

Monitor lines up agriculture experts for farm clinic

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KAMPALA. With just 10 days left to the seventh *Seeds of Gold* Monitor Farm Clinic to be held at Kabanyolo in Gayaza, Monitor Publication Ltd (MPL) has lined up top agriculture lectures from Makerere University to take farmers through hands-on farming practices.

During the launch of the farm clinic at MPL head offices offices in Namuwongo, Kampala, yesterday, Dr Stephen Lwasa of the Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute Kabanyolo (MUARIK), the host institution, revealed that he has assembled a team of the best brains in agricultural matters in the country to teach the farmers that will attend the clinic on August 26.

"This will be the third time we are hosting the clinic and we promise [a better experience]. We are realising the trend of many people joining agriculture hoping it will bail them out but the challenges like diseases, marketing, infertile soils [and] value addition remain," Dr Lwasa said.

He added that this time round, they will put emphasis on value addition.

"It (the clinic) is going to be hands-on learning experience because we have the necessary facilities. We have polished up our approach over time work-



Ready. Left to right: Heifer International Country Director William Matovu, MPL managing director Tony Glencross, aBi Trust Group CEO Andre Dellevoet, Dr Stephen Lwasa of Makerere University Agricultural Research institute, Kabanyolo, Post Bank senior credit manager Benon Rukundo and Mr Apollo Kamugisha of Uganda Coffee Development Authority pose during the 7th Seeds of Gold Farm Clinic press conference at Monitor Publications Limited headquarters in Kampala yesterday. PHOTO BY ALEX ESAGALA.

ing with *Daily Monitor* and we have lined up great minds like Prof David Mukika (expert in piggery), Prof Constantine Katongole (expert in livestock marketing), Prof SB Mukasa (expert in banana breeding), Julius Ahaganna, (expert in passion fruit farming) and myself, with vast expertise in farming economics," Dr Lwasa said.

According to Mr Tony Glencross, the MPL managing director, the 2017 second edition of the farm clinic is a must attend for its countless benefits.

"This year, we decided to extend our farm clinic from Mba-

rara, Kabanyolo, to the east and north [parts of the country] as we focus on the climate smart theme. The Shs70,000 attendance fee is mainly for transport and lunch but whether you're a beginner or active farmer, you have to come for this enriching clinic," Mr Glencross explained.

According to Agricultural Business Initiative (aBi) Group CEO Andre Dellevoet, the farm clinic is one way they can reach out to the public with practical agriculture skills.

Mr William Matovu, the country director of Heifer International - one of the partners

- promised to use their 70-year experience in dairy farming to help smallholder farmers get connected and get value by sharing information.

Similarly, the Post Bank senior credit manager, Mr Benon Rukundo, said the bank is willing to equip participants with knowledge on accessing agriculture financing.

The Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) has joined the growing list of partners such as aBi, Heifer international, Post Bank and MUARIK to make MPL's farm clinic a crucial event for farmers.