



TALKING POINTS FOR H E SUSAN KIHKA, NAKURU COUNTY GOVERNOR, ON AVOCADO FARMING IN NAKURU COUNTY

1. Strategic Investment in Avocado as a Flagship Crop

- Since 2017/2018, avocado has been a flagship agricultural initiative in Nakuru County, prioritized in our County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP 2023–2027).
- Over the last seven years, we have distributed more than 750,000 seedlings to over 17,000 farmers, significantly transforming livelihoods across all sub-counties.

2. Steady Growth in Acreage, Yield, and Value

- Acreage under avocado farming has increased from 370 hectares in 2018 to 2,893 hectares in 2023, a growth of nearly 700 per cent.
- This expansion has resulted in a production jump from 664 tonnes in 2018 to over 39,000 tonnes in 2023.
- The crop's value rose from KSh 12 million in 2018 to KSh 2.5 billion in 2023, making avocado a reliable high-value crop for farmers.

3. Varieties and Global Demand

- Nakuru primarily grows Hass, Fuerte, and Jumbo varieties, with Hass commanding the largest share due to its high export demand.
- Our farmers are tapping into a global avocado boom, with over 116,000 metric tons exported in 2024 alone.

4. Value Addition and Export Opportunities

- Avocado is no longer just a fruit; it's a business. We're seeing local value addition in the form of guacamole, avocado oil, and frozen products.
- Leading exporters such as Keitt Exporters, Olivado Kenya, Biofarm, and Vegpro are working closely with our farmers to ensure market access and international standards.

5. Partnerships for Quality Seedlings and Farmer Training

- We've partnered with KEPHIS, HCD, and private nurseries to ensure only certified seedlings are distributed.
- 26 registered avocado nurseries now operate across the county, supported by 4 certified mother blocks that produce quality rootstocks and scions.
- In 2024/2025 alone, over 91,000 seedlings have been distributed to farmers and schools to continue expanding this sector.

6. Localized Support and Farmer Reach

- The program reaches farmers across all sub-counties, including Bahati, Njoro, Kuresoi North, Kuresoi South, Gilgil, Naivasha, Molo, Subukia, Rongai, Nakuru West and others.
- These seedlings are distributed through both county headquarters and ward-level initiatives.

7. Strengthening the Avocado Ecosystem

- We work with a wide range of actors: from training organizations like MESPT and Shep Biz, to logistics and aggregation companies like I Growers, to biological pest control firms like Kenya Biologics.
- Their support includes market linkage, pest and disease control, training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and financial literacy.

8. Key Challenges and Interventions

Challenges:

- Smallholder management practices, pest and disease (e.g., Persea mites), centralized grading/packaging in Nairobi, cold chain limitations, and the problem of immature fruit harvesting.

County Interventions:

- Prioritizing avocado under the agriculture pillar in the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).
- Farmer training on GAP, postharvest handling, and traceability.
- Public-private initiatives to supply certified seedlings and access to credit.
- Investment in aggregation centers, cold storage, and mechanized grading.
- Enforcement of transportation regulations to maintain quality.

9. National and Export-Level Coordination

- National agencies regulate harvesting seasons and oversee quality checks to prevent the export of immature fruit.
- Exporters are licensed and trained on market requirements, and we're facilitating their participation in international exhibitions.
- With Naivasha as a dry port, logistics infrastructure is improving, including reefer containers, cold trucks, and rail transport to Mombasa.

10. The Way Forward

Nakuru County is committed to making avocado farming a sustainable economic pillar. We urge continued collaboration between farmers, private sector, government agencies, and development partners.

Thank you

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GOVERNOR, NAKURU COUNTY