

# Half-Year REPORT



February - June 2024

## //Product Stewardship

### Revolutionizing Weed Management: The Herbicide Campaign Making Waves in Kenya

In partnership with Yara East Africa and Agriline Drones, the campaign highlighted the benefits of using drones for herbicide application. This approach not only reduced exposure risks but also ensured precision in application, marking a significant advancement in agricultural practices.

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## //Pictorial

His Excellency Dr. Jonathan Bii Chellim, E.G.H, Governor of Uasin Gishu County, visits the aak-GROW stand at the Eldoret ASK Show.

- aak-GROW present in the Food and Agriculture Organization forum and many more.

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# World Food Safety Day 2024

## Preparing for the unexpected

On June 7, 2024, World Food Safety Day, themed "Prepare for the Unexpected," highlighted the importance of staying ready for food safety incidents, regardless of their severity Page: 11

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# Institutional Development

## New Leadership and Expert Working Groups Poised for Transformative Impact

The board of directors at aak-GROW plays a pivotal role in addressing significant issues concerning the company, its shareholders, employees, and the public. They provide crucial support to the organization in defining objectives, setting major goals, and maintaining focus over time.

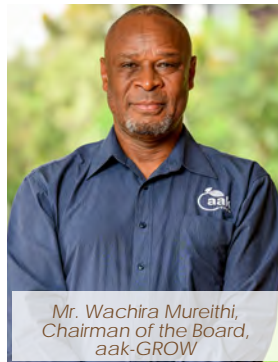
On April 16, 2024, aak-GROW/ CropLife Kenya proudly introduced its new board of directors. Leading the team is Chairperson Mr. Wachira Mureithi, with Vice Chairperson Mr. Mwangi Muthee and Treasurer Mr. Manoj Shah by his side. This dynamic trio is well-prepared to steer the association towards achieving its mission. Joining them are esteemed members Mr. Hezekiah Macharia, Mr. Evans Mutuva, Mr. Joern Kraegeloh, Mr. Given Mudenda, Mr. David Ndegwa, and Mr. Joseph Anampiu. Together, they bring a rich blend of skills, backgrounds, and experiences, poised to enhance the association's productivity and service.

In addition to the board, aak-GROW heavily relies on Expert Working Groups (EWGs) consisting of specialists from member companies. These groups—focused on Stewardship, Regulatory Policy and Standards, Anti-counterfeit, and Communication—provide invaluable technical expertise and innovative ideas to drive industry performance.

The induction of the new EWGs took place on June 18, 2024, marking the beginning of their new term. This induction session was designed to familiarize them with their roles, responsibilities, and expectations, ensuring they are well-prepared to contribute effectively to the association's goals.



aak-GROW Board 2024



Mr. Wachira Mureithi,  
Chairman of the Board,  
aak-GROW



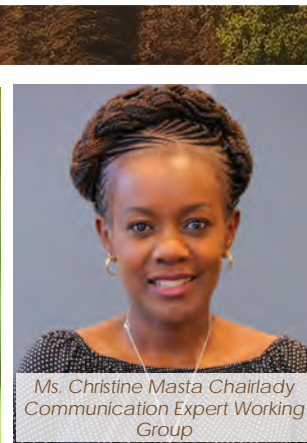
Ms. Catherine Wangu  
Chairlady, Policy, Regulatory  
and Standards EWG



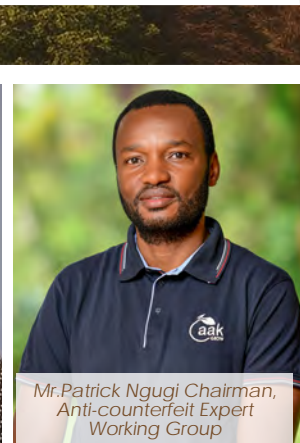
Mr. Eric Kimunguyi,  
CEO, aak-GROW



Mr. Francis Karanja, Chairman  
Product Stewardship EWG



Ms. Christine Masta  
Chairlady  
Communication Expert Working  
Group



Mr. Patrick Ngugi Chairman,  
Anti-counterfeit Expert  
Working Group

With the combined vigour of the new board and the freshly inducted EWGs, aak-GROW is set to propel forward with renewed energy. This supercharged momentum will significantly aid the secretariat in achieving its objectives and realizing the institution's vision of better farming, better food, and better health.



Members of the aak-GROW Expert Working Groups



# Product Stewardship



Awareness creation on responsible use during the Herbicide Campaign Road show

The aak-GROW Herbicide Campaign stands as a testament to the power of strategic awareness initiatives in transforming agricultural practices and ensuring a safer, more productive farming environment in Kenya.

## Revolutionizing Weed Management: The Herbicide Campaign Making Waves in Kenya

From February 19th to March 31st, aak-GROW launched an innovative Herbicide Campaign, setting the stage for a transformative planting season in Kenya. This campaign, strategically timed before the 2024 long rains, aimed to address persistent weed management challenges and promote responsible herbicide use among Kenyan farmers.

The campaign's core objective was to educate farmers on effective herbicide application techniques, proper use of personal protective equipment, label comprehension, and the identification of counterfeit products. By targeting farmers, agro-dealers, agronomists, and Spray Service Providers, aak-GROW sought to enhance agricultural productivity while ensuring the safe and effective use of herbicides.

