

AGRARIAN

POLICY ISSUE TRACKER



JANUARY, 2026

Issue No. 33, 2026

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ABOUT ACSA

The Advocacy Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture (ACSA) is a legally registered national network of Civil Society Organisations working with smallholder farmers to advance sustainable agriculture, agricultural market development, environmental conservation, research, and policy advocacy. ACSA now has 30 member organisations operating across 52 districts in Uganda. Its mission is to empower Civil Society Organisations, including church and non-church actors, to advocate for a favourable agrarian policy environment for sustainable communities, and its Vision is smallholder farmers living in a sustainable environment. ACSA advances this mandate through advocacy and lobbying, research and documentation, capacity building for member organisations and the Secretariat, and networking and partnership building, to ensure that relevant agricultural policies and services are effectively implemented to foster profitable and sustainable smallholder enterprises.

Rationale

The agriculture sector is very sensitive to emerging issues that may be social, economic, cultural and environmental, which are often overlooked in planning and implementation processes by stakeholders at different levels, and yet they heavily impact on food security as well as sustainability livelihood options. Through the objective of "ACSA Member Organizations (MOs) and smallholder farmers influencing the agrarian policy and budgeting processes at different levels", ACSA will continuously identify and popularize the emerging agrarian policy issues for dissemination among MOs and other stakeholders to inform advocacy initiatives towards improved legislation, resource allocation and service delivery.

This publication tracks key agrarian policy issues from the period of January, 2026. Additionally, it also tracks the current status of agrarian and related bills in the Ugandan parliament within the same period.

Stories Inside

- ▶ How the EU Space Programme supports agriculture
- ▶ New FAO guidance on assessing food safety risks related to environmental inhibitors

International

Plant breeding is a critical tool in the fight against climate change

Plant breeding offers a way to break this cycle. By producing more food per hectare across the globe, high-yielding, improved varieties of food crops such as rice, beans, wheat, potatoes, cowpea, maize, and sorghum reduce the pressure to clear additional land and, therefore, the number of trees that are felled. Higher productivity made possible by breeding helps limit agricultural expansion while slowing carbon emissions from land-use change.

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How the EU Space Programme supports agriculture

The EU Space Programme, through its wealth of Earth Observation and satellite navigation data, supports efforts to help agriculture adapt to these pressures. In this week's Observer, we explore how space-based services and data contribute to more sustainable food production across Europe and beyond.

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New FAO guidance on assessing food safety risks related to environmental inhibitors

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has produced a report, Environmental Inhibitors in Agrifood Systems – Considerations for Food Safety Risk Assessment, along with a technical brief, to help guide policy makers and all stakeholders in evaluating any possible food safety risks.

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▶ Weekly agriculture news summary 2026

FAO launches International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026 to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment in agrifood systems

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO] recently launched The International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026, a global campaign aimed at recognizing women's indispensable yet often overlooked contributions to global agrifood systems and to galvanize efforts to close persistent gender gaps.

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FAO Food Price Index dips in December despite higher world cereal quotations

The benchmark for world food commodity prices fell in December compared to the previous month, as declines in dairy product, meat and vegetable oil quotations more than offset increases in those for cereals and sugar. The FAO Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of a set of globally-traded food commodities, averaged 124.3 points in December, down 0.6 percent from November and 2.3 percent from its level a year ago.

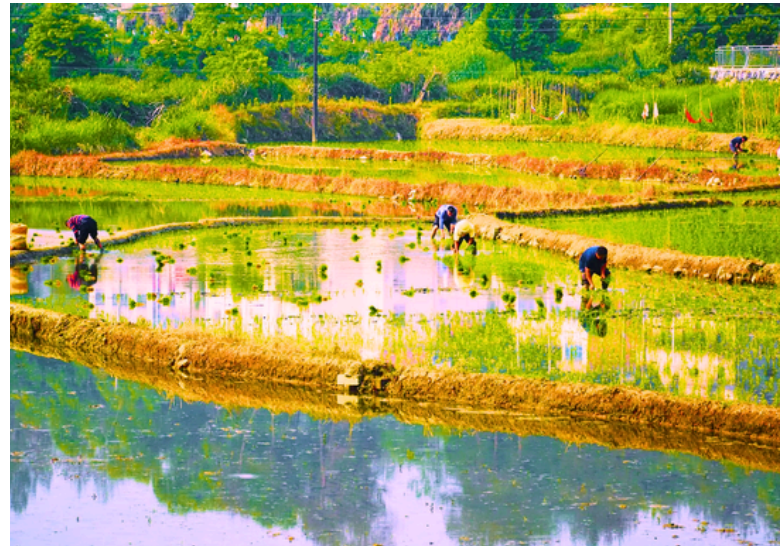
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How Rice-Field Ponds are Forging Climate Resilient Livelihoods in Cambodia

