

# Govt starts registration of coffee farmers

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The Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) yesterday said it has started an "electronic registration" of farmers involved in the planting of the cash crop to maximise quality and output.

UCDA managing director Dr Emmanuel Lyamulemye Niyibigira said during a press briefing at the Uganda Media Centre in Kampala that the exercise would capture a lot of detail, including farmer biodata, location and size and number of trees – their age and type.

"We want to know what affects our farmers and how best we can plan for them. We shall use fresh graduates, who will be deployed at sub-counties to capture the information," he said.

He said the exercise started yesterday with a pilot in Mukono district. It will be rolled out to the rest of the country on January 20 and will last about a month.

At the briefing, which was also held as part of activities to commemorate the authority's 25 years of existence – after it was instituted in 1992 through an Act of Parliament in 1991, Niyibigira said the country needed to celebrate with a cup of coffee.

"We have a target to produce 20 million bags of coffee by 2020. But we need to celebrate the crop for empowering most of our Ugandan livelihoods," he said before inviting journalists to a "cup of coffee" which was served at the Media Centre.

## Farmers speak out

Fred Sekyewa, a farmer affiliated to the Celebrate Hope Miniseries in Rakai district, welcomed the proposal, but called for "more technical assistance" in growth and production of the cash crop.

Another farmer, Baker Kayula, challenged the authority to assist them with "better irrigation" systems.