

AGRARIAN

POLICY ISSUE TRACKER



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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 April, 2026. Additionally, it also tracks the current status of agrarian and related bills in the Ugandan parliament within the same period.

Stories Inside

- ▶ **FAO: Protracted Strait of Hormuz crisis could turn into global agrifood catastrophe**
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International

FAO: Protracted Strait of Hormuz crisis could turn into global agrifood catastrophe

Ships carrying critical agricultural inputs must start moving through the Strait of Hormuz as soon as possible to ward off the risks of a dangerous spike in food price inflation later this year that could trigger a cascade of effects similar to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). “The clock is ticking,” and crop calendars put poorer countries most at risk of scarce and pricey fertilizer and energy inputs, FAO Chief Economist Maximo Torero said.

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Bananas: An essential crop at risk and an opportunity for impact

In tropical regions around the world, bananas are far more than a staple food; they are a lifeline. This crop provides food, income, and economic stability for millions of smallholder farmers and plays a critical role in global food security.

Yet, despite its importance, banana production is increasingly under threat. Climate change, soil degradation, and the spread of devastating diseases are putting its long-term sustainability at risk. Addressing these challenges is not only an agricultural priority but also a development imperative.

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Coffee prices rebound as Middle East tensions jolt global market

Global coffee prices rose in March, snapping a three-month decline, as geopolitical tensions in the Middle East disrupted shipping routes and drove up energy costs, according to the latest report from the International Coffee Organization (ICO).

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FAO Food Price Index rises in March as Near East conflict raises energy costs

World food commodity prices rose in March for the second month in a row, largely due to higher energy prices linked to the conflict escalation in the Near East, according to the latest benchmark measure released Friday by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The FAO Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of a basket of globally-traded food commodities, averaged 128.5 points in March, up 2.4 percent from February and 1.0 percent above its level a year ago.

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Bridging indigenous fruits and vegetables to markets: The case for Northern Vietnam’s indigenous fruits and vegetable systems

In Mai Son and Sa Pa, indigenous fruits and vegetables are more than heritage crops. New research explores how biodiversity, markets, and agroecotourism could unlock their potential for nutrition and rural livelihoods.

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- ▶ Banana waste finds new life as textiles and paper in Brazil’s emerging bio economy

The Iran war's impacts on global fertilizer markets and food production

In 2024, up to 30% of global fertilizer trade passed through the Strait of Hormuz from the Persian Gulf to export markets around the world, as well as an estimated 20% of liquified natural gas (LNG), a key fertilizer feedstock, and 27% of globally traded oil. Now, with Iran limiting shipping through this critical maritime corridor in response to attacks by the United States and Israel, prices have risen sharply across energy and fertilizer markets.

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Banana waste finds new life as textiles and paper in Brazil's emerging bio economy

The tones of banana trunks left behind after harvest are increasingly being transformed into raw materials for clothing, paper and packaging, as advances in mechanical extraction and controlled drying accelerate industrial development in the sector.

What was once agricultural waste may soon end up in everyday items — from T-shirts and notebooks to supermarket packaging — as factories refine methods to convert banana pseudo stems into standardized industrial inputs for textiles, paper and bio-based composites.

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Will the Iran crisis lead to another round of food price spikes?

Agricultural commodity prices have been under sustained downward pressure since 2013–14. The 2022 spike in the wake of COVID-19 disruptions and Russia's invasion of Ukraine proved temporary rather than cyclical. Now, the Strait of Hormuz closure amid the Iran war has produced a sharp run-up in fertilizer prices, raising agricultural production costs. Yet thus far, global commodities markets have not spiked. More than a month into the crisis, urea prices are up roughly 40%, while wheat and maize prices have increased by about 6% and soybeans less than 3%. Rice prices have fallen over the period.

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▶ COL40: A Colombian Solution to Protect Cassava in Africa

▶ Expert advice getting Calf feeding right from day one

Continental

The impacts of the Middle East conflict on Africa

The global economic environment has become increasingly volatile with rising frequency of major shocks worldwide. Amid spikes in energy, food and fertilizer prices caused by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) outline practical recommendations for crisis responses and resilience building in African countries.

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Expert advice getting Calf feeding right from day one

Successful calf rearing is a process rather than a recipe. Under normal circumstances, a two-week-old calf should still be suckling from its mother, in other words, drinking mainly mother's milk. Dairy calves are, however, removed from their mothers because milk is too expensive to feed to calves, and farmers prefer to use or sell the milk themselves. Dairy calves, as well as calves whose mothers may have died at birth or shortly thereafter, are therefore in most cases hand-reared on milk replacers, of which there are various options on the market. These milk powders each has its own mixing instructions and recommended guidelines on how it should be fed and how calves should be reared.

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COL40: A Colombian Solution to Protect Cassava in Africa

In several countries in Eastern and Central Africa including Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, and Malawi millions of families depend on cassava as a staple food and source of income. However, production of this crop faces a growing threat: Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD), caused by viruses that damage the plant's roots, significantly reduce yields, and threaten food security. As a result, infected roots lose commercial value and, in many cases, become unfit for consumption. This means that a single harvest can no longer serve either as food or as a source of income.

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- ▶ Kenya's first EUDR-ready coffee shipment: A milestone for sustainable trade
- ▶ Ethiopia scales up agro ecology to transform its food systems

Ethiopia scales up agro ecology to transform its food systems

Ethiopia officially launched its National Agro ecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (2026–2040), marking a major turning point in the country's agricultural policy direction.

