

Pest Risk Analysis Opens Up Export Opportunities

Through the STOSAR Project, the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) of Zambia has benefitted from various capacity-building initiatives such as Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) that equipped the country with Pest Lists to conduct market access negotiations for horticultural commodities that included Blueberries, Soya bean and Stevia (a natural sweetener and sugar substitute derived from the leaves of the plant species *Stevia rebaudiana*).



Blue berries packaged for the export market

Members of staff from Zambia's Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Services [PQPS], which is one of the departments under the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the NPPO in Zambia received Pest Risk Analysis training facilitated by CABI in July 2021 and August 2022.

Before the Pest Risk Analysis and Data Management (PRADM) Unit at the PQPS received the PRA online training, they heavily relied on literature review and internet searches on pests associated with

a given commodity, to come up with a pest list, as well as perform an overall pest risk analysis workshops. However, following the training sessions with CABI and access to the PRA online tool, the PRADM unit now easily generates pest lists for almost any crop using the tool, as well as conducting the entire PRA process within the tool.

According to the plant health officers that participated in the workshop, the PRA tools trainings were very informative and helpful. "The training that I found most beneficial was on how to use the Horizon Scanning tool to generate analysis reports, said Emma Mazimba, a plant health officer.

"The CABI PRA tool has been quite useful for generating Pest Lists, as well as checking the status of the pests of concern for countries like China, the geographical distribution of pests of concern, host range, the biology of the pest and other important information about pests of concern which are especially useful when conducting market access negotiations for horticultural commodities like Blueberries, Soya bean and Stevia" she added.

In addition to this, the PQPS received copies of the guide on Pests and Pathway initiated protocols. The guide will equip the PQPS with better preparedness, especially on the early warning systems, incorporation of ideas and concepts, as well as provision of quality input into the strategy-making process.

Following the PRA workshop, the participants from PQPS resolved that going forward, they will conduct all PRAs within the Horizon Scanning analysis tool, especially after Pest Lists have been generated. Course participants were able to cascade the training they received to other PQPS staff who were unable to participate in the FAO-CABI workshop, for purposes of information and skills transfer.

Thanks to some laboratory equipment and consumables procured under the STOSAR Project, processes that precede or support PRA at the PQPS department have been enhanced considerably.

The Zambia NPPO is now confident that they will in future, continue compiling quality PRAs, which can be published and shared with a wide range of trading partners before market access negotiations.