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A big step for horticulture in Tanzania

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Written by M. M. Mwanakijji

FRIDAY, 12 DECEMBER 2008



The Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA) and its newly formed grower-owned logistics firm, TAHA Fresh Handling Ltd. (TFHL), were joined this afternoon by Mark Green, the United States Ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania, to inaugurate a weekly air cargo service from Kilimanjaro International Airport to Ostend in Belgium, operated by MK Airlines. This regularly scheduled Boeing 747-200 air cargo flight is dedicated to the shipping of horticultural produce from northern Tanzania, providing cost-effective, timely access to market and spurring growth of agricultural exports in the region. The first flight took off on Sunday, December 7th full of 40 tons of flowers, cuttings and vegetables, the horticultural bounty of Tanzania destined for the

markets of Europe.

Horticulture has great potential in contributing to poverty alleviation in Tanzania because of its potential in creating employment and increasing export revenue. Horticulture has experienced rapid growth with export earnings increasing from less than \$10 million in 2000 to over \$50 million in 2007. Projections are for Tanzania's horticultural exports to reach \$100 million by 2012, on par with traditional exports such as coffee and cotton.

The Tanzanian Horticultural Association is a great example of a local umbrella organization taking the lead in identifying key drivers of economic growth, mobilizing funds, and bringing stakeholders together to find solutions. TAHA approached the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and identified three major constraints to the sector: lack of reliable and cost effective airfreight; lack of long-term financing for agriculture; and limited participation of smallholder farmers in the horticulture value chain.

Support from the American people has been targeted to address each of these constraints. The air-freight project, receiving \$1.5 million over two years, is working to provide a reliable and cost effective air-freight solution. USAID has partnered with the African Development Bank and CRDB to launch a \$20 million credit guarantee for medium and long term financing to agriculture. USAID is also supporting the integration of smallholder farmers into exporters' value chains through an out-growers program, the SHOP project.

Getting products to market is vitally important, but marketing is also critical to successfully support in stimulating expansion and new investment in the sector. The American people are also helping to implement a promotion campaign for Tanzanian flowers resulting in two major awards for TAHA at international floral fairs in Holland and Miami.

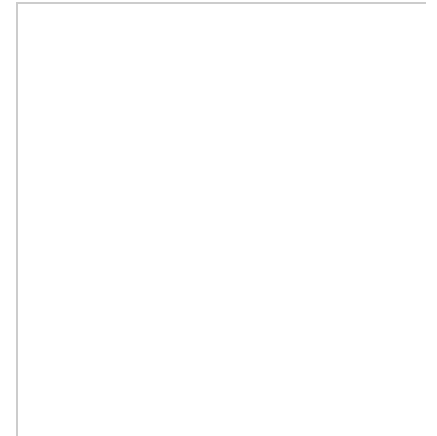
For information on this, and other USAID programs in Tanzania supported by the American people, please visit us at [Home](#).

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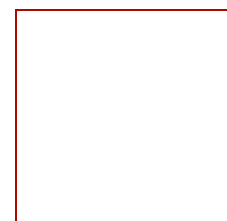
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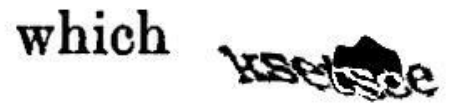
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