



# Setting Up Organic Agriculture Demonstration Centers in Uganda



## Background

Ecological organic production systems can ensure and sustain local food security and sovereignty, ecosystem services for rural welfare and biodiversity conservation. Ecological agriculture fosters biodiversity that is resilient to impacts of climate change. It depends on and sustains ecosystem services as well as tapping into and enhancing the knowledge, practices and innovations of local communities leading to more reliable and increased food security and incomes. It is acknowledged that small-scale farmers already produce 70% of the world's food, and that following agroecological and organic principles and practices African small-scale farmers can produce adequate food to feed the continent sustainably, provided they have secure access to land, water, seeds/breeds and other natural resources.

ESAFF Uganda with financial support from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is implementing the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in Luweero, Wakiso, Mukono and Masaka. In a bid to motivate uptake and enhance adoption of Ecological Organic Agriculture technologies and practices through systematic dissemination of research and experience-based information, knowledge and training of value chain actors, ESAFF Uganda facilitated set up of 3 demonstration gardens of pineapples and coffee in Mukono, Masaka and Luweero in September 2020.

# Methodology

The demonstration gardens were started up as an action from the training on Ecological Organic Agriculture practices that was conducted in different districts between June and July 2020. They were started with an aim of encouraging farmer to farmer learning through hands-on training and to motivate uptake of Ecological Organic Agriculture practices among small scale farmers.

After the training, small scale farmers came together and identified suitable crops to be planted and sites on which the demonstration gardens should be set up. These were selected on the basis of accessibility, fertility of land, popularity of crop, climatic conditions of the area among other reasons.

ESAFF Uganda comes in to support the host small-scale farmers in acquiring organic inputs such as coffee seedlings, pineapple suckers, coffee husks, and organic fertilizers (ekirimbe), and sign posts for the 3 demonstration gardens. Planting was done by TOTs that were trained following the ecological organic agriculture planting procedures for coffee and pineapples.

Small-scale farmers are encouraged to document information from the demonstration centre like time of planting, with an objective of improving information efficiency, profitability and productivity in order to ensure building a knowledge base for other small-scale farmers.

To ensure effective running of the demos, ESAFF Uganda conducts quarterly visits to these demonstration gardens to assess progress and impact that the gardens on small scale farmers that are using them as learning centers.

## Current Status

**Currently, ESAFF Uganda supports 3 Demonstration Gardens in Mukono, Masaka and Luweero Districts.**

### 1. Mwanyi Bugagga Coffee Demonstration Garden



This demonstration garden is hosted by Miiro James a small-scale farmer in Kisoga Village, Ntenjeru Sub County in Mukono district. The TOTs planted 50 KR7 Robusta coffee plants using a spacing of 3m by 3m or 10ft x 10ft in this garden because of its resistance to pests and high yields once it matures. They chose to plant coffee because it is a perennial crop which can be harvested twice in a year, has ready market both at local and international market. Since its establishment, 20 small scale farmers from Ntenjeru Sub County have used this demonstration garden as a learning center. It also acts as a reference center for best organic practice in Kisoga village.

### 2. Kaija Produce Dealer's Pineapple Demonstration Garden



This pineapple garden sits on a 50\*50 plot of land. Mr. Kiseka Ibrahim in Kaija Village, Buwunga Sub County in Masaka district hosts it. This garden was planted in double rows spaced at 2 feet (60cm) between the rows, 1 foot (30cm) between plants and 4 feet (120cm) between adjacent double rows and other ecological organic practices like use of coffee husks and chicken droppings. Mr. Kiseka was already a pineapple farmer using inorganic inputs for his pineapples but getting very low yields and less profits. He decided to offer his land to put what he had been trained into practice as well as teach other farmers on good practices.

This demonstration garden has been recognized by the Buwunga sub county production office as a learning center which can be accessed by the public. Since its establishment in 2020, 15 small scale farmers from Buwunga and Mukungwe sub counties have learnt how to grow organic pineapples and 2 have so far translated these practices in their gardens.

