

KISUMU IS NEXT IN LINE TO RECEIVE A RECORD-BREAKING INVESTMENT

East Africa Breweries (EABL) is set to establish a new plant valued at Kshs. 15 billion, a move that will boost employment in Kisumu county by at least 110,000 direct and indirect jobs.

This follows a series of sorghum value chain campaigns launched in March 2016, that has seen the county government and EABL encouraging farmers to grow white sorghum that has the potential to provide income to small scale farmers and benefactors along the value chain while ensuring food security and improved nutrition at the household level.



Showcasing Bumper harvest at Oria Mataro



Cake made from white sorghum flour (photo courtesy of StARK+Newsletters# 3rd December 2016)

Sorghum is the fifth most important grain crop after maize, wheat, rice and barley. It is a drought tolerant crop that performs well in arid areas like Nyakach and Nyando as both food and cash crop. The sorghum farming project spearheaded by the EABL in partnership with the County government of Kisumu was established to promote food security in the region. With the high demand for white sorghum from East Africa Malting Limited (EAML) at 30% percent, EABL saw the need to enhance outreach for sorghum to provide the key ingredient for its products.

Perhaps the best thing with sorghum is that it has a ready market and it only takes four months to mature. The brewers demand for the grain is huge and soon, sorghum farming in Kisumu will realize its return, following the announcement by H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta that EABL will be setting up a Sh15 billion state-of-the-art brewery in Kisumu for its Senator Keg.

The announced plan was well received by both the county government and sorghum farmers. H.E Governor Jack Ranguma said, “the revival of the East African breweries is an investment I have envisaged to benefit Kisumu people.” In anticipation to the multibillion EABL investment, the county government through the department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries have vested efforts in empowering farmers through seeds and subsidized fertilizer distribution to assist in large scale production leading to the realization of bumper harvest.



H.E Governor Jack Ranguma flags off fertilizer distribution to boost sorghum production in the county



Kisumu County sorghum awareness campaign (photo courtesy of StARK+ Newsletters# 3rd December 2016)

The commitment by the EABL underlines the strong confidence driving with significant multiplier effects to Kisumu county’s future economy. The upcoming investment is expected to open a significant socio-economic lifeline that will positively transform livelihoods by lifting the demand for sorghum, which will in turn support farmers in the county and Nyanza region at large.

BY Matilda Atieno