

**KEY NOTE ADDRESS OF H.E THE GOVERNOR OF NYAMIRA COUNTY ON  
WORLD FOOD DAY CELEBRATION ON 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2015 AT RIGOMA WARD,  
NYAMIRA COUNTY**

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES GOVERNOR ..... COUNTY**

**THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK AND  
FISHERIES.**

**COUNTRY DIRECTOR, FAO, KENYA**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

It gives me great pleasure to host this year's World Food Day Celebration in Nyamira County. Food remains a basic need for survival. Socio-economic growth of the people is measured in part by the extent of food and nutritional security. Availability and access of food remains elusive. Agriculture is the single most important sector in realization of equitable access and availability of food in the country.

Global Sustainable Development Goals One and Two aim at ending poverty of all forms and hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. In order to achieve these goals, greater emphasis needs to be put in agricultural production and agribusiness.

For instance, Nyamira whose economy greatly depends on agriculture, we have put up measures that are aimed at sustaining growth of the agricultural sector.

We have identified the sub-sectors that have the greatest potential to drive growth and reduce poverty.

That potential lies in commodities that have a large production base and a large and growing demand.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) through its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) which recognizes agriculture's contribution to accelerated economic growth in African countries, recommended that African countries should devote 2 percent of their GDP to agriculture.

It also called for greater focus on improving agricultural productivity and increasing the effectiveness of technology generation and dissemination.

Agriculture is Nyamira County's economic backbone where 90% of its population is dependent on agricultural production and marketing directly and indirectly. Indeed, Agriculture supports 80% of total employment opportunities in the county. In realizing this, my government while preparing the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), identified Agriculture as a major pillar to drive socio-economic development of the county.

To this end, my Government has put an elaborate strategic plan in every department to drive the development agenda of the county.

In my three years in office, I have up a number of mechanisms aimed at alleviating high levels of poverty in this county.

We are determined to achieve food security, poverty reduction, transformation of agriculture from subsistence to commercial farming and agribusiness, markets, efficient use of inputs and agricultural credit.

As you all know, My vision of agricultural sector in the county is “***a food secure and agriculturally prosperous county.***”

To achieve this growth, my government is transforming smallholder agriculture from subsistence to an innovative, commercially oriented and modern agricultural sector. This transformation will be accomplished through: Transforming key

institutions in agriculture, livestock, forestry and wildlife to promote agricultural growth, increasing productivity of crops, livestock and fisheries, Developing appropriate policies, legislation and regulations and increasing investment in agriculture.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

My government has put in place various initiatives to address food insecurity in the county. In the last two years in office I have invested ksh. 425 million to this sector. This year, my government has allocated ksh. 313 million on agricultural and food security programmes in the county. We are moving closer to Maputo declaration of 10% allocation of total budget to agriculture.

In order to improve extension service delivery, my government employed 72 ward extension officers and gave them enough resources to traverse the county.

Twenty of these officers were specifically deployed to perform Artificial Insemination services, one per ward and I fully equipped them.

My government believes in agribusiness and marketing of agricultural produce, therefore I have opened up roads across the county to enable marketing of agricultural produce and improve input access to farmers. This has in turn improved commercialization and reduced the cost of production. Today, farmer in Nyamira County is likely to sell his or her produce than the environment that was in place 3 years ago.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The role of policies and regulations in developing agricultural sector cannot be overemphasized. My government recognizes this and has developed policies to this effect;

- Nyamira county animal breeding policy to streamline livestock breeding procedures to enable farmers benefit from breeding activities
- Nyamira County Aquaculture policy to manage the farming, trading and consumption of fish and related products.
- Nyamira County Livestock Policy to guide development of livestock production, marketing and value addition.
- Nyamira County Cottage industry bill to guide development and investment in agricultural-based cottage industries.
- Nyamira County Agricultural Development Fund bill to operationalize the Agricultural Development Fund which will complement private and public sector credit facilities available.
- Nyamira County Disease control Act defines identification, management and control of livestock diseases.
- Nyamira County Tea Development bill: guides production, processing and marketing of tea.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Since the advent of the devolved system, my County Government of Nyamira has endeavoured to implement a number of flagship projects in the Agricultural sector. Some of the sector projects include:

- Accelerated Germplasm Multiplication Project
- Micro-Irrigation using greenhouse technology
- Commercial Bee Keeping Project
- Commercial Fish farming Project
- Commercial Local Vegetables Project
- Dairy Goats Promotion project
- Promotion of Tissue Culture Bananas

- Commercial Fodder Production Project

These interventions have led to increased production and productivity of major agricultural commodities. This is attributed to improved extension services, improved management capacity, reduced pest and disease incidences, improved access to high quality inputs, greater involvement of women and youths in production activities and improved investment in the sector.

