

COLEACP PRESENTATION

WHO WE ARE

COLEACP is a network of companies, professional organisations and experts committed to inclusive and sustainable agriculture.¹ Operationally, we work through technical cooperation to support sustainable and inclusive development of the private sector (SMEs) and the enabling environment (including competent authorities) in 50 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

Since its creation, COLEACP has been managing development projects in the ACP agricultural and food sector, financed by international donors (mainly the European Union). The overall objective of the current EU-ACP programmes (Fit For Market, Fit For Market SPS, and NExT Kenya) is to reduce poverty, improve food security and food safety, and ensure sustainable and inclusive growth by strengthening the ACP agri-food sector. The specific objective is to enable smallholders, farmer groups and organisations, and MSMEs to access domestic, regional and international markets by complying with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues and market requirements, within a sustainable framework.

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been accelerating our local and digital anchoring. We complement and reinforce our activities through national programmes that enable us to respond to the requests from both private and public sectors, and from civil society, that we receive on a daily basis. COLEACP representatives are now present in ten countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2020 we began a major national programme, NExT Kenya, which will be based in a COLEACP Nairobi office.

WHAT WE DO

COLEACP works in the following key areas:

- Disseminating knowledge and capabilities on a broad scale for all value chain actors through strong links with academia and increased digitalisation;
- Linking private sector needs with research outputs to improve access to technological innovations in production, processing and business management;
- Improving conditions for investment and access to suitable financial solutions for MSMEs through targeted collaborations with financial intermediaries and investors who share our vision and values;
- Empowering ACP MSMEs to embrace opportunities on their domestic and regional markets, with a focus on value addition (processing), while improving market access to the EU through regulatory and commercial compliance (SPS, organic, etc.);
- Embedding sustainable agricultural and management practices throughout business development strategies to improve the competitiveness of MSMEs through a commitment to COLEACP's Sustainability Charter and adoption of our Sustainability Self-Assessment System;

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The Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee (COLEACP) is a private sector interprofessional not-for-profit association established in 1973 by stakeholders in the international fruit and vegetable trade.

- Supporting competent authorities in establishing governance frameworks, setting up operational processes, building the relevant competencies, and creating communication channels to foster private sector development;
- Making agriculture more attractive for the younger generation and more inclusive for women by working towards equitable value sharing throughout supply chains;
- Providing strategic information to value chain stakeholders through market intelligence and business development services;
- Contributing to national, regional and global alliances and networks by establishing trusting, long-lasting and transparent partnerships between public and private sectors, academia, research and civil society;
- Advocating for our members through our unique position as a not-for-profit, private sector association working for the public good.

HOW WE DO IT

COLEACP has developed a system of technical cooperation and vocational training via a distinctive “cascading” training-of-trainers methodology, coordinated by a centralised team and implemented by national experts and trainers throughout 50 ACP countries. Training and technical cooperation cover a wide range of topics for all actors in the agri-food sector, including sustainable production and trade; plant health; food safety; food production and processing; social accountability and empowerment; environmental management; business management and development; and training methodologies, with training materials adapted to specific target audiences. All content is available via COLEACP’s e-services platform.

RESOURCES:

- COLEACP permanent team (45 people)
- COLEACP local trainers and experts (800 in 50 countries)
- COLEACP services (research & innovation, advocacy, marketing intelligence, business development, information & communication)
- COLEACP digital infrastructure (e-learning, e-database, e-library)
- COLEACP network (technical and financial partners, public and private)
- Public funds from the EU and other donors²



WHY WE DO IT

Agricultural exports from ACP countries are key development enablers through job creation and increased revenues, especially among groups such as rural women who have few alternative income-generating opportunities. There are also important opportunities to build on advances made in the ACP export sector by disseminating knowledge and skills on aspects such as SPS compliance, social empowerment and environmental protection, so that they also benefit production for dynamic local and regional markets.

Our members want to ensure that wherever they work, agriculture and agribusiness offer a solution, not a problem, for the sustainability of our planet, and particularly of ACP and European countries. In the critical period 1990–2015, the cumulative carbon emissions that are driving the climate crisis doubled. During that time, the richest 10% of the world's population (630 million people with incomes above €30,000 a year) were responsible for over half (52%) of cumulative carbon emissions, while the poorest 50% (3.1 billion people) generated just 7% of cumulative emissions.³ Despite sharp falls in carbon emissions in 2020 linked to the Covid-19 pandemic, the climate crisis is continuing to grow.

In the face of the vagaries of climate change, and in an ever-changing trade context – including the impacts of Covid-19, Brexit, the European Green Deal, and the African Continental Free Trade Area – the resilience of both public and private actors in the agricultural and agri-food sectors will be essential. In this context, COLEACP's team and network of experts and trainers in ACP countries are managing more than 900 development projects in 50 countries, directly affecting 2 million producers.

Our vision, *Growing people*, means working to transform the global agri-food model through continuous investment in the human capital on which scientific and market solutions are based. This applies particularly to ACP countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, which are well placed to become the driving force behind a new sustainable agricultural model. This global transformation will mean increasing agricultural production and quality while also ensuring a positive impact on climate change, biodiversity and ecosystems, through the progressive adoption of agro-ecological practices on a larger scale.

These new, legitimate market demands must not generate extra burdens on suppliers, but instead can become catalysts for their development. To ensure that agricultural trade continues to be a driver for economic growth, producers and exporters from ACP countries must have the information, skills and human resources they need to improve market access and to capitalise on these new opportunities.