Led by the Ministry of Agriculture, this ambitious roadmap is the result of a one-year multi-stakeholder process involving public institutions, researchers, development partners, civil society, and the private sector. This process was not only technical but deeply consultative, with more than ten national and regional dialogue platforms shaping the final strategy, ensuring that it reflects both scientific evidence and realities on the ground.

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Beyond organic: How Kenya is reshaping food systems with Participatory Guarantee Systems and Agroecology

Researchers and partners in Kenya are advancing Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) integrated with agro ecology to make safe, sustainable food more accessible, lower certification costs for farmers, and strengthen resilient, inclusive food systems. Where does this food come from? How was it produced? Is it safe? Is it beneficial to my health? These are critical questions Kenyan consumers are increasingly asking. The growing consumer awareness about the origin of food, production methods, farm inputs, safety, and nutritional value is creating a strong push to reshape the local food system - from how food is produced and marketed to how it is consumed and even disposed of.

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► Museveni launches Uganda's first Anti-tick vaccine

Nigeria Approves High-Performing Groundnut Variety SAMNUT 30 Developed by ICRISAT

Nigeria has approved the release of SAMNUT 30 (ICGV 206228), a high-performing groundnut variety developed by ICRISAT, marking an important step toward enhancing productivity, resilience and food and nutrition security among smallholder farmers. The new variety stands out for its high grain yield, strong stability across environments, and combined tolerance to major diseases including rosette disease, early leaf spot, and late leaf spot.

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Kenya's first EUDR-ready coffee shipment: A milestone for sustainable trade

Kenya's coffee sector has marked a historic milestone with the successful preparation and export of its first shipment of European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)-ready coffee. This achievement reflects not only compliance with emerging global sustainability standards, but also the country's growing capacity to operate within a rapidly evolving trade environment where environmental accountability is becoming a prerequisite for market access.

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Ivory coast reports new avian influenza outbreak

Ivory coast has reported a new outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza, as authorities face renewed pressure on a key agricultural sector after several years of relative stability. Avian influenza remains one of the most devastating viral diseases affecting birds and poultry farming worldwide.

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National

Uganda rolls out digital system to boost coffee traceability and meet EU regulations

Uganda has taken a major step towards achieving transparency and traceability in its coffee sector, as industry stakeholders introduce a new digital system designed to comply with stringent European Union (EU) deforestation regulations. Several African countries involved in coffee, cocoa and rubber production failed to comply with the initial December 31, 2025 deadline, largely due to inadequate infrastructure to register and monitor smallholder farmers in rural areas who have sustained the agricultural economy for decades.

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Uganda earns record Shs 9 trillion from coffee exports amid strong global demand

Uganda has registered a record performance in coffee exports, earning approximately Shs 9 trillion over a 12-month period, according to the latest figures from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). The Monthly Coffee Report for February 2026 shows that exports for the period March 2025 to February 2026 totaled 8.8 million bags, valued at US\$ 2.5 billion (about Shs 9 trillion).

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Local CSOs urge government on banned hazardous agrochemicals

Civil society organisations (CSOs) working on food safety have urged government to ensure robust enforcement of the ban on a range of highly hazardous pesticides and agrochemicals being sold on the Ugandan market. The call follows a directive by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) prohibiting at least 65% of agrochemicals currently used in the country, citing their dangerous chemical composition and risks to human health, animal life, and the environment.

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Museveni launches Uganda's first Anti-tick vaccine

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has commissioned Uganda's first locally developed anti-tick vaccine at the National Livestock Resources Research Institute (NaLIRRI) in Namulonge, Nansana Municipality, describing the breakthrough as a long term solution to tick-borne diseases that have persistently affected the country's livestock sector.

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- ▶ Uganda, Chile launch landmark climate-smart tilapia research partnership

- ▶ Bunyoro, Tooro cane farmers outraged by proposed excise duty hike

Uganda, Chile launch landmark climate-smart tilapia research partnership

Uganda is set to partner with Chile on an ambitious research initiative aimed at advancing climate-smart aquaculture, with a particular focus on the Nile tilapia. The research also seeks to establish mechanisms to enable communities, private entities and cooperatives engaged in aquaculture to scale up their participation, while promoting viable commercial approaches to fish farming.

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Owners regret leasing land for growing sugarcane in Busoga

While this lump sum payment offers immediate cash, it effectively locks landowners into long term agreements, limiting their ability to switch to more profitable short cycle farming activities. Individuals who leased out land for sugarcane cultivation have expressed regret, saying the venture no longer makes business sense.

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Ntungamo, Rukiga shut animal markets over FMD outbreak

Security and veterinary officials have suspended animal and animal product markets in Ntungamo District following an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in some parts of the district. The animal movement quarantine will also affect Rukiga District.

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UNIDO, World Coffee Research launch €850,000 drive to boost Uganda's coffee seed systems

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and World Coffee Research (WCR) have announced a €850,000 co-investment to strengthen Uganda's coffee seed systems, improve farmer livelihoods and support long-term sustainability. The initiative, implemented under the Advancing Climate-Resilience and Transformation in African Coffee Programme (ACT), brings together a coalition of partners including the Lavazza Foundation, The J.M. Smucker Co. and JDE Peet's, alongside funding from Italian Cooperation.

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Bunyoro, Tooro cane farmers outraged by proposed excise duty hike

Sugarcane farmers in the Bunyoro and Tooro sub-regions, united under the Bunyoro Tooro Sugarcane Farmers Association (BUTOS), have expressed strong disapproval over government's proposal to increase the excise duty on sugar from Shs 100 to Shs 300 per kilogramme. The proposed hike is contained in the Excise Duty Amendment Bill 2026.

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