In partnership with Yara East Africa and Agriline Drones, the campaign highlighted the benefits of using drones for herbicide application. This approach not only reduced exposure risks but also ensured precision in application, marking a significant advancement in agricultural practices.

The campaign focused on the North-Rift region of Kenya, covering Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, and Bungoma counties.



Farmer Field Day at Bumula Sub County



A farmer receiving a gift during the roadshow

To disseminate this vital information, aak-GROW utilized a multi-channel approach, including social media, newspaper columns, SMS, radio broadcasts on BK and Chamgei, farmer field days, the Eldoret Agricultural Society of Kenya Show, agro-dealer workshops, billboards, and posters.

In addition to these channels, a dynamic roadshow reinforced the campaign messages, reaching out to farmers, pest control product handlers, and the general public. The roadshow covered routes from Chepkanga to Moiben, Juakali to Kipkaren River, and Barracks to Ziwa, ensuring widespread awareness.



## Impact and achievements

The Herbicide Campaign achieved a remarkable reach of **1,221,798 people**.

### Key accomplishments

- 1 **Enhanced Brand Visibility:** The campaign significantly boosted the visibility of participating brands.
- 2 **Massive Awareness Creation:** It created extensive awareness about responsible herbicide use and innovations in the field.
- 3 **Expanded Farmer and Agro-dealer Database:** The campaign expanded the database of farmers and agro-dealers, facilitating future outreach efforts.
- 4 **Support and Appreciation:** Member companies received strong support and appreciation during field days.
- 5 **Introduction of New Innovations:** The campaign introduced new innovations, such as drone applications for herbicides, to the agricultural community.



Agro-dealer training in Kitale, Trans Nzoia County

The aak-GROW Herbicide Campaign stands as a testament to the power of strategic awareness initiatives in transforming agricultural practices and ensuring a safer, more productive farming environment in Kenya.

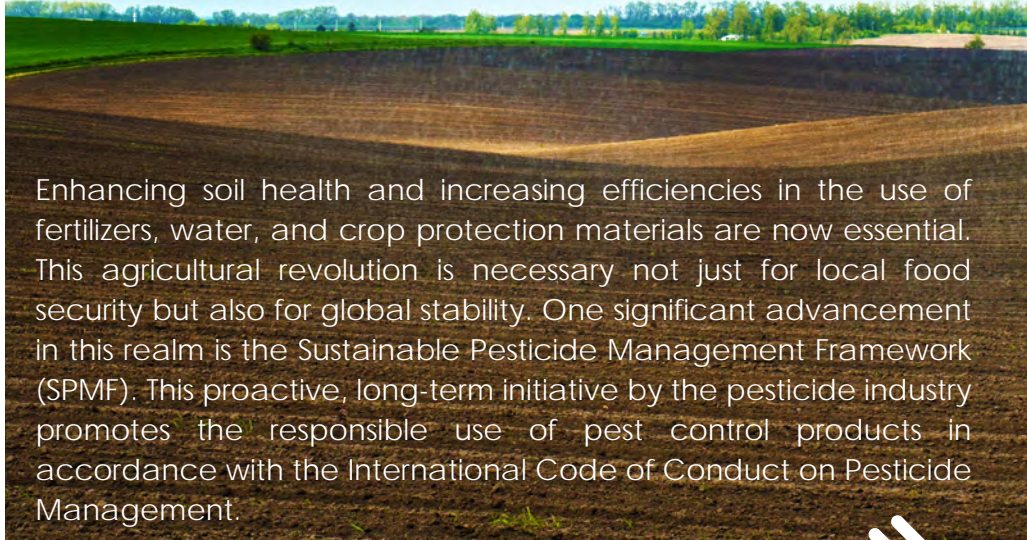
## Agricultural Innovations for Population Growth and Climate Adaptation



Kenya's population is rapidly growing intensifying pressure on farmers to feed the nation, transforming agriculture into a crucial geopolitical challenge. With arable land and water resources shrinking due to climate change, population pressure, and other factors, farmers must innovate to produce higher crop yields while preserving the environment.



Participants during the roadshow



Enhancing soil health and increasing efficiencies in the use of fertilizers, water, and crop protection materials are now essential. This agricultural revolution is necessary not just for local food security but also for global stability. One significant advancement in this realm is the Sustainable Pesticide Management Framework (SPMF). This proactive, long-term initiative by the pesticide industry promotes the responsible use of pest control products in accordance with the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management.



Demonstration of the use of drones during the campaign



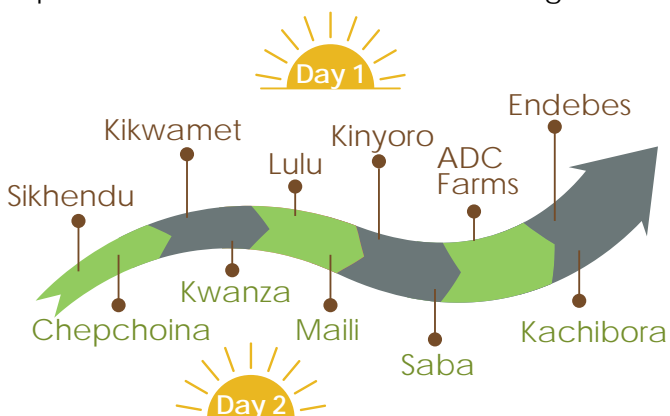


A key pillar of the SPMF is fostering innovation, enabling farmers to access modern crop protection tools, practices, and technologies. The industry has prioritized food safety and the well-being of those using pest control products, supporting the introduction of drone technology for pesticide application. These drones are designed to assess farms and determine the precise quantity of pesticide needed. By applying only the required amount, they reduce the risk of environmental pollution and minimize risks to exposure.