3.

## Ssekamuli Pineapple Demonstration Garden



This demonstration garden is located in Ssekamuli village, Bamunaniika Sub County in Luweero district and hosted by Wasswa Yusuf. Due to the presence of well-drained sandy loam and clay loam soils on which Pineapples thrive best in Luweero district especially in Bamunaniika and Kikyusa sub counties, 1500 pineapples of smooth cayenne variety were planted using ecological organic agriculture practices such as use of ekirimabwe, coffee husks and dipping the lateral shoots in warm water before planting. This garden is a learning centre for 10 small scale pineapple farmers in Ssekamuli village and serving over 30 small-scale farmers as well as a research centre for the sub county production office.

## Achievements and Challenges

As a result of the presence of this demonstration centre, there has been increased appreciation of farmer to farmer learning among the ToTs that are part of the processes. These centers have also led some small-scale farmers in the communities who had started practicing conventional agriculture to transition and adopted the ecological organic agriculture practices on growing coffee. Further testimonies from small-scale farmers show reduced use of inorganic inputs thus reducing health risk of the farmers.

Some main challenges include the competition and demotivating propaganda from pineapple farmers from within using inorganic inputs coupled with the poor perception among small-scale farmers in the community on organic farming thus making it difficult in convincing other farmers on the benefits of organic farming. Small-scale farmers also face a challenge of limited knowledge and technics for organic agriculture.

## Future Plans

Looking forward, the demonstration centres plan to construct a water reservoir to collect runoff water which can be used during the dry season. Working with partners to support the certification of organic small-scale farmers for pineapple and coffee in Masaka, Luwero and Mukono district. The major plan is to continue mobilizing more pineapple and coffee small-scale farmers to participate in the activities of the demonstration garden including hosting trainings or establishing more demonstration centers. After upscaling the organic practices, small-scale farmers will focus on value addition on both coffee and pineapple.

The very first harvesting from the pineapple demonstration gardens in Masaka and Luweero will be done early 2022. The host small scale farmers will be able to sell these organic pineapples through the Kilimomart Application and their communities.

## Conclusion

Through the learning and application of EOA practices along the entire commodity value chains, ESAFF Uganda believes that food security, incomes and nutrition of small-scale farmers as well as the environmental sustainability of agricultural production can be improved.

### ABOUT ESAFF UGANDA

Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda exists to create a platform to bring together small-scale farmers into a farmer-led advocacy movement to influence policies and practices at the local and national level and contribute through ESAFF to policies and practices at regional, continental and global levels. ESAFF Uganda is a small-scale farmer-led advocacy movement formed to facilitate processes through which small scale farmers' development concerns can be solicited, articulated and ultimately addressed through policies and programs. ESAFF Uganda focuses on advancing economic empowerment, agroecology and food sovereignty.

ESAFF Uganda is grateful for the financial support from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Biovision Africa Trust.

The views expressed in this publication don't reflect those of the donors



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra





Eastern and Southern Africa  
Small Scale Farmers' Forum  
**ESAFF - UGANDA**

**CONTACT US:-**



**Physical Address:**

Plot 266, Muvule Avenue  
Buye – Ntinda, Kampala  
P.O Box 34420 Kampala – UGANDA  
Telephone: +256-414-699623



**Social Media:**

Facebook: ESAFF Uganda  
Twitter: @ESAFFUG  
Instagram: esaff\_agroecology  
SoundCloud: ESAFF Uganda Podcasts  
YouTube Channel: ESAFF Uganda TV



**Write to the National Coordinator:**

Ms. Nancy M. Walimbwa  
Email: [coordinator@esaffuganda.org](mailto:coordinator@esaffuganda.org)



**Website:**

[www.esaffuganda.org](http://www.esaffuganda.org)