



A FARMER'S SAY >

By Michael J. Ssali

How we can save coffee scientifically

An article by Alex Scott published in the newsletter, Chemical & Engineering News; last month indicated that the end of coffee is near due to climate change and disease unless a quick fix is made.

Another article titled: "Why we should genetically modify coffee" by Ross Pomeroy published in Real Clear Science indicated that rising temperatures and diseases such as coffee rust and twig borer are bound to wipe out Arabica coffee.

Genetic modification for coffee is considered one of the most effective approaches to saving the crop which is also Uganda's major foreign exchange earner.

Pomeroy wrote, "genetically modify coffee could be just 10-15 years away. Genetically-modified Arabica coffee would bring economic stability to Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, and Uganda."

It went on to reveal that to lift hundreds of millions of people in the developing world out of poverty, genetically modify coffee is 'a humanitarian necessity.'

Internationally, Arabica coffee is tastier and preferable to Robusta coffee but it is more at risk of extinction given its low genetic diversity.

"Cultivated Arabica plants have a genetic diversity of just 1.2 per cent, compared with more than 20 per cent for crops such as rice or soy making it less able to adapt to changing conditions. And it is a fragile, weakling of a variety that is susceptible to disease, including coffee leaf rust and pests such as the coffee borer beetle."

World Coffee Research (WCR) has got a team of conventional plant breeders tasked to get disease resistant Arabica varieties by cross breeding.

But WRC science director, Christophe Montagnon says the approach is more focused on disease resistance than on heat tolerance.

Agrochemical giants like Bayer, BASF, and Syngenta say they have pesticides and other technologies to protect Arabica coffee but Montagnon thinks pesticides are not a solution to the problem.

Brande Wulff of John Innes Centre in the UK has said that genetic modification is a quicker and more effective alternative to cross breeding for heat tolerance and disease resistance.

Montagnon warned however that the world is not yet ready for genetically modified coffee despite scientific evidence that genetically modify coffee products are safe.

Duck Ug

A duck is t that puts c of anyone wanted to Others arg more diffic chicken or large chest smaller pro bone. Deni out why de demand is many Ugar

A t most l in Kam in adva kilogramme

Tasty br

The buyer Koreans, wi a kilogramn without bar,

The Asian for duck egg ing Shs15,00

Research farmers sell fee ranging Shs50,000 a but upcount Shs30,000.

According a chef at a rant in Ka they pur each female at \$15 (Shs5 while each male duck (Shs72,000 course mea meat costs S while the duck meal Shs38,800.

Tao adds to her cust stick with cl

trendi

Duck is a whose food other th Duck is usu baking. Not o can also proc Duck meat the duck's bo of the chest a on the duck c than the ches The duck b