On May 30th and 31st, 2024, aak-GROW, Yara Fertilizers, Syngenta East Africa and the Pest Control Products Board launched a drone awareness campaign in Kitale, Trans-Nzoia County. The campaign aimed to achieve several objectives:

1. Educating Farmers: Educating medium and large-scale farmers about the benefits of using drones for pesticide application, promoting safer and more efficient practices.
2. Creating awareness: Informing all farmers on the responsible purchase, application, and disposal of pesticides, emphasizing the importance of avoiding counterfeit products.
3. Promoting Crop Nutrition and Pest Management: Raising awareness about available crop nutrition and pest management options for maize farmers, including strategies for controlling Grey Leaf Spot, fall armyworm, and weeds, with support from commercial partners like Yara and Syngenta EA LTD.

The campaign featured on-farm demonstrations along a planned route, showcasing the practical use of drones for applying farm inputs. The route covered the following areas:



*These drones are designed to assess farms and determine the precise quantity of pesticide needed.*



The roadshow was complemented by a week-long radio campaign on West FM, culminating in a talk show discussing the responsible use of pest control products for safe food and increased yields. This initiative highlights the crucial role of technology in agriculture. As population growth reduces the available land and resources for farming, innovative solutions are essential to boost food production while ensuring the quality and safety of our food supply.

By embracing advanced technologies and responsible practices, Kenya's farmers are not just meeting the immediate needs of a growing population but are also setting a sustainable path for the future. This transformation is vital in ensuring that agriculture can continue to thrive despite the challenges posed by a rapidly changing world.





## The Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Organization of Kenya (HAPROK)

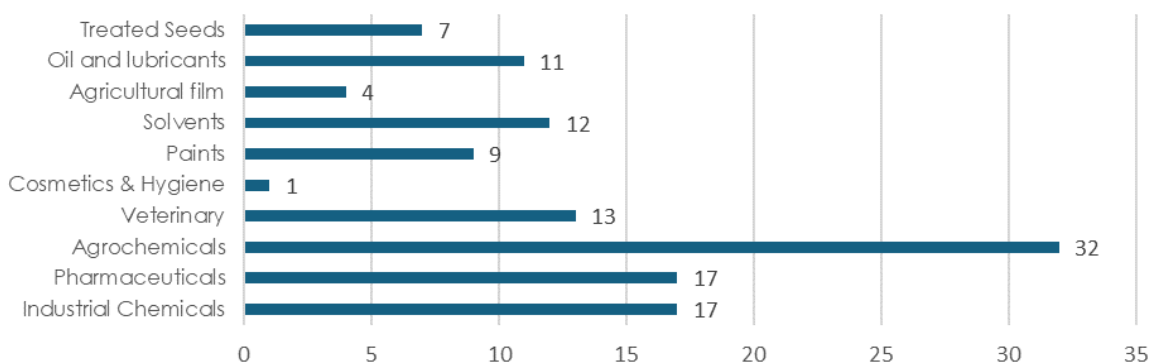
### Status of Incorporation

The Kenya Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Organization (KEHAPRO) has been officially incorporated as The Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Organization of Kenya (HAPROK). This entity is legally registered as a Company limited by guarantee under Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2015, with its articles of association duly prepared. The organization, initially named the Kenya Hazardous Waste Producer Responsibility Organization (KEHARO), underwent a name change to comply with the Government of Kenya's reservation of the term 'Kenya' for institutional names. HAPROK is currently based at the Kenya Association of Manufacturers House, 5th Floor, along Mwanzi Road in Westlands, Nairobi.

### Membership

HAPROK has a membership of **86**, comprising **49** paid-up members and **35** under registration, representing various sectors such as treated seeds, oil and lubricants, agricultural films, solvents, paints, cosmetics and hygiene, veterinary, agrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, and industrial chemicals. Among the paid-up members, 10 are producers from the agricultural sector.

HAPROK MEMBERSHIP PER SECTOR



Other sectors, including sanitary towels, diapers, and treated wood, are expected to join as directed by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). Membership recruitment is ongoing.

### EPR Plan Development

Section 13 of the Sustainable Waste Management (SWM) Act 2022 mandates that producers bear Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) obligations to mitigate pollution and the environmental impact of their products in the Kenyan market, as well as the resulting waste. Producers are required to ensure the safe handling of post-consumer waste by participating in a collective compliance scheme, such as HAPROK. On August 30, 2023, NEMA issued a notice urging all producers to submit their EPR Plans to the Authority.

As a result, aak-GROW and Tandem consultants have drafted the initial Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Plan, which was presented for review by various stakeholders, including aak-GROW members, NEMA, KAM, and Waste Service Providers, on June 19, 2024. Suggestions and comments from this review are being incorporated, with a significant focus on revising EPR Fees.



