

## MINISTER OPENS FOOD SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY BUILDING AT KABETE CAMPUS

In the afternoon of 12th January, 1977, the Minister of Agriculture Mr J.J. Nyagah, M.P. performed the official opening of the Food Science and Technology Building in the Faculty of Agriculture located at Kabete. On arrival, the Minister was welcomed by among others, the Vice-Chancellor Dr. J.N. Karanja and the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Prof. R.S. Musangi

In his welcoming address the Vice-Chancellor noted that the formal opening of the Food Science and Technology building terminated the first part of a technical assistance agreement which the Swiss and the Kenya Governments had concluded six years ago. A staff development continuing over the next six years was expected to bring this commendable example of technical co-operation a successful conclusion.

As early as 1971, it was felt that advanced training in Food Science and Technology should be institutionalized in a new interdisciplinary department of the University. A survey of manpower requirements was carried out in 1972 and this showed that there were nearly a thousand senior expatriate managers and specialists engaged in the food industry. In response to Kenya's request, the Swiss Federal Government asked

Prof. Marc Bachmann to visit Kenya on a fact-finding mission. He prepared the concept for this new project, including preparing the curriculum for B.Sc. studies in Food Science and Technology, and assessing requirements for academic staff and specialized equipment included what is now perhaps the finest food processing pilot plant on this continent. Following Professor Bachmann's studies an interim programme for staff development was prepared which will continue until a taught M.Sc. course at the University of Nairobi was established. The present arrangements for postgraduate training were organised in conjunction with the University of Zurich. The University's candidates do their course work in Switzerland and cond-



The Vice-Chancellor, Dr. J.N. Karanja, makes his welcoming speech. The Minister for Agriculture Hon. Mr J.J. Nyagah MP (extreme Left) and other University officials Hon. Mr Arap Too, Assistant Minister for Agriculture (behind V.C.) and Dean of Faculty, listen attentively.



act their research in this department, where they work on applied problems facing the local industry. The VC noted that three Kenyans had already completed such post-graduate studies while five were currently undergoing their course and four candidates were about to leave for Zurich in the near future.

He further noted with satisfaction that the first group of undergraduate students, admitted in 1973 had already graduated, 36 more were at various stages of the B.Sc. course and this number would rise to give the department about 60 undergraduates by 1980.

The minimum admission requirements consists of 2 A-level passes in Chemistry and Biology and a third in either physics or Mathematics. Besides advanced training in these sciences, first years students receive a comprehensive introduction into the nature and properties of agricultural materials. The second year is devoted mainly to food Microbiology and Food Process Engineering in addition to closely supervised practicals in food industry during the fourth term. During the final year, students are introduced to the intricacies of the processing technology of a wide variety of foodstuffs, including canning, brewing, refining, baking and dehydration. In this regard, practical work in the laboratories plays a particularly important part.

Every aspect of this programme, he said, has thus far been a model of planning and administration. That the entire programme had run as smoothly due to the sound foundations prepared by planners and to the quite competence, and commendable flexibility of the Swiss Federal Government in all stages of the project. They did not insist that the equipment or academic staff should come from Switzerland. They simply asked their officials to work out with the University which were the most suitable, and lost no time in helping the the University to obtain them. This flexibility is really necessary in an academic institution for the maintenance of standards of excellence.

As a result of the rapid growth of this campus, he noted, many problems had begun to appear. There was considerable shortage of water at Kabete Campus. But all was being done to alleviate the problem.

The other problem was inadequate accommodation for the students. In order to improve the situation, he said, a new hostel would be built at Kabete and hopefully would be ready before the next academic year.

It was his hope, he said, that both staff and students would join in solving these problems which had inevitably arisen as a result of needed growth and expansion.

After his address the Vice-Chancellor invited the Minister to open the building.

