

KIRINYAGA COUNTY

Responses to Proposed Discussion Points

Submitted by KNCCI Kirinyaga Chapter

1. Agriculture and Trade Opportunities

Q: Which agricultural products from Kirinyaga have the greatest export potential (coffee, tea, macadamia, avocado, etc.)?

A: Kirinyaga County is renowned for high-quality agricultural products, with significant export potential in:

- Coffee (specialty Arabica varieties highly demanded internationally)
- Tea (notably orthodox and specialty teas)
- Macadamia nuts (premium quality, growing global demand)
- Avocados (Hass variety, particularly suited for EU and Middle Eastern markets)
- Mangoes, passion fruits, and French beans (for horticultural exports).

Q: From your perspective, which Ukrainian agricultural products or inputs could be of interest to local businesses and farmers?

A: Local businesses and farmers would be keen on affordable and high-quality:

- Fertilizers and soil enhancers
- Improved seed varieties
- Agricultural machinery (tractors, irrigation equipment, greenhouse technology)
- Grain storage and milling technologies.

Q: Are there particular gaps in the agribusiness supply chain where Ukrainian companies could provide solutions?

A: Yes. Key gaps include:

- Affordable mechanization for small and medium farmers
- Post-harvest management (storage, cold chain, and logistics)
- Processing equipment (tea, coffee, macadamia, and fruit pulping)
- Access to financing through equipment leasing or credit models.

Q: Which sectors are open for Ukrainian partnership or investment?

A: Ukrainian investors and companies may explore:

- Agro-processing: tomato paste, avocado oil, macadamia, dairy, rice wine, banana, and coffee/tea packaging.

- Manufacturing: textiles/apparel, particle boards from rice husks, non-pharmaceuticals, and agrochemicals.
- Green technology & assembly: electric vehicles/bikes and agricultural machinery.
- Hospitality & leisure: investment in the 5-star hotel and golf course within the city.

Q: What opportunities exist for collaboration between Kenya and Ukraine?

- Agricultural technology exchange: Ukraine has advanced expertise in mechanization and storage solutions that could be adapted to Kirinyaga's agro-industry.
- Joint ventures in food processing: leveraging Kenya's raw materials with Ukrainian processing technology.
- Education & training partnerships: upskilling local labor to support manufacturing.
- Infrastructure investment: Ukrainian firms could participate in ongoing SEZ/EPZ construction and utility provision.

2. Value Addition and Agro-Processing

Q: How is the Chamber supporting value addition and agro-processing in the county?

A: The Chamber actively works with stakeholders to:

- Advocate for policies supporting local processing and packaging.
- Link members to buyers and technology providers.
- Promote training on value addition practices.
- Mobilize investment for small-scale processing plants in coffee, macadamia, and horticulture.

Q: Are there opportunities for cooperation in areas such as processing, storage, or packaging of agricultural products?

A: Yes. Priority opportunities exist in:

- Establishing fruit processing (juices, pulps, dried fruit)
- Coffee roasting and branding for export
- Macadamia and avocado oil extraction
- Cold storage facilities and packhouses for horticultural products.

3. Business and Investment Conditions

Q: Why is Kirinyaga County an ideal location for industrial investment?

A: Kirinyaga lies in Kenya's primary agricultural belt, producing significant volumes of tea, coffee, rice, horticulture, macadamia, avocados, and dairy. This ensures reliable access to raw materials. In addition, the county is strategically positioned:

- Only 90 minutes from Nairobi, the largest domestic market.
- Less than 2 hours from major urban centers with over a quarter of Kenya's population within 100km.
- Well connected to JKIA for air freight and Mombasa port for sea freight.

- At the junction of the two Northern Transport Corridors, easing regional trade access.

Q: What is the current status of development?

A: The Masterplan is approved, and construction is ongoing.

- EPZ Phase 1: 29 plots, 4 sheds, warehouses, police post, dispensary, and customs office are under construction.
- SEZ Phase 1: 18 industrial plots, 10 sheds, warehouses (including cold storage), and a logistics hub are underway.
- Gazettement of the SEZ as a custom-controlled zone is targeted for June 2025, after which onboarding of investors will commence.
- Already 57 investors have expressed interest, and several feasibility studies (e.g., tomato, avocado, macadamia, dairy) have been completed.

Q: What are the conditions and incentives for establishing agribusiness enterprises or joint ventures in Kirinyaga?

A: Kirinyaga provides an enabling environment with:

- Strong agricultural base and skilled farmers.
- County government support through favorable licensing.
- Strategic location with access to Nairobi and export corridors.

Q: What investment incentives are available for international investors?

A: SAIC offers a mix of Export Processing Zones (EPZs), Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and County Aggregation & Industrial Parks (CAIPs). These come with:

- Tax incentives and customs facilitation.
- A one-stop investor service center.
- Ready industrial sheds, warehouses, and utilities.
- Affordable land lease arrangements through the National Land Commission.

Q: What regulatory or administrative support can foreign businesses expect if they decide to set up operations here?

A: Foreign businesses can expect:

- Linkages with cooperatives, farmer groups, and SMEs.
- Support with compliance and local partnerships.
- A one-stop shop administration office for licensing, customs, and business registration.
- Direct support from Kirinyaga Investment and Development Authority (KIDA).
- County and national government backing through policy frameworks, legal gazettement, and infrastructure investments.

4. Sustainability, Technology, and Knowledge Exchange

Q: How is the county working on sustainable farming practices?

A: The county promotes:

- Irrigation schemes (Mwea Irrigation Scheme, among others).
- Climate-smart agriculture (water harvesting, conservation agriculture).
- Renewable energy adoption (solar drying, biogas).

Q: Would there be interest in training, technology transfer, or exchange programs with Ukrainian agricultural experts and institutions?

A: Absolutely. Areas of interest include:

- Irrigation and water-efficient technologies.
- Modern mechanization suitable for smallholder farmers.
- Post-harvest management solutions.
- Training programs for youth and women in agribusiness.

5. Upcoming Agitech Grand Expo 2025

Q: What opportunities are available for international participants in the upcoming Kirinyaga Expo?

A: Opportunities include:

- Exhibition booths to showcase products, services, and technologies.
- B2B networking sessions with local farmers and businesses.
- Participation in panel discussions on agriculture and trade.

Q: Would there be options for complimentary exhibition space for Ukrainian companies?

A: The Chamber will explore possibilities of providing limited complimentary space for strategic international partners, subject to discussion and approvals.

Q: Could representatives of Ukraine's Ministry of Agriculture or businesses take part virtually, through online presentations?

A: Yes, hybrid participation (in-person and virtual) is supported to encourage wider collaboration.

Q: What type of participation from international partners is most valued by the Chamber during such events?

A: The Chamber values:

- Demonstrations of practical agricultural technologies.
- Knowledge-sharing sessions and training.
- Investment interest in local agribusiness ventures.
- Long-term partnerships with farmer groups and SMEs.