



Re: Inputs into GLOBALGAP V4 DRAFTING – Africa and Smallholder Contributions

Dear Sirs,

GLOBALGAP, the foremost private standard of fruits and vegetables, flowers and ornamentals, aquaculture and livestock is in the process of reviewing its Standard in readiness for launch of V4 in 2011. This process involves consultations with stakeholders across the world, whose input is considered by Standard Drafting Committee for adoption by the GLOBALGAP Board.

The next input into the process is scheduled for 24th June 2009 during a formal meeting of the Fruits and Vegetables Sector Committee in Koln, Germany.

As part of the Standard's efforts to increase stakeholder consultation process, GLOBALGAP launched in 2007 the Smallholder Project, which is aimed at ensuring that the views of this important segment of producers are represented during the standard drafting process by the Africa Observer and Smallholder Ambassador.

There have been concerns on the Standard's implementation, especially among small scale producers involved in export value chain, on the complexities and costs associated with compliance and periodic certification, leading to possible market access exclusions. At the same time, there have been concerns expressed by buyers in most market destinations for export produce on the need to ensure that products are shown to comply with market standards, regardless of origin.

The Africa Observer and Smallholder Program under GLOBALGAP is aimed at ensuring that all requirements in the Standard are the minimum necessary, and that they are not an impediment to trade from Africa or smallholders across the world. The Horticultural Council of Africa (grouping of associations of horticulture in Africa) is keen to protect the interests of African growers in the marketplace.

We are achieving this by collecting views from producer organizations across Africa on what precisely is challenging in the standard, and how it can be done differently and achieve the same objective of safeguarding our consumer interests in export markets.

We encourage associations and growers to be as specific as possible, and where possible to indicate the Compliance Criteria and Control Points reference in the standard, which you consider necessary for amendment. These views are best collected at association level, or industry stakeholder forum, but can also be sent in by individual companies. We are therefore writing to kindly request you to send to the Africa Observer program a summary of concerns on the Standard from your membership. There was a call for public comments made early last year, which you will remember, and I am sending you the interim comments by a separate email for your perusal. It might be practical to summarize your comments by referencing on Compliance Criteria and Control Points in question. You could also summarize in general sense comments expressed by growers (small, medium and large) in your country on GLOBALGAP standard.

We are encouraging growers to be as frank as possible, and express positive or negative comments freely. For purposes of the forthcoming June 24th 2009 Sector Committee, I would be grateful if you can send the inputs to me by 15th June 2009, for consideration by the Smallholder Team before submission. A summary of issues raised will also be circulated. Our aim, as growers in Africa, is to enhance market access for our produce. We are collaborating in this initiative to ensure that GLOBALGAP, and other official or private standards that affect us are transparently set on the minimum conditions necessary for both consumers and producers, and that the whole process is cost effective.

We look forward to your collaboration in this effort and prompt action on this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr Stephen Mbithi

Ambassador for Small Holders and Africa Observer to GLOBALGAP ,

Also: **Chief Executive Officer**, Fresh Produce Exporters Association of Kenya (FPEAK).