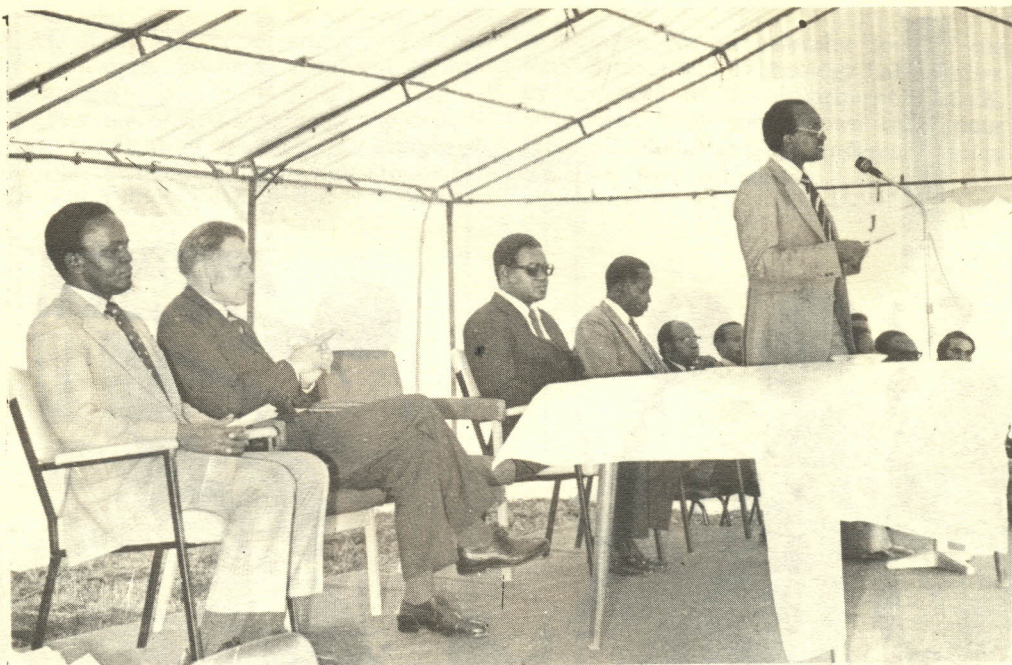
Before opening the Building the Minister had a few words to say:-

The official opening of the Food Science and Technology Department, he said, was yet another land mark which the Swiss and the Kenya Governments and the University can be justly very proud. Kenya, he noted, was endowed with particularly favourable geographical conditions for the production of a wide range of crops and animals which lend themselves to food and beverage processing.

This led to the gradual establishment of related agro-industries several decades ago, but accelerating after independence and particularly in the 1970s. Today there are over 300 Food Processors and at least ten companies have a thousand or so on their pay-roll. Food processing, he continued, was Kenya's most important industrial sector in terms of production and employment. In 1974 output was estimated to be worth almost K£150 m. representing over 37% of manufacturing production compared with 33.6% two years earlier. In terms of jobs, food processing provides direct employment for some 25,000 persons, and indirect employment for several thousands in the service industries. Above all, it was enabling a large and increasing number of farmers to intensify their operations in terms of employment, four, five or six fold. And this, of course, meant much higher rural income for those concerned. Furthermore, in 1974 food and beverage export totalled K£82.1m. representing 39% of all export. Since independence, the annual growth of the industry has been 6 per cent in real terms and this commendable rate was likely to be exceeded until 1980 at the very least.

These figures, the Minister noted served to illustrate the importance of food and beverages in Kenya's over-all industrial and rural development and as a foreign exchange





The Minister of Agriculture, Mr J.J. Nyagah M.P., E.G.H. delivers his opening address. Listening attentively are (LtoR): The Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture Prof. R.S. Musangi, the then Swiss Ambassador to Kenya Dr. Richard Pestolozzi, the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. J.N. Karanja and the Assistant Minister for Agriculture, Mr Arap Too, MP. Others in the picture include the Deans of Faculties and officials of the University.

earner. In the past, agricultural products left Kenya largely as raw materials for processing overseas. The reversal of this trend of colonial times had become the back-bone of Kenya's programme of industrialization. The Government was fully aware of the necessity to create the requisite investment climate and the necessary infrastructure in the form of services such as roads and other communications, water supplies and in many other ways. The most important and most challenging simple aspect of this problem was the provision of qualified man-power at all levels.

