

The University of Nairobi in collaboration with Australia Awards Kenya and University of Sydney held a very successful Agricultural Symposium dubbed the Agricultural Symposium 2013, Kenya Australia Awards Post-Harvest experience. The symposium was graced by among others, the Australian High commissioner to Kenya, Mr. Geoff Tooth, Mr. Phinius Nyaga, from the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries, representing the Agriculture Secretary, Prof. Isaac Mbeche, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Student affairs, who was representing the Vice Chancellor University of Nairobi, Professor Agnes Mwang'ombe, the principal, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, agricultural stakeholders including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), National Cereals and produce board, KARI, researchers and other stakeholders in the agriculture sector.

The symposium was part of the larger initiative between University of Nairobi, University of Sydney, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and technology and University of Stellenbosch on post-harvest management of maize, rice and Legumes, funded by the Australian government. Prof. Mbeche, in his opening speech indicated that the University of Nairobi is a member of the Africa Australia University Network and underscored the importance the university of Nairobi places on academic and research partnerships. In welcoming the guests to the symposium, he also expressed his deep appreciation for the ongoing partnership between the university of Nairobi and University of Sydney on post-harvest management, one of the key challenges facing Kenyan and Indeed African farmers. His Excellency, Mr. Geoff Tooth in his address, emphasized the Australian government support in the area of agriculture in Africa and particularly the East African region. He also pointed out that the food security center located in Nairobi, which is funded by the Australian government, is set to expand. One of the key areas for Agricultural development is impact to the end user and towards this end he reiterated the importance of evidence of scientific breakthroughs and other agricultural knowledge at the farmer level for improved livelihoods.

Mr. Nyaga, from the Ministry, highlighted the importance of agriculture in the Kenyan economy, the challenges in postharvest sector, and strategies aimed at addressing these challenges in order to ensure safe storage for improved food and nutrition security and livelihoods.