

# Report

FOR THE 5<sup>TH</sup> *Annual*  
**NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK**

**NOW** **20**  
**23**  
**25<sup>TH</sup> - 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**THEME:**

*Promoting agroecological  
farming techniques and  
healthy foods*



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



Eastern Organic Agriculture  
**EOA**  
Growing Sustainably



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# REPORT FOR THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK (NOW) 2023

ESAFF Uganda organized its 5th Annual National Organic Week (NOW) 2023 from 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in 14 Districts across the country including; Adjumani, Masaka, Mityana, Amuru, Gulu, Kisoro, Lira, Apac, Mbale, Kasese, Jinja, Kamuli, Amuria and Soroti. This week aimed at increasing awareness of the benefits of organic products and farming production systems and accelerate the uptake of these in the wider community and promoting the best agronomic practices that conserve the environment and nature.

The week had various events which included: Visit to Lira University, Radio Talk Shows, Community Dialogues, Awarding Certificates to Agroecology Club Members who participated in the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition of the Poem Writing Competition and the National Organic Dialogue.

# 1. VISIT TO LIRA UNIVERSITY



On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023, ESAFF Uganda paid a courtesy visit to Lira University to engage the selected EOA Curriculum review team on the process of integrating the EOA Curriculum into Lira University. The meeting was attended by 2 ESAFF Uganda staff, the National Chairperson of ESAFF Uganda and 5 Lira University officials. The meeting resolved that a memorandum of understanding be signed between ESAFF Uganda and Lira University in order to begin the process for the EOA Curriculum development.

## 2. RADIO TALK SHOWS



ESAFF Uganda organized 8 radio talkshows in Masaka, Mbale, Gulu, Kasese and Jinja on Baba FM, Etop Radio, Aulogo FM, Voice of Lango, Radio Buddu, Open Gate FM, Radio Messiah and Radio Rupiny centering on the theme ***“Promoting Agroecological Farming Techniques and Healthy Foods”*** as part of the National Organic Week celebrations. The spotlight of discussions ranged from: Seeds of Resilience, dangers of Chemical Use in Agriculture, Innovation and Value addition and food and Nutrition Security in Busoga Sub region. The radio Talk shows engaged a total of 9 small scale farmers, 8 extension workers and reached an estimated coverage of 1,152,000 listeners across the country.



### 3. COMMUNITY DIALOGUES



The Community Organic Agriculture Dialogues involved local farming communities, including small-scale farmers, women groups, local leaders and youth associations. The dialogues were held in Gulu, Adjumani, Masaka, Kasese, Mityana and Amuria districts and the discussions centered on the 5th National Organic Week (NOW) 2023, meaning and principles of organic farming, farming technical with interest on agrochemicals, opportunities and the challenges that community members are facing in upscaling to organic farming. The dialogues were attended by over 200 participants.

## 4. AWARDING CERTIFICATES FOR THE 1<sup>ST</sup> AGROECOLOGY POEM WRITING COMPETITION



In order to maximize students' potential in agroecology and develop their creative and writing abilities, ESAFF Uganda launched the first Schools Agroecology Poem Writing Competition in 2023, which ran in ten schools across the country. The competition provided a forum for raising agroecology awareness, empowering young learners to be change agents, and fostering sustainability in educational institutions and the local communities.

During NOW 2023, ESAFF Uganda awarded certificates and awards to the participants of the competition at St. Gertrude Girls' Vocational Secondary School, Nakulyaku Primary School, Otubet Primary School, Divine Power Primary School, Vision High School, Pagak Primary School, Kilembe Secondary School Rock View Primary School and Rock Primary School.

St. Gertrude Girls' Vocational Secondary School in Kisoro district emerged the second in the competition beating other schools. There was reciting of the poems by the members of the Agroecology Clubs, Music, and Dance to promote Agroecology. A total of 10 Agroecology clubs and 342 pupils and students were awarded with certificates.



## 5. THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE DIALOGUE



The main event of the Organic Week 2023 was the National Dialogue held on 29th September, 2023, at Soroti Hotel in Soroti district. The objective was to create awareness about organic agriculture and share challenges and experiences associated with it.

The event was graced with 50 participants from Soroti, Omoro, Adjumani, Nebbi, Zombo, Nwoya, Amuru, Gulu, Arua, Amuria and Apac district. These included small scale farmers, Chairperson LCV Soroti district, Chairperson LCIII Akeriau subcounty-Amuria district academia from Uganda Martyrs University and Lira University and the media.

The National Dialogue aimed at creating awareness on organic agriculture, share challenges and experiences associated with organic agriculture in Uganda. The different stakeholders were urged to celebrate the traditional foods and indigenous seeds that exist in the farming communities as they are nutritious and climate resilient. Participants committed to integrating agroecological farming techniques into their practices to preserve soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem balance. They emphasized reducing chemical usage and promoting organic farming principles.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The dialogue recommended that government should; fund awareness campaigns that educate farmers and consumers about the benefits of organic farming, dangers of aflatoxin contamination.
2. Government should Invest in innovation hubs and research that supports the development of value-added products derived from Agroecological farming.
3. Establish stricter regulations on chemical use in crop production and the promotion of organic farming methods and formulate Policies for Indigenous Seed Conservation.
4. Universities and tertiary learning institutions should operationalize courses on Agroecology to empower students on the different benefits of Agroecology to sustainable food production and environmental protection.
5. Media should prioritize and give more air play for stories related to Agroecology and encourage the consumption of organically produced foods among the general public.

In conclusion, participants committed to Integrate Agroecological farming techniques into their practices, emphasizing natural and sustainable methods that preserve soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem balance. This includes minimizing chemical usage and promoting organic farming principles.



## MEDIA LINKS

1. <https://kaseseguiradio.com/local-farmers-in-kasese-are-still-cleaved-to-inorganic-farming/>
2. <https://kaseseguiradio.com/rock-primary-sch-has-merged-national-winners-of-school-agroecology-poem-writing-competition/>
3. <https://www.watchdoguganda.com/news/20230925/160084/national-organic-week-creating-more-awareness-on-organic-best-farming-practices.html>
4. <https://vomuhabura.com/st-gertrude-student-wins-school-fees-for-writing-environment-poem/>
5. <https://earthfinds.co.ug/index.php/en/tourism/environment/item/3861-national-organic-week-to-on-promote-agroecological-farming-practices-and-healthy-food>



## About ESAFF Uganda

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 currently having a membership of 12,543 farmer groups with 384,056 individual small-scale farmers of which 64 per cent are women in 54 districts (under the administration of 30 historical districts' forums).

ESAFF Uganda is also part of a bigger network of small-scale farmers in the other 15 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa including South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho, DR Congo, Madagascar, Seychelles and Mozambique.





Eastern and Southern Africa  
Small Scale Farmers' Forum

**ESAFF - UGANDA**

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