Stakeholder Engagement on review of draft EPR Plan



An Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Plan is a strategy aimed at incorporating the environmental costs of products throughout their entire life cycle into their market price. The main goal of EPR plans is to hold producers accountable for the disposal and recycling of their products at the end of their useful life. This approach encourages more sustainable product design and helps to reduce waste.

### HAPROK Board of Directors Meetings

The HAPROK Board of Directors held an inception meeting on February 23, 2024. During this meeting, the concept of EPR, the status of HAPROK, budget planning for KEHAPRO activities, and next steps were discussed. Subsequently, on May 24, 2024, the Board met again to nominate HAPROK leadership:



Mr. Manoj Shah of Osho Chemicals (Agrochemicals sector) was elected as Chairperson.



Mr. Bipin Shah of Basco Paints (Paints and Solvents sector) was elected as Vice Chairperson

### EPR Implementation through River Catchment Clean-Ups

NEMA is enforcing the Sustainable Waste Management Act of 2022 and EPR obligations through inspections of pollution in the Nairobi River Catchment. As part of this initiative, three HAPROK members received Environmental Restoration Orders due to improper disposal of product and packaging waste. These orders required the cleanup of hotspot areas and submission of EPR Plans to prevent further pollution.

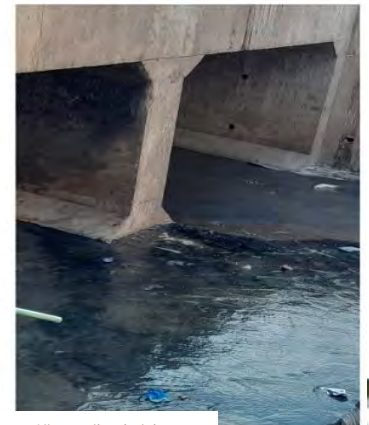
From March 4 to March 15, 2024, cleanup activities were organized along the Nairobi, Ngong, and Mathare Rivers in collaboration with the Nairobi Rivers Commission (NRC), Kenya Extended Producer Responsibility Organization (KEPRO), Packaging Producer Responsibility Organization (PAKPRO), and community youth groups.

The targeted cleanup sites included

**1. Kiamaiko Bridge along Mathare River near John Saga Police Station, Huruma.:**

2. Korogocho Bridge along Nairobi River, Dandora.
3. Mukuru Kayaba along Ngong River near Outering Road.
4. Ngong River at Mashimoni-Mpaka Lindi Area in Kibera.
5. Nairobi River at Rounder Area in Kariobangi.

These efforts reflect a committed approach towards implementing EPR obligations and promoting sustainable waste management practices.



Transformation of Mathare River at Kiamaiko bridge







*Their achievements are a testament to their innovative spirit and dedication to promoting smart agricultural practices for a sustainable future*

## aak-GROW's Success at the Eldoret National ASK Show

In 2023, aak-GROW made its debut at the Eldoret National Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) Show, held from March 1st to 4th. The event was a significant milestone for the organization as they showcased their innovative Cone Garden Technology. This technology highlighted various garden crops and emphasized the importance of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in pest control. The exhibition featured detailed explanations and practical demonstrations, which garnered much attention.



Aak-GROW receiving their award from Hon. Mithika Linturi

## Looking Ahead to 2025

With two consecutive wins, aak-GROW is now setting its sights on the 2025 Eldoret National ASK Show. If the organization secures the top position for the third time, they will be able to keep the trophy permanently. The team is enthusiastic and prepared for the upcoming competition, with hopes of continuing their streak of excellence.

aak-GROW's journey at the Eldoret National ASK Show reflects their commitment to advancing agricultural practices and sharing vital information on safety and sustainability. Their achievements are a testament to their innovative spirit and dedication to promoting smart agricultural practices for a sustainable future.

## Cone Garden Technology

Their impressive presentation earned aak-GROW the first position for the Best Agricultural-Based Organization that disseminates Safety Information in Agricultural Products. This prestigious accolade was presented by the Deputy President, Hon. Rigathi Gachagwa, and came with a trophy celebrating their achievement.

The success continued into 2024, with the show taking place from March 6th to 9th. This year, aak-GROW introduced a new innovation called Green River Technology. The display included a different variety of garden crops but maintained a strong focus on IPM for pest control. The organization's dedication to innovation and education in agriculture once again paid off as they clinched the first position for the second consecutive year. The trophy was awarded by the Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture, Livestock Development, and Fisheries, Hon. Mithika Linturi.

The theme for the Eldoret National ASK Shows, from last year to this year, has been consistent: "Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Trade Initiatives for Sustainable Economic Growth." This theme highlights the importance of sustainable practices and innovations in agriculture, which aak-GROW has continually embraced and promoted through their participation and exhibitions.



The aak-GROW Team celebrating their victory during this year's Eldoret ASK Show



## Focus on Agriculture and Food Security at the Madaraka Day 2024 celebrations



The panel discussion



Mr. Eric Kimunguyi CEO aak-GROW during the panel discussion

This year's Madaraka Day celebrations centred around the theme "Agriculture and Food Security," bringing significant attention to the agriculture industry. Held on Saturday, June 1, 2024, at Kibabii University in Bungoma County, the event gathered key government leaders and stakeholders.

