

# NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2024

---



**ISSUE 4 2024**

---

**UGANDA FLOWERS EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION**  
[ed@ufeaa.co.ug](mailto:ed@ufeaa.co.ug)/[ufeaa@ufeaa.co.ug](mailto:ufeaa@ufeaa.co.ug)/[www.ufeaa.co.ug](http://www.ufeaa.co.ug)  
**+256 39 3263321**

## **CONTENTS**

**ED's message**

**Phytosanitary Compliance**

**Compliance with Sustainability Standards**

**Sustainability and Social dialogue**

**Upcoming Events**

**ED'S MESSAGE**

Dear Esteemed Members and Stakeholders, Welcome to issue 4 of UFEA Newsletter. In this issue, you will be informed of the ongoing activities in the Secretariat.

In September, the Board held a meeting on 05<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

In the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024, the Board considered approaching other stakeholders who benefit from UFEA's services, particularly, the concession to import unregistered inputs for members of the Association to consider making a financial contribution of \$500 (USD five hundred) only to UFEA to bridge the financial gap for the running of the Secretariat.

In May 2024, three (3) main suppliers were contacted; i.e Greenhouse chemicals, Grain Pulse and Uganda Crop Care Ltd. They all responded positively and 2 had paid up by July 2024. UFEA wrote to two (2) more companies in September and feedback is expected soon.

A date for the AGM was agreed upon as 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024. More details will follow.

In this issue are updates on Phytosanitary compliance, update on EU new regulation on FCM, emerging regulations, lessons learned from recent audits on voluntary standards (MPS), sustainability and social dialogue, updates on collaborations and upcoming events/trainings organized by the Secretariat. Check our website and twitter for upcoming events and reports.

**UFEA invites you to share your stories for publication on the sector newsletter which is uploaded on our website monthly.**

**Enjoy the reading.**

**PHYTOSANITARY COMPLIANCE**

**MAAIF monthly audits to the farms-points to note**

The ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Department of Crop Inspection and Certification (DCIC) conducts monthly audits of productions sites/farms in fulfillment of requirement for export to EU and this is included in the additional declaration on the phytosanitary certificate. UFEA receives reports from DCIC, reviews them before forwarding to the farms and then settling Inspector’s facilitation under the partnership arrangement.

MAAIF-DCIC holds UFEA responsible to ensure farms take corrective actions on gaps identified during the audit. From the last audit, the following are some general observations for your attention:

- ✚ The farm compliance teams should make/ document and submit to MAAIF timely, monthly action plan to address the non-compliances observed by inspectors.
- ✚ The action plan for the previous inspection has to be filed against the MAAIF inspection report.
- ✚ Personnel doing Phytosanitary checks need to be trained and refreshed regularly on detection and identification of harmful organisms to mitigate non-compliances of the products.
- ✚ On Crop Protection methods used at the farm; these need to be documented, including:
  - ✓ If Integrated Pest Management strategies are used including; biological, cultural, mechanical/ physical.
  - ✓ Pesticide application records/ spray records should be in place and in tandem with scouting records.
  - ✓ The general weekly scouting records should have the date indicated, in some farms, this is not clear.
  - ✓ In rose farm, open flowers observed in some greenhouses should be removed since they act as bait/attraction for pests. Weeds too act as alternate hosts for pests and therefore should never be left to freely grow in between Greenhouses or even inside.
  - ✓ In rose farms, continuous removal and management Agrobacterium galls in all greenhouses must be given priority as they act as harbors for FCM.
  - ✓ The double door system for Greenhouses needs to be respected by all workers at all times to achieve the purpose.
  - ✓

Any farm without Registration code/ Number, as noticed in the monthly audit report forms should contact MAAIF to be allocated a number for easy traceability. Example below.

Registration code/ Number	UGPR/2005/0006
---------------------------	----------------

**FCM in cut roses from Africa: New EU requirements to enter into force from 26 April 2025**

Additional phytosanitary requirements applicable from 26 April 2025 to cut roses originating in Africa prior to export to the EU are specified on pages 15 - 16 of the Annex to the Regulation.

You can access them here directly: [Annex - new EU requirements on cut roses](#)

As Uganda we are looking forward to officially launching the systems approach for management of the false codling moth on cut flowers. This is what MAAIF has been piloting for at least two years now and it is yielding positive result. We will work towards submitting to the EU DG SANTE the necessary dossier before close of the year 2024.

Check out key features of a systems approach Pg 6-15 : [IPPC ISPM 14 International standard](#)

The use of integrated measures in a systems approach for pest risk management

- The system will be implemented in cooperation in public-private partnership, but it is under the official and sole responsibility of the NPPO of the exporting country to do the reporting to the EU.

