

## Fodder Shrubs, Enrich Feeds & Improve Livelihoods

October, 2006

### SECOND KATRESNO WORKSHOP HELD - (NAKURU EROS HOTEL)

From September 14th to 15th 2006, AP<sup>3</sup> facilitated the second KATRESNO workshop. AP<sup>3</sup> is a USAID global demonstration program designed to improve the livelihoods of small holder dairy farmers by reducing the cost of milk production and increasing the yields and quality of the milk through simple and cheap fodder shrub technologies.

At the first workshop, held in early June, the farmers that distribute fodder shrub planting materials realized that unity is strength, which led to the development of a seed dealers association known as Kenya Tree Seeds & Nursery Operators (KATRESNO). As of today, the association has been registered with the office of the Attorney General as a self-help group. The Constitution outlines how the association will be governed. The primary objective of the association is to lobby for the interests of the members who come from most parts of the country.

The second workshop was designed to develop the members technical capacity in seed technologies, entrepreneurial skills. In addition, the workshop strengthened linkages among the seed dealers and identified members needs in enterprise development. To help improve their livelihoods, the participants identified several enterprises:

- Silk worm rearing – Sericulture
- Fish rearing – Aquaculture
- Bee keeping – Apiculture
- Seed & seedlings marketing
- Processing of dairy cows and goats milk
- Poultry keeping
- Leaf meal processing and marketing

*The above enterprises will be discussed in subsequent newsletters.*



KATRESNO Workshop Participants

Since the formation and registration of the association, there have been several success stories:

- Sensitized 4,000 farmers on the use and benefits of fodder shrubs.
- Trained school children and youth on the benefits of fodder shrubs.
- Established 93 nurseries.
- Sold 151,000 seedlings and 783 kg of various tree seed species.

#### Where to plant the fodder shrubs

- Along the farm boundaries to leave more space for the crops.
- Along the soil conservation terraces to stabilize the soil on the terraces.
- Around the homestead to provide home privacy.
- In the Napier plots.

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### Harrison Gathogo (The farmer expert)

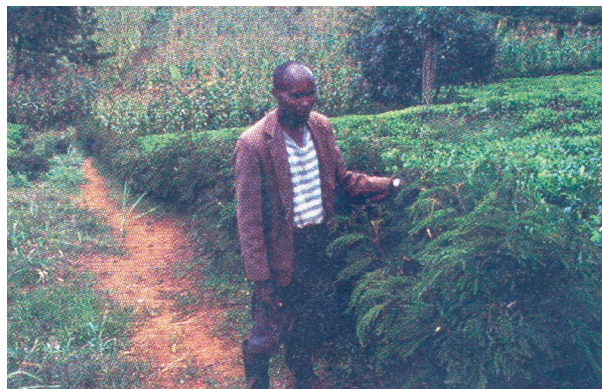
Mr. Harrison Gathogo resides in Kinyona Location of Maragua District. He has been farming on his piece of land since 1989, and his major enterprise is tea production; he has also set aside a small plot of land for grazing his dairy cows using semi-zero grazing system.

Since 1999, Harrison has planted more than 3,000 fodder shrubs (calliandra, trichandra and tree lucerne). Harrison has meticulously planted the shrubs to make hedges along the internal farm boundaries, and soil conservation terraces, and around the homestead. He has maintained the shrubs at a height of approximately 1m above the ground except for the shrubs that are used for seed production. For reasons that are not yet known, seed production by his calliandra shrubs is quite low.

Despite the multiple challenges, soil acidity and failure of the seeds to germinate, Harrison has not stopped disseminating information about fodder shrubs. He procures seeds from extension and research services and shares them with other farmers. He also produces seedlings that he shares with neighbours.

His farm attracts other farmers seeking to learn more about the use of fodder shrubs. He uses this time to explain the benefits that can be realized from the use of fodder shrubs such as increased milk production, reduced cost of production, and improved physical health of the animals. Asked why most farmers in his area are reluctant to take up the new practices, he says “prophets are not heard in their own homes.... these people need an outside voice to make them heed what I have been preaching to them”.

Harrison conducts experiments on the performance of fodder shrubs under different treatments. In one observation, he noted that fodder shrubs next to his cattle shed grew faster and were more productive. The researchers attributed this phenomenon to the soil amelioration effects on acidic soils that result from addition of organic manure to such soils. He says the knowledge and skills on fodder shrubs emanated from the training provided by the extension and research staff during farm visits and demonstrations. Harrison has had the opportunity to visit other farmers within Kenya and in Tanzania and makes regular



Harrison next to a calliandra hedge on his farm.

consultations to extension offices to update his knowledge on farming practices and innovations.

#### What should farmers be doing this month!

*Transplant the seedlings at the onset of the rains to ensure proper establishment and growth. The spacing of seedlings is 0.5 m (1 ½ ft) between the shrubs planted on a hedge.*

#### Updates!

- KATRESNO participates in Nairobi International Trade Fair and Nyeri show; thousands of farmers were reached.
- AP<sup>3</sup> project facilitates 10 regional meetings and 2 major seed dealers' workshops.
- Mt Kenya Youth Progress Group establishes nurseries in 5 secondary schools.
- AP<sup>3</sup> project assist in the distribution of ICRAF publications to government extension officers, NGOs, universities and learning institutions.
- AP<sup>3</sup> is working with the Media to promote planting and use of fodder shrubs.

#### Quote of the month

*“Prophets are not heard in their own homes.....these people need an outside voice to make them heed what I have been preaching to them!”*  
says Harrison as he emphasizes the importance of exchange visits

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## Seed Dealers

Name	Address	Telephone Numbers
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<b>NYERI</b>		
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Paul Kihara Ruga	Gitero Self Help Group P.O. Box 159, Giakanja, Nyeri	0722-683058
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