Prominent attendees included Bungoma County Governor H.E. Ken Lusaka, Kakamega County Governor H.E. Fernandes Barasa, and the Principal Secretary for Agriculture, Dr. Kiprono Rono. The celebrations highlighted the government's efforts to address challenges and implement solutions across various agricultural value chains.

During the event, Dr. Rono emphasized the government's dedication to revitalizing the sugarcane industry. He detailed plans to restore the four sugar mills—Chemelil, Muhoroni, Mumias, and Nzoia—within the next three years, underscoring the importance of these mills to the region's economy and food security.

A significant panel discussion featured Mr. Eric Kimunguyi, CEO of aak-GROW, H.E. Fernandes Barasa and Dr. Kiprono Rono among others. During the discussion, Mr. Kimunguyi addressed the importance of enhancing access to and utilization of agricultural inputs. He emphasized the vital role of the pest control industry in fostering research and innovation to support food security through the responsible use of agricultural products by farmers, particularly in rural areas through a program deemed, "Stewardship Mashinani". Mr. Kimunguyi underlined the industry's dedication to helping farmers achieve high yields and ensuring sustainable food production.

Additionally, he pointed out the industry's efforts to combat the illegal trade of agricultural inputs, highlighting the collaboration with the Pest Control Products Board. These institutions, working with other stakeholders, aim to reduce the influx and trade of counterfeit crop protection products.



From Left: H.E. Ken Lusaka, Dr. Kiprono Rono and H.E. Fernandes Barasa

To tackle this issue, three key steps have been identified:

- 1. Clean the Market: Conduct raids and seize illegal products through a multi-stakeholder approach.**
- 2. Educate Entry Point Agencies: Train officials at ports and borders to identify and report counterfeit products.**
- 3. Sensitize Farmers: Raise awareness among farmers about the detrimental effects of using counterfeit products on farming, health, the environment, and the economy.**

The week-long celebrations provided a platform for government leaders, farmers, and other stakeholders to interact and collaborate, fostering a shared vision for the future of agriculture in Kenya.



# World Food Safety Day 2024

## Preparing for the Unexpected

On June 7, 2024, World Food Safety Day, themed "Prepare for the Unexpected," highlighted the importance of staying ready for food safety incidents, regardless of their severity. This year's theme emphasized the critical need to be prepared for any potential health risks associated with food consumption.

Food safety incidents involve situations where food poses a potential or confirmed health risk. These incidents can arise from accidents, insufficient control measures, food fraud, or natural events.

*He underscored the need for innovative solutions to monitor food safety locally and make residue data accessible to everyone, including smallholder farmers and vendors like the mama mboga*



Mr. Eric Kimunguyi during the panel discussion



Panel discussion during the event

In Kenya, the World Food Safety Day 2024 event was held at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi. It gathered various stakeholders from the agriculture industry, including the Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya, Kenya Bureau of Standards, University of Nairobi, Pest Control Products Board, Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service, and aak-GROW/CropLife Kenya. These stakeholders convened to discuss strategies for ensuring the Kenyan food industry is prepared for potential or confirmed health risks associated with food consumption.

During a panel discussion, Mr. Eric Kimunguyi, CEO of aak-GROW, stressed the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors and research institutions to enhance food safety. He underscored the need for innovative solutions to monitor food safety locally and make residue data accessible to everyone, including smallholder farmers and vendors like the mama mboga.

While being ready to manage food safety incidents requires concerted efforts from policymakers, food safety authorities, farmers and food business operators, consumers also can play an active role.



# The Poison Information Centre

The Poison Information Centre provides emergency services for incidents involving pest control product exposures. The centre can be reached via toll-free numbers listed on all registered product container labels.

In the first quarter of 2024, there was an increase of 27 calls compared to the same period in 2023. In the second quarter, there was a difference of 50 calls between the two years. Overall, for the first half of 2024, the number of calls increased by 77 compared to 2023 with 84% being general inquiries and 12% being poison related cases. This rise in calls is attributed to increased public awareness about the Poison Information Centre, leading to higher utilization of its services.



Toll free numbers  
**0800-720021/0800-730030**

## Stewardship Outreach Activities

### Mid-Year - Summary of Farmers Field Day Trainings

Jan

**RU training - 90 extension officers** from Kisumu, Siaya, Migori, Homa-Bay, Busia, Bungoma, and Kakamega Counties

Jan

CGA/aak-GROW - Annual Stakeholders Potato Farmers Field Day for Potato Farmers (**153 farmers**)  
Purko Sheep Ranch, Mau-Narok for Narok/Nakuru Farmers  
11th January

Feb

**RU training - 19 agronomists** from Delmonte trained

Feb

**RU training - 8 I-Shamba call agents** trained to support non poison cases from PIC.

Feb

**Farmer field day - 410 farmers** trained on general safe use and proper disposal

Feb

CGA/AGVENTURE - Safe Use Training on Conservation Agriculture for Enhanced Productivity (**94 farmers**)  
Sasumua Agriculture Ltd, OI- Maison Ranch - Rumuruti, Laikipia County - 8th February

Mar

**Herbicide and drone campaign** - Reach of **1,221,798 people**

Mar

**Sensitization seminar** - Representatives from **52 coffee factories** convened by Fair Trade Africa were sensitized on RU/IPM with follow up activities per region agreed upon.

