

them from rain, wind or hail storms that reach the highlands in the rainy season from April to July. And the boom of the flower business has created the boom of the greenhouse industry: from 150 ha of greenhouses 10 years ago to...3000 ha today, of which about 2500 ha of roses! Not all greenhouses are high tech of course, most are with wooden structure, but the replacement market is for metal structures and is seen as an Eldorado by a number of suppliers! The Israeli supplier Azrom is the clear leader in the market, served by its local representative Amiran who is also responsible for building and maintaining more than 90% of all Kenya's greenhouses and 80% of all irrigation equipment to the floriculture sector!!! This

Table 4: Proposed New Development Programmes for Irrigation in Kenya (in hectares)

Scheme	Area after development
Kano Plain	15000
Turkwel	1300
Arror	1340
Taita Taveta	6000

Table 5: market share of various fertilizers in Kenya (estimate 2008)

FERTILIZER TYPE	% OF TOTAL
DAP	31.20
MAP Field grade	6.89
NPK	6.24
CAN	11.31
TSP	1.04
UREA	5.20
Tea Fertilizer	23.80
Coffee Fertilizer	9.11
Sulphate Fertilizer	2.87
Other Speciality Fertilizer	2.34
TOTAL	100

NPK: 23:23:23; 20:20:0 are the most common types of NPK used in Kenya
Other speciality fertilizers =
Mainly horticultural fertilizers- see table 6
Source: various
Total consumption in x 1000 tons nutrients:
N 56, P2O5 60, K2O 19

doesn't leave a lot of room for competing suppliers such as the Dutch and French industries (Rovero, Filclair, etc.) who are trying hard to get their share of the cake! The objective of competing companies has been to develop alternative turnkey greenhouse concepts for growing flowers in Kenya. Part of the concepts is the export of French / Dutch greenhouse technology and related floricultural supplies through a local service center (one-stop-shop such as Amiran), and the offering of financial arrangement to customers in the horticultural sector in Kenya that can compete with the attractive packages offered by the Israeli industry.

IRRIGATION: AN URGENT NEED TO EXPAND AREA AND TECHNIFICATION

Irrigation in Kenya has a long history spanning over 400 years. Historical records show that irrigation in Kenya has existed for many years along the lower reaches of River Tana and in the then Elgeyo-Marakwet, West Pokot and Baringo districts. Rice irrigation activities also existed along the river valleys. The National Irrigation Board was established in 1966 through an Act of Parliament. The Board took over the running of Mwea, Hola and Perkerra. Later, the Board developed Ahero, West Kano, Bunyala and Bura schemes. The first three schemes were developed as pilot schemes in the 1960s and early 1970s and remain so even today. The NIB later expanded the Hola and the Mwea schemes and transferred the control of the Bura Irrigation Scheme to the Ministry of Agriculture. The Board has also facilitated research leading to the development of some public assist-

AN INTERVIEW WITH

Trevor Sherwin, Ocean Agriculture Ltd, Kenya

Ocean Agriculture (EA) Ltd, a subsidiary of Ocean Agriculture (Pty) Ltd in South Africa, was incorporated in Kenya in 1996 after the parent company realized the potential for specialized fertilizers in the Kenyan market. The company, based in Nairobi, is now one of the largest fertilizer suppliers in the East African Region for speciality fertilizers. Since its inception in 1996, the company has seen progressive growth and development. Over the past three years in particular the company has achieved substantial year on year growth.

"We buy water soluble technical grade fertilizers, specialized fertilizers, specialized foliar feeds and high quality growing media from the world's leading manufacturers to ensure product integrity. The products are then imported and distributed within the East African community countries. In order to add value to their products, the company's team of dedicated and qualified agronomists also offers their clients technical support. Our primary markets are in the Horticultural sector. The global slump in demand for horticultural produce this year



Courtesy of NAI

has put pressure on the farmers, which has had a negative spin off on our business. The local trading environment in Kenya is extremely competitive. This year in particular has also seen a number of new entrants into the market. International commodity prices have also dropped substantially in 2009. All this has resulted in lower turnovers and gross margins, as well as increased the risk exposure of doing business. This year we are looking to maintain and support our existing customer base by adding value to the quality of our service. We are also preparing to invest more in our infrastructure and capacity, so that we are well positioned to continue growing sustainably into the future".

ed irrigation schemes, such as the Yala Swamp and the South West Kano Schemes, which have been implemented by other agencies. With only 20% of Kenya's land having potential for arable agriculture, the country is today increasingly working on expanding its irrigation agriculture to meet the growing demand for food. An estimated population of 8

million out of the total 34 million in the country is at risk of starvation hence the urgent need to expand food production through irrigation. In its 2009/2010 fiscal budget the Kenyan government set aside \$320 million approximately 10% of its development budget for the water and irrigation sector. Currently the country has just above 12,000 hectares of really irrigated land (area theo-