In Cambodia, where rice is life, climate change is shaking the foundation. Intensifying droughts, falling prices, and unpredictable rainfall means the monoculture model is breaking down. Integrated rice-field pond systems (RFP) appear to be a solution, as successfully piloted under the CGIAR–Asian Mega Delta initiative. This climate-smart approach is turning vulnerable farms into resilient, bio diverse hubs, securing land, water, and the future of smallholder livelihoods.

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Continental

Agribusiness Sector Trends: Africa Industry Shifts 2026

Africa's agribusiness sector is undergoing a truly transformative phase, shaped by a potent combination of technological innovation, demographic shifts, policy reforms, and evolving global demand for agricultural produce. With predictions pointing to an impressive surge in both the adoption of digital technologies and the implementation of strategic policy reforms, the landscape of agriculture and agribusiness in Africa is set to experience dynamic changes through 2026 and beyond.

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► **Voices of Change: How Indigenous storytelling is helping shape global climate policy**

► **Bridging silage quality gap: A study with smallholder dairy farmers**

SA's new generation of farmers: How training, technology and smart markets are driving real profits

South Africa's farming scene is changing, thanks to a new group of young farmers. They are not just farming to get by – they are building real businesses, creating jobs and making money. With good training, new tech and ways to sell their goods, they are shaking up how food is grown in the country.

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Weekly agriculture news summary 2026

As of late January 2026, South Africa's agriculture faces a severe Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) crisis that has spread to eight provinces (only Northern Cape remains free), with the virus mutating rapidly and outbreaks surging from 191 cases (2020–2024) to 342 in 2025 alone.

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East Africa

Bridging silage quality gap: A study with smallholder dairy farmers

Silage is increasingly becoming a critical pillar of smallholder dairy farming in Kenya. However, seasonal shortages of quality silage, due to environmental, economic, and management constraints is a significant challenge to optimal animal productivity.

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Voices of Change: How Indigenous storytelling is helping shape global climate policy

As the climate crisis intensifies, the communities least responsible for global emissions are often the ones facing the most severe consequences. In the drylands of Baringo County, Kenya, the Ogiek and Endorois peoples are witnessing firsthand how altered precipitation and prolonged droughts threaten their traditional livelihoods.

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Reclaiming the Banana Island: How Ukerewe Farmers Are Restoring Production After Bunchy

On Ukerewe Island in Tanzania, bananas are more than a staple crop; they underpin household food security, income, and cultural identity. Yet by 2023, Banana Bunchy Top Disease (BBTD), caused by the Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV), had pushed the island's banana systems to the brink. Surveys revealed that over 85% of banana plants were infected, resulting in production losses exceeding 90% and leaving once-productive fields barren.

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How citizen science is transforming pastoral resilience

In northern Kenya, KAZNET - a CGIAR digital platform - is empowering herders to collect, share, and act on real-time data about rangelands, markets, and livestock, blending traditional knowledge with technology for stronger, climate-smart livelihoods. In the arid plains of northern Kenya, life often hangs on a delicate balance. Pastoralist families wake each morning to weigh tough decisions

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- ▶ Coffee boom powers Uganda's agricultural exports-MAAIF

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National

Uganda's coffee, cocoa and dairy exports surge

Uganda's agriculture sector has posted strong gains in production, export earnings and household incomes, driven by improved performance in coffee, cocoa, oil palm, dairy and fisheries, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF).

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Coffee boom powers Uganda's agricultural exports-MAAIF

Uganda has started 2026 on a strong agricultural footing, with coffee once again emerging as the backbone of the country's export growth after generating a record US\$ 2.4 billion in earnings in the 2024/2025 financial year [FY].

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