Some essential features to be incorporated into a systems approach:

- Monitoring, auditing and reporting on system effectiveness
- Appropriate corrective actions (and sanctions)
- Appropriate record-keeping
- Phytosanitary certification in accordance with the requirements of the system

**Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation - Mission II (23<sup>rd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024)**

UFEA participated in a five-day retreat focused on the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) to finalize the SWOT analysis and Logical Framework for modules that were incomplete during the previous evaluation from July 29 to August 2, 2024. This retreat marked the continuation of Mission II, which builds on the initial assessment of MAAIF conducted in May 2024, aimed at identifying gaps in its phytosanitary control functions.

The goal of the second PCE mission was to engage in strategic planning by performing a SWOT analysis of the National Plant Protection Organization's (NPPO) phytosanitary control capabilities. Additionally, the mission sought to develop a logical framework addressing the identified gaps in MAAIF's various roles related to phytosanitary control.

During the retreat, the team concentrated on finalizing the SWOT analysis and Logical Framework for the following modules:

- Export Certification
- Import Certification
- Pest Diagnostics
- Pest Surveillance and Reporting
- Pest Risk Analysis



Phytosanitary Evaluation meeting finalizing activities of the second mission

### **Consultative meeting on establishing a Gamma Irradiation Facility in Uganda**

A technical team led by the Acting Assistant Commissioner for Nuclear Science Application from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development visited the Uganda Flower Exporters Association (UFEA) on September 11, 2024. This consultative meeting was part of a pre-feasibility study initiated by the government to explore the establishment of a Gamma Irradiation Facility in Uganda.

During their presentation, the team outlined several benefits of Gamma Irradiation Technology, including:

- No degradation of materials during sterilization
- Absence of chemical residues
- Ability to administer precise doses uniformly

Gamma Irradiation Technology utilizes ionizing radiation from Cobalt-60, which is effective in sterilizing and eliminating contaminating organisms. With a growing emphasis on environmentally sustainable production methods and restrictions on agrochemical usage, this technology is viewed as a viable solution to combat quarantine pests, particularly the False Codling Moth, which poses a significant threat to Uganda's rose farms.

UFEA raised concerns regarding potential logistical challenges, particularly the time required for products to pass through the Irradiation Facility. The importance of maintaining temperature control was also highlighted, as flower quality is closely tied to the cold chain.

In response to the team's query about the ideal location for the facility, the airport was recommended as the most suitable site. The team was also encouraged to formally reach out to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) or UFEA for any additional information needed to support the needs assessment process.





Team from the Department of Nuclear Energy of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development

### COMPLIANCE WITH VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

#### MPS strengthens requirements on Parental Material, Occupational Safety and Environment in updated version of MPS GAP standard

The MPS-GAP certification standard has been revised to enhance its requirements. This updated version is aligned with the recently released GLOBALG.A.P. Flowers & Ornamentals certification standard (version 6). As a result, a new edition of MPS-GAP has been introduced, featuring additional requirements, some that have been removed, and others that have been clarified. The updated standard, MPS-GAP v12, has been approved by the MPS Board and will take effect on January 1, 2025, with mandatory compliance starting April 1, 2025.

Notably, several requirements that were considered minor in MPS-GAP v11 have been elevated to major requirements in MPS-GAP v12. A key focus for farms is the new requirement regarding parental material, which mandates that growers comply with applicable regulations and respect the intellectual property rights associated with the planting materials they utilize.

Another significant addition pertains to the responsible management of water resources. Growers are now required to possess a water permit or demonstrate that they have actively applied for one and are in the approval process.

The major updates include:

- Compliance with legal regulations related to parental material
- Enhanced guidelines for chemical handling, including storage, application, and safety
- Improved standards for Occupational Safety and Health

New requirements introduced in the MPS-GAP standard emphasize:

- Raising awareness among workers about the MPS-GAP scheme
- Commitment to environmental conservation, ensuring compliance with relevant environmental regulations

- Focus on Occupational Health and Safety

These updates reflect MPS's commitment to improving agricultural practices while ensuring environmental sustainability and worker safety.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE

### Social Dialogue: A Pathway to Sustainable Business Growth.

The significance of social dialogue in fostering business sustainability cannot be overstated. Through various interactions between the FUE, Union and UFEA, it has become clear that social dialogue is essential for addressing industrial relations issues, ultimately creating a more harmonious workplace.

Uganda under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has a legal regulation; National Tripartite Charter on Labour Relations to strengthen Social Dialogue and tripartism between government, the employers and the union. First signed in 2013, the review process is ongoing and UFEA participated in a consultative meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

As global competition intensifies, businesses are encouraged to develop strong social dialogue frameworks. These mechanisms not only tackle immediate concerns but also enhance employee satisfaction and reduce turnover. Such improvements lead to increased productivity and bolster the company's reputation, which is vital for corporate image.

Additionally, promoting social dialogue aligns with sustainability objectives by cultivating a resilient workforce capable of adapting to industry changes. By prioritizing employee welfare alongside environmental considerations, businesses can secure the long-term viability of their operations.

In conclusion, investing in robust social dialogue is crucial for achieving business success and fostering industrial harmony in Uganda's flower export sector.