Mar

**ASK show Eldoret - 1800 farmers** sensitized on RU/IPM with key emphasis on proper herbicide use.

Mar

Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training (**89 Farmers**) - Tongaren Sub-County, Bungoma County - 12th March

Mar

**Agrodealers trainings - 474 agrodealers** from 8 counties were trained on emerging issues and RU/IPM. Partnership with FPEAK

Mar

Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training (**82 Farmers**) - Bumula Sub-County, Bungoma County - 14th March

Mar

Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training (**207 Farmers**) - Mt. Elgon Sub-County, Bungoma County - 13th March



**Mar** Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training **265 Farmers** - Kwanza Sub-County, Trans-Nzoia County - 15th March

**Mar** Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training **(95 Farmers)** - Turbo Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County - 26th March

**Mar** Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training **(95 Farmers)** - Turbo Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County- 15th March

**Mar** Safe Use of Herbicides Farmers training **136 Farmers**) - Soy Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County - 26th March

**Apr** Farmer trainings - **28 farmer reps** from Kamurai Coffee C.S in Embu trained on RU/IPM and SSP use .

**Apr** **17 VBA's** from Elgeyo Marakwet trained on RU and IPM at a 2 day training

**Apr** **10 SSPs** and **40 FSC's** trained on RU at a 2 day training in Nyandarua County on 28th and 29th April 2024

**Apr** Participated at Avocado Africa Expo on 7th to 9th May where we met **over 200 stakeholders and growers** , educating them on RU and Container management.

**May** **1 member sensitization** meeting for HAPROK held on 15th May where **117 members attended**.

**May** **1 training** for **48 Agrodealers** in T/Nzoia

**May** Drone Campaign on 29th to 31st May 2024 in Trans Nzoia County featuring a roadshow, radio talk show and Social media. **Over 1100 directly reached**

**May** **Over 410 farmers** sensitized at International Potato day Exhibition on 30th and 31st May in Nyandarua

**May** **Over 1,200 farmers** reached at the Bungoma Madara day exhibit on 27th to 31st May 2024.

**May** **HAPROK board meeting** held on 24th May 2024

**Jun** **104 stakeholders** sensitized on MRLs, RU and food safety during WFSD celebrations at Safari park Nairobi on 7th June.

**Jun** **19 SSPs** from Bungoma County trained on 10th to 14th June.

**Jun** **Over 300 stakeholders** sensitized on RU, Container management, PPE and ACF at Agritech exhibition on 12th to 14th June.

**Jun** **133 spray operators and supervisors** from Sasini Ltd trained on RU from 26th and 27th June 2024.

**Jul** National Potato Council/Stakeholders – Potato Farmers Field Day, RUP Training. **(200 Farmers)** - Eenengeita,Narok North – Sub-County, Narok County - 10th July

**Jul** National Potato Council/Stakeholders – Potato Farmers Field Day, RUP Training. **(250 Farmers)** - Nessuit, Njoro Sub-County Nakuru County - 12th July

**Jul** A successful **media tour of PCPB** and Njabini to showcase use of SSPs. Container management and PPE use to journalists from **6 media houses**.

**Jul** **Farmer field days** - NPCK in Narok, Uasin Gishu, Nakuru and Meru on 10th to 23rd July

**Jul** Participated in Fresh Crop farmers exhibition on 24th and 25th July at Mau Narok where **over 4,000 farmers** sensitized on RU/IPM, PPE, ACF and container management.

**Jul** **Stewardship workshop with PCPB** in Naivasha on 18th and 19th July. Way forward to be shared with several activities for immediate implementation.

**Jul** Participated at **Wambugu ATC farmers exhibition** on 26th and 27th July 2024.



# Regulatory, Policy and Standards

## Battling Fake Pest Control Products in Kenya: A Collaborative Effort

Kenya's agriculture sector is a vital part of its economy, contributing significantly through exports of horticulture and other commodities. However, its potential is being undermined by various challenges, including the rise of counterfeit agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and pest control products. These fake products are not only ineffective but also harmful to the environment, polluting soil and water, endangering biodiversity, and posing risks to food safety and international markets. In 2021, an industry survey estimated annual losses from illegal trade at Kshs 3.7 billion (USD 24 million), but law enforcement seizures were only worth USD 32,000 over three years.

In 2023, the National Security Council flagged out the issue of illegal pest control products as a national security threat. This prompted enhanced efforts to tackle the problem, leading to close collaboration between PCPB and aak-GROW, supported by the Sustainable Pesticide Management Framework (SPMF). These two institutions are working with other stakeholders to reduce the influx and trade of counterfeit crop protection products.