Production of milk has increased from 67 million litres in 2012 to 72 million litres in 2014. Production of eggs increased from 3million from 2012 to 3.4 million in 2014, honey increased from 60 tons in 2012 to 120tons kgs in 2014. Production of greenhouse tomatoes is increased from 300 tons to 800 tons. Acreage under Tissue Culture bananas, sweet potatoes and local vegetables increased by 40%. Fish production majorly tilapia and catfish increased from 90 tons in 2013 to 146 tons in 2015;

The cost of production has reduced greatly. The cost of production of a litre of milk reduced from ksh. 24 in 2012 to ksh.22 in 2014. This is attributed to increased availability of high quality fodder and reduced dependency on commercial feeds. The cost of production of bananas has reduced by 10% due to improved management and introduction of tissue culture varieties.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

662 new common interest groups which are market oriented for bananas, sweet potatoes, honey and milk were been formed in 2014 while 60 value chain platforms have been formed for milk, local vegetables and bananas. Further 6 apex (umbrella) farmers' organizations have been formed to spearhead marketing of milk in Nyamira, Nyamira North and Borabu sub-counties with 3 milk marketing cooperatives formed to market milk on behalf of farmers.

Improvement in value addition of produce is a key focus area of my government. Value addition of agricultural produce has increased tremendously. My government has supported capacity building of 4,000 farmers on value addition of milk, honey, fish, bananas, sweet potatoes and local vegetables. Some of the value added products found in market include pasteurized milk, traditionally fermented milk known locally as *amabere amaruranu*, packaged honey, ripe bananas, flour, bread and cakes made of banana and sweet potatoes.

- Through collaboration with Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Programme, my government supported Kineni Cooperative Society with milk bulking and collection cooler of 5,000 litres capacity and installed water tank.
- My Government collaborated with Eastern Africa Agricultural productivity Project to support Nyamira Peri-urban Cooperative Society with 1300 capacity milk cooler.
- Value addition of local vegetable has been supported with solar driers. 20 solar driers were distributed to every ward. Further, the county government with collaboration with World Vision supports installation of bananas and sweet potatoes value addition equipment at Nyamusi banana marketing shed.
- My government supports value addition of honey. 20 modern honey harvesting equipment have been distributed to farmers. Further, honey processing facility is supported by the County Government at Nyamusi. Value addition initiatives from the county government have increased incomes of agricultural produce, improved quality and marketability of products.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The interventions of my government have led to improved income to farmers; Farmers have realized ksh.12. million from sale of green-house tomatoes. Fish

farmers realized ksh. 43 million from 146 tons of fish harvested. Improved local poultry farmers have earned a total of ksh.1 million from sale of eggs, live birds and chicks.

Further, 1,021 bales of Rhodes grass hay and 63 tonnes of fodder crops were produced this earned ksh.1.5 million from commercial fodder production. Further, 20,000 kgs of honey have been realized from the short time commercial bee keeping project has been implemented. This earned bee keepers a total of 2 million.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

My government has increased access to improved agricultural technologies. The county government has identified better technologies to improve production, environmental resilience, marketing and value addition. Better technologies have enabled farmers to reduce costs, post production losses, prolong usage of inputs (conservation) and genetically improved calves- Reduction of artificial insemination charges from ksh.1,500/- to ksh.500/- through a subsidy programme has improved access and affordability of the service. The inseminators are supported with transport facilities (motorcycles), AI equipment and semen. A total of 11,080 cows have been inseminated and close to 4,100 calves born. The programme has resulted in genetically superior calves; fast growing (early maturing), potentially high milk production, reduced incidences of sexually transmitted diseases which caused infertility in cows and improved adoption of better breeding methods.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

As we celebrate World Food Day, I take cognizance of the fact that the growing human population puts pressure on food production. This calls for initiatives to manage physical, human and technological resources to increase productivity. I

call upon research institutions and universities to develop appropriate low cost technologies to drive our agricultural production. I call upon investors to venture into agribusiness investment opportunities in Nyamira.

Recently, the lake region counties economic bloc organized an agribusiness investment forum in Vihiga County. Nyamira County is organizing a similar event in the near future. I call upon all producers to take advantage of the existing market opportunities in the region to market their produce.

I once more welcome you to Nyamira County, the county of possibilities.

**THANK YOU**