's mandate has not changed, and it still strives to open doors for its members.

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"Placing particular emphasis on sustainable development and poverty alleviation, COLEACP pleads for a better integration of small farmers into the horticultural supply chain," the group notes. "The association encourages operators to adopt best practices in the areas of food safety, human health and environmental practices."

COLEACP has used its position to help open EU markets to off-season vegetables and tropical fruits from Africa and Caribbean countries

through promotional campaigns, while also conducting numerous technical and commercial assistance missions throughout these member nations.

This is made possible by a knowledge of exactly what the EU market wants

in terms of its produce – reliability of supply, competitiveness, and a high quality of fresh produce.

"Thanks to its long-term experience and knowledge of the field, COLEACP provides to its members services that can help them strengthen competitiveness and market share," the group says. "These services include information and communication, market intelligence and analysis of regulatory changes, technical advice, training, promotion and partnership creation, among others."

RWANDA

The Rwanda Horticulture Development Authority (Rhoda) will display the growth and development of the country's products with export potential at Fruit Logistica this year, through the marketing of production and post-harvest technology, infrastructure, information systems and its grower organisation.

Located in Hall 5.2 at the Berlin Exhibition Grounds, the Rhoda stand will promote a diverse range of fresh products, from fruits such as bananas, avocados, pineapples and passion fruit, through to vegetables including chilli peppers, tomatoes and baby corn, as well as flowers and nuts.

And the organisation, which participates in the preparation of national agricultural policies and helps frame guidelines relating to horticultural quality, has been handed a timely boost ahead its participation in Berlin with the news that the country's government is launching a new brand for fresh produce which, along with a promotional drive, will help present Rwanda as a viable and competitive source of fruits and vegetables and an advantageous location for investment.

The country's agriculture sector hopes that the brand, named



A diverse range of Rwandan produce is on show

'Rwandaful', will help to highlight the range of products, including passionfruit, mangoes and oranges, that the small nation produces.

Two bodies – Rhoda and the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) – have been set up by the government to help stimulate growth and investment in a sector which it argues has advantages over other east African regions.

According to the two agencies, Rwanda's mountainous terrain and wet climate mean that it is effectively able to produce fruit at different altitudes

all year round, while its location at the equator helps deliver products with a high sugar content.

Rhoda general director Magnifique Nzaramba says that he is confident that the country has the potential and drive to succeed in the sector, putting its troubled past behind it.

"We have a history, but the best way to learn from it is to draw lessons from it in terms of economics," Mr Nzaramba tells Eurofruit Magazine.

He adds that Rwanda's government has identified horticulture as a "key growth industry" for the country, as was therefore putting in place a number of measures to stimulate development and investment, including the building of a new wholesale market in Kigali.

Mr Nzaramba explains that the Rwandan authorities have also set aside some 15,000ha of land for horticultural development, while new road links were also being constructed.

To attract outside investment in the sector, meanwhile, Mr Nzaramba notes that the country has opted to permit 100 per cent foreign ownership of new ventures in the country, while overseas workers will now not be required to hold a visa for the duration of their first year in Rwanda. ■

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Sustainable businesses need good long-term suppliers.

Thanks to its network of members operating in Africa, the Caribbean and Europe, the COLEACP can help you to source safe tropical and off-season fresh fruits and vegetables produced with due regard to the environmental and social standards expected by your customers.



An association of producers /exporters, importers and local consultants committed towards sustainable horticultural trade.
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