## Upcoming Issues to watch

### How will the new EU packaging legislation on Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) affect the floriculture sector?

On 24 April 2024, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) was approved by the European Parliament. However, it will not become final until the European Council also approves it. The PPWR will have an impact on all the packaging we use every day, including packaging used in floriculture. The PPWR sets requirements and guidelines from 2030 with the goal of reducing the environmental impact of packaging.

EU countries have committed to be climate neutral by 2050, in line with commitments in the Paris Agreement. The PPWR is an integral part of The Green Deal; the strategy through which the EU intends to achieve the goal step by step.

Goal of PPWR

The PPWR consists of two parts:

1. Packaging requirements.
2. Guidelines to prevent packaging waste.

The European Council is expected to finalise the PPWR in late 2024 or early 2025.

*The key features, which will almost certainly apply from 2030, are as follows:*

- All packaging must be recyclable.
- Plastic packaging must contain at least 35% recycled material.
- Packaging design must ensure that the weight, volume and number of layers of material are kept to a minimum.
- Preference for reusable packaging, such as multi-use transport packaging, with minimum targets within the EU. Exact definitions for reusable packaging are still being established.
- All packaging must have a label or QR code providing details of material composition, to facilitate sorting by consumers or to enable reuse.

We will obviously continue to monitor developments in relation to the PPWR.

*The changes from 2030 regarding the reuse and recycling of packaging seem a long way off, but it is important to think about this early and make the right choices. Hence our tip: talk to your packaging suppliers and customers in time.*

Read more

- [European Green Deal impacts design and use of floriculture packaging](#)
- [New EU rules to reduce, reuse and recycle packaging](#)
- [Royal FloraHolland examines impact approved EU packaging legislation](#)

### **Diversification: Summer flower trials and collaborations**

Following Rose growers' participation in the IFTEX in June 2024, there is more awareness of the floriculture sector in Uganda. UFEA is receiving requests to know about the sector and what potential is available for investment, including in summer flowers.

### **Collaboration with Eurofins testing Lab**

Following our meeting session, Eurofins is interested in fostering our relationship with UFEA as a central hub of knowledge sharing for Horticulture services in Uganda. In order to achieve this, they are investing in online academic programs (<https://www.eurofins-agro.com/en/news?soort-artikel=academy&sector=horticulture>) and development of new solutions based on existing services such as the soil life monitoring and next generation sequencing, among others.

***E.g refer to Newsletter on Rose production planning for Valentine's Day via plant nutrition (see article attached for more.)***

Production planning starts with an optimal growth. Optimal growth is influenced by several factors, plant nutrition is one of them. Several nutrients directly influence growth speed.

✓ Calcium: development of growing points (leaves, rose buds).



- ✓ Nitrogen: protein synthesis (all amino acids contain nitrogen), leaf size, chlorophyll.
- ✓ Sulphur: part of proteins, cell membranes, suppressing heavy metal effects.
- ✓ Potassium: regulation of opening/closing of stomata, transport of assimilates.
- ✓ Magnesium: protein synthesis, chlorophyll.
- ✓ Micronutrients: involved in several protein syntheses (cell elongation, photosynthesis...).

### **Building A Sustainable Future: Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) in decision-making.**

FYI- One Member company is already conducting ESG reporting as a requirement for certification. UFEA organized a 2-day training to sensitize companies on the topic as a proactive measure. Please register to be part.

In recent years, environmental, social and governance considerations have become increasingly important for businesses. While issues such as employee well-being and business ethics are longstanding corporate concerns, sustainability, environmental degradation and broader social factors have now also come into focus as key elements of ESG initiatives. Sustainability has become a strategic opportunity for businesses to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

To keep up with ESG programs, [companies must track key metrics](#) -- such as energy consumption, raw material usage and waste treatment -- that can eventually lead to reduced energy bills and cost reductions.

What are ESG metrics?

ESG metrics are various performance indicators, primarily nonfinancial in nature, that help companies assess their business operations on sustainable and responsible practices. These metrics provide insights into things like environmental impact, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and internal governance structures. By tracking and analyzing relevant ones, companies can monitor their progress toward improved business sustainability and better business practices.

ESG metrics can help businesses in a positive way to build and maintain their standing in the market. Consumers are increasingly concerned about the social and environmental impact of the products they buy, and many are more likely to support companies that are transparent about their ESG performance. Investors also often use ESG metrics to evaluate companies, and organizations that score poorly might find it harder to raise capital or attract new investments.

ESG metrics can help businesses identify opportunities for growth and innovation. For example, companies that invest in renewable energy, green computing and other sustainable measures could better position themselves to take advantage of changes in customer preferences

In Summary:



## 3 pillars of ESG



### PLANNED EVENTS

- Water Source Protection Planning training confirmed for 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024
- Training on Corporate Governance didn't take place as planned because of inadequate participant numbers.

### Your Feedback column

<https://forms.gle/QgXyfNdwb9wMLibJ7>