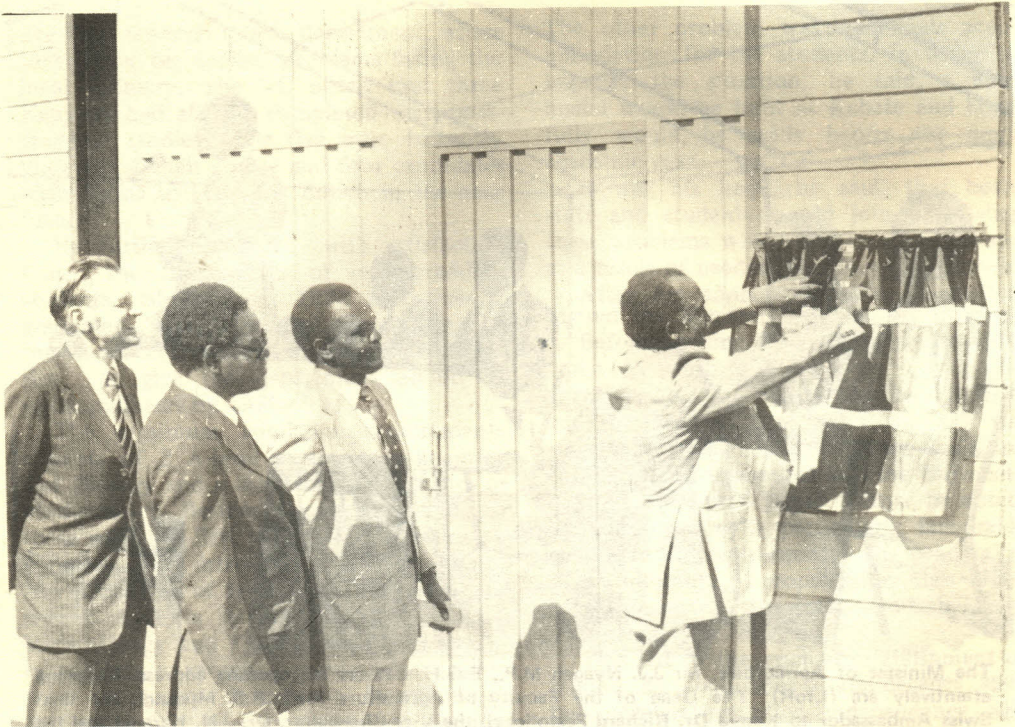
A cardinal point in industrial development, he noted, consisted almost invariably in the replacement of imported foods by products manufactured locally. Import controls were an effective means to this and but only where the local industry thus favoured was in a position to meet the challenge of filling the gap in terms of quality and price.

As far as Kenya was concerned, he said, self-sufficiency in processed foods had to

be considered only as an intermediate phase. The second phase should be to secure a competitive place in the world market for Kenya's finished food products. In export promotion, he noted further, Kenya's tourist industry was an important asset which had to be exploited. If the country's tens thousands of tourists remember the high quality of Kenyan foods and beverages such as beef, cheese, fruit and vegetable preparations, tea and coffee, food importers in their respective home countries would be bound to become more interested in Kenyan products.

Development target could be attained through advanced know-how in product development and in food-plant and business management. Imparting the required know-how in food technology he said, would be the prime concern of this institution. Furthermore, it should be remembered that 'eye appeal' and good keeping quality alone did not automatically open export food markets. Prices, services and marketing were also very important. Kenyan products





The Minister, Mr J.J. Nyagah, MP, removes the covering cloth to declare the Food Science and Technology Building officially open. Looking on are the Swiss Ambassador to Kenya, Dr. R. Pestalozzi, the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. J.N. Karanja (wearing glasses), the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Prof. R.S. Musangi.

should also comply with the constantly changing food legislation of the various overseas markets. To meet these requirements, the Kenya Bureau of Standards had been established and along with the Trade Development Authority had made a good beginning. However, it should be remembered that the amount of Government control or guidance or support can replace the conscientious day-to-day work of the control laboratories of such food processing plant as regards raw materials, semi-finished and finished products. Until watertight control was established over quality, he said, it was sheer waste of time to spend money on advertising or any other market development.

The Minister noted that food processing enterprises in the developed world were faced with high labour costs leading to more sophisticated labour-saving processing lines. This called for very considerable investments and for readily available highly specialized maintenance and repair services. The food

processing industry in Kenya on the other hand, should provide gainful employment to as many persons as was economically possible and tailor its investment accordingly. Thus, blue-prints from overseas should not be applied without proper adaptations to make account of local conditions. The decisions of the Kenyan and Swiss Governments to establish the Department of Food Science and Technology at the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of Nairobi, instead of training students abroad was meant to fulfil this function of local adaptability.

The assistance granted to Kenya by Switzerland, represented a further very important milestone in the development of what he said was "one of the finest" Faculties of Agriculture in the continent. He noted that the farmers and the country as a whole, were depending very, very much on the food and beverage industries to provide still more exports, save still more imports, provide more factory and service employment and



enable more and more farmers to engage in such more intensive crop and animal production.

After the official opening of the department, the Minister, the Vice-Chancellor and the then Switzerland Ambassador to Kenya, His Excellency, Dr. Richard Pestalozzi

were taken for an extensive tour of the Food Science and Technology Laboratories by the head of the department Prof. W. Schulthess. They were shown the various processes food processing undergoes before it is ready for consumption.



The Minister for Agriculture happily shakes hands with the Vice-Chancellor Dr. J.N. Karanja, the Swiss Ambassador to Kenya, Dr. R. Pestalozzi, and the Dean of the Faculty Prof. R.S. Musangi after declaring the Food Science & Technology building officially open.





The Minister, Mr J.J. Nyagah, makes an extensive tour of the buiding and laboratories housed therein. Here, the Chairman of the Department of Food Science and Technology, Prof. W. Schulthess explains about the various processes the various foods have to go before they are ready for consumption.



A section of the distinguished guests and others who turned up to witness the official opening of the Food Science and Technology Building.