Consequently, three key steps have been identified to address this issue:

- 1. Clean the Market: Using a multi-stakeholder approach, conduct raids and seize illegal products.**
- 2. Educate Entry Point Agencies: Train officials at ports and borders to identify and report fake products.**
- 3. Inform Farmers: Raise awareness among farmers about the negative impacts of using counterfeit products on farming, health, the environment, and the economy.**



A visit to the border agencies at the Namnga one stop border point

These efforts are ongoing. In December 2023, PCPB staff received training at the National Criminal Investigations Academy, enhancing their ability to investigate and prosecute counterfeit cases. This training has led to significant improvements, with over 300 tons of illegal products worth Kshs 22.5 million (USD 171,000) seized to date, in Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Kisumu and Kisii among other towns, far surpassing the past three years.



A visit to the KEBS office at the Port of Mombasa



Officers from PCPB and aak-GROW assessing an illegal product



Educating agencies at entry points is also a continuous effort. On February 29, representatives from various agencies gathered to discuss how to identify and prevent the entry of fake products. Participants included the Kenya Revenue Authority, Kenya Bureau of Standards, Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service, Pharmacy and Poisons Board, Agriculture and Food Authority, Anti-Counterfeit Authority, and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

From June 10th to 14th, industry and regulatory officials visited key border points, including the Port of Mombasa, Lungalunga, Loitoktok, and Namanga, to assess the effectiveness of past efforts and develop better strategies. They found that previously trained border agencies are now actively supporting the initiative by identifying and reporting suspect products. Additionally, the issue of consolidating pesticides with non-pesticide products was identified as a significant entry point for illegal goods, concluding that pesticides should only be grouped with other pesticides to prevent cross-contamination and entry of fakes.

The fight against counterfeit pest control products is crucial for ensuring the quality of Kenyan produce and the health of its people.



Meeting with border officials at Loitoktok



Meeting with border agencies at Lungalunga border

## Kenya Leads the way in Online Dossier Submission for the East African Community

*This transition has streamlined processes, reduced complexity and time in the evaluation process for registering both conventional and biological crop protection products and synchronized with the e-citizen system.*



Participants of the workshop pose for a group photo

Kenya's Pest Control Products Board (PCPB) has set a remarkable precedent within the East African Community (EAC) by adopting online dossier submission for pesticides. This milestone marks significant progress in their mission to provide an efficient and effective registration process for pest control products, among other activities within their mandate.

In May 2024, regulators from six out of eight EAC Partner States—Burundi, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo gathered in Kenya for a collaborative capacity-building workshop organized by CropLife Africa Middle East, the EAC secretariat, in collaboration with USAID, AFSI program under USDA, and aak-GROW. Ethiopia also joined the meeting.



The first component of the workshop, hosted by PCPB, focused on Benchmarking the Online Pesticides Registration System (OPRS). Speaking at the event, PCPB CEO, Mr. Fredrick Muchiri praised the collective effort of the EAC partner states and their supporting partners for taking the bold yet necessary step towards digitalizing dossier submissions. He highlighted this as a positive move towards the harmonization of EAC pesticide regulatory frameworks.

PCPB experts from the IT and registration departments facilitated an insightful walk-through of the system. The session's highlight was Kenya's successful transition from manual to online dossier applications through this pilot. This transition has streamlined processes, reduced complexity and time in the evaluation process for registering both conventional and biological crop protection products and synchronized with the e-citizen system. A move that will in a great way enhance efficiency for players in the pest control industry.

Guided by the EAC secretariat, it is anticipated that all EAC Partner States will incrementally roll out this system as part of ongoing efforts to harmonize pesticide management.



Mrs. Stella Wafula of CropLife Africa Middle East, during the workshop



Participants of the workshop pose for a group photo

## The Pest Control Industry presents Finance Bill Submissions to Parliamentary Committee

Representatives from the Pest Control Industry, aak-GROW, and the Fertiliser Association of Kenya (FAK) presented their submissions on the proposed tax changes in the Finance Bill to the Parliamentary Finance Committee on 28th May 2024. aak-GROW was represented by Mr. Eric Kimunguyi (CEO) and Mr. Joel Mutai. Representing FAK were Dr. Bimal Kantaria (Chairman) and Dr. Lillian Wanjiru (CEO).

The two associations jointly addressed the committee, focusing on taxation issues related to pest control products and fertilizers. The key issues raised included:



From Left: Representing aak-GROW, Mr. Eric Kimunguyi (CEO) and Mr. Joel Mutai (Regulatory Manager). Representing FAK : Dr. Bimal Kantaria (Chairman) and Dr. Lillian Wanjiru (CEO)

**1 Tax Status of Pest Control Products:** A proposal to retain pest control products as zero-rated as opposed to the Bill's proposal of adopting the tax-exempt status.

**2 Public Health Products:** A recommendation to zero-rate all pest control products used in public health, specifically for mosquito control, bedbugs, and rodents

**3 Agricultural Inputs:** A call to zero-rate micronutrients, foliar feeds, and bio stimulants.

**4 ECO Levy Fee:** A suggestion to remove the ECO levy fee on plastic packaging materials, arguing that the Extended Producer Responsibility levy already covers this cost.

**5 VAT Act Amendment:** The retention of paragraph 16 in the second schedule of the VAT Act 2013, with an amendment to read 'Pest Control Products' instead of 'Agricultural Pest Control Products'.





The team began by presenting a written submission, followed by an invitation for an oral presentation to further elaborate on their points.

By addressing these key issues, the associations aimed to ensure that the proposed tax changes in the Finance Bill would support the agricultural sector and public health initiatives effectively.

