Coffee farmers trained on contracting, risk management

BY JONATHAN ADENGO
jadengo@ug.nationmedia.com

KAMPALA. Coffee farmers from across the country have been skilled and trained on understanding contracts in a bid to strengthen their negotiating power.

The training conducted by the Agribusiness Development Centre (ADC) with support from the Rabobank Foundation and DFCU bank targeted mainly farmers who are leaders in cooperatives.

The farmers were equipped with knowledge and skills of handling coffee fit for export, negotiating contracts, risk management and gathering information for better prices.

The training which is aimed at improving the livelihoods of farmers involved in the coffee trade is in line with Uganda's road map of increasing the number of coffee bags from the current 5 million to more than 20 million bags of 60kgs capacity by 2030.

Experts say that this can be achieved if every coffee farmer produces at least 30 bags of coffee.

Ms Anja de Fijter, the head of ADC, while speaking to *Daily Monitor* on the sidelines of the training said Uganda's coffee exports have increased from 3.5 million bags registered two years ago to five million coffee bags today.

"There is no doubt people continue to embrace coffee growing; the sector has a bright future," Ms de Fijter said.

Coffee market

Ms Katia Mugenzi, the ADC communications and marketing manager, said the training has equipped farmers with a better understanding of the challenges faced in the coffee industry.

"The training was about price risk management, and basic knowledge of the coffee market because our farmers are cheated by middlemen who have information about the market. This is because most of the time coffee prices are determined elsewhere," she said.

She said their emphasis is on coffee exportation because there are other organisations that are already focused on production.

"It doesn't make sense if farmers produce their coffee and they are unable to benefit from its sale. Therefore as ADC we are helping farmers especially those working under a cooperative to get pre-finance that is vital in exportation," Ms Mugenzi said.

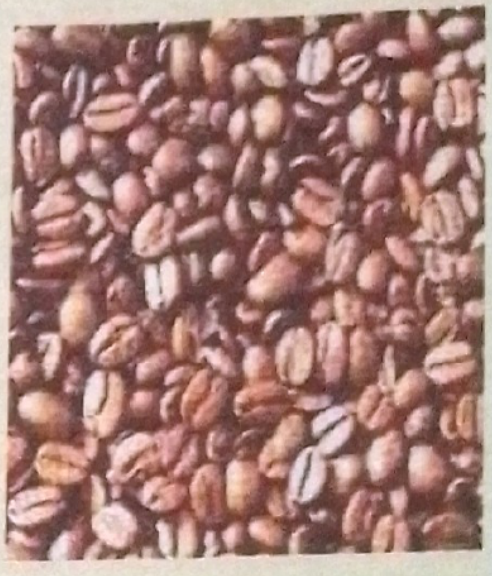
Observation

She added that young people are beginning to take agriculture seriously.

"It is very encouraging that we are now seeing youth getting involved in agriculture. This shows that the sector will register tremendous development," Ms Mugenzi said.

Ms Mary Nalukwata, a coffee farmer representing Kibinge cooperative, which export 27 containers of coffee to Belgium and the Netherlands, said through the training they hope to increase their coffee tonnage and be able to compete globally using the knowledge acquired regarding risk management and data analysis.

TARGET



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