## Launch of Pest Control Products Board Online Services and Strategic Plan 2023-2027

The Pest Control Products Board (PCPB) has reached a significant milestone with the launch of its online services and the unveiling of its strategic plan for 2023-2027.

### Advancing Digital Transformation

The introduction of the PCPB's online services platform represents a major step forward in the board's digital transformation. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for online services, as physical contact and traditional submission methods were no longer viable. The new e-submission system now provides users with enhanced accessibility and efficiency in registration processes. The platform offers streamlined access to information, applications, and regulatory updates through user-friendly interfaces and secure portals, facilitating smoother interactions between stakeholders and regulatory authorities.

### Strategic Plan 2023-2027

During the event, the Board Chairman, Mr. Njoroge Kagwe, emphasized the board's commitment to modernizing its operations while maintaining high standards of safety and efficacy in pest control products. The strategic plan for 2023-2027 outlines key objectives aimed at strengthening regulatory frameworks, promoting sustainable pest management practices, and fostering innovation within the sector.

The launch of the online services and the strategic plan for 2023-2027 underscores the PCPB's commitment to efficiency, transparency, accountability, and sustainability in regulating pest control products



The top management of PCPB together with the Chairman aak-GROW Mr. Wachira Mureithi during the cake cutting ceremony



## Key Objectives

The strategic plan focuses on two main objectives:

- 1. Ensuring Quality and Safety:** Ensuring the availability of quality and safe pest control products to promote agricultural productivity while safeguarding human health, animal health, and the environment.
- 2. Enhancing Institutional Sustainability:** Strengthening the institution's sustainability through improved regulatory practices and innovative approaches.



The chairman PCPB, Mr. Njoroge Kagwe and the CEO Mr. Fredrick Muchiri with the Strategic Plan during the launch



### Commitment to Excellence

The launch of the online services and the strategic plan for 2023-2027 underscores the PCPB's commitment to efficiency, transparency, accountability, and sustainability in regulating pest control products. By leveraging technology and innovation, the PCPB aims to achieve its regulatory objectives effectively and efficiently.

## Communication and Public Relations

### Celebrating Future Leaders



Mr. Benson Ngugi handing over the trophy to the Faculty of Agriculture during the award ceremony.

At aak-GROW, we prioritize staying future-focused and aim to leave a legacy of a better and healthier world. As part of our commitment to societal development, we participate annually in the University of Nairobi Student Recognition Ceremony. We proudly award the top final-year student in the Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Crop Protection Option. This initiative reassures us that the industry will continue to thrive with visionary leaders in the future. Congratulations to Evanson Ngugi for being the best student in this category for the academic year 2022/2023. Your achievements assure us that the future of the pest control industry is promising.



## Climate Change: aak-GROW joins the nation to Combat Floods and Honor Lives Lost

The effects of climate change have been immensely felt across various parts of Kenya this year. Intense rainfall ravaged numerous regions, including the Coastal area, Central areas like Nairobi, the Western Highlands, Rift Valley, Lake Victoria Basin, Southeastern lowlands, and Northeastern regions. This heavy rainfall is largely attributed to climate events such as El Niño – the warming of the surface waters of the Pacific Ocean, which causes heavy rainfall in certain parts of the world.

Since the onset of the March-April-May (MAM) rains, multiple counties experienced severe impacts. Households were displaced, farmlands submerged, businesses disrupted, and livestock lost. By early May, 42 out of Kenya's 47 counties were affected, with at least 210 reported deaths.



The aak-GROW team join hands in planting a tree

In response to the devastation, President William Ruto announced a long-term solution to mitigate climate change effects. He declared May 10th a national holiday to commemorate the lives lost during the floods. This day was also designated as a National Tree Planting Day, aiming to counteract climate change's impact.



The President urged every Kenyan to plant at least 50 trees, setting a nationwide goal of planting 200 million trees on this day. This initiative seeks to combat adverse climate effects such as floods and droughts.

In alignment with these efforts, the aak-GROW secretariat actively participated in the day's initiative by planting 1,000 trees over 2 acres at their adopted Forest Block in Mau Forest, Likia. Additionally, the Community Forest Association generously donated 200 seedlings, bringing their total to 1,200 trees.

As Kenyans unite to address the challenges posed by climate change, this national effort underscores the importance of collective action. By planting trees and honoring those lost to the floods, the nation takes a significant step towards a greener, more resilient future.



# Pictorial



aak-GROW at the International Day of the Potato held at KALRO in Ol' Joro rok, Nyandarua County, Kenya's top potato producer



Pre-Madaraka Day Celebrations at Kibabii University, Bungoma County



The aak-GROW team interacting with participants during the Avocado Africa Conference 2024



The aak-GROW TEAM during the Nakuru ASK Show



3 day Spray Service Provider Training at the Nakuru ATC, Nakuru County



9th Africa Agri Expo 2024



His Excellency Dr. Jonathan Bii Cheilim, E.G.H, Governor of Uasin Gishu County, visits the aak-GROW stand at the Eldoret ASK Show



aak-GROW present in the Food and Agriculture Organization forum



Ndoraini Farmers Field Day



Border agencies during a workshop to discuss strategies to combat influx of illegal pest control products in Kenya





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