

Focus on Smallholders. EUREPGAP Appoints an Observer for Africa

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EurepGAP confirmed the appointment of Dr Johannes Kern as the Observer for Africa in the EurepGAP Sector Committees for an initial period until Dec 2008. The role is intended to provide technical support to EurepGAP members in developing countries and to act as a smallholder ambassador identifying ways that can further facilitate the compliance of smallholder farmers with EurepGAP standards.

Nigel Garbutt, Chairman EurepGAP said " We are delighted that in collaboration with DFID and GTZ we have been able to appoint Dr Kern who has many years of experience working with standards implementation in Developing Countries. Dr Kern will operate in a largely independent capacity linking with key stakeholders and contributing to the standard setting process. Dr Kern will be involved in establishing new frameworks for best practice in smallholder certification making the system more cost effective by developing the group certification model as well as harmonising the approaches in Africa with smallholder schemes operating in Latin America and Asia."

The work of the Africa observer will be presented on an independent website www.africa-observer.info. Dr Kern can be contacted at johannes.kern@africa-observer.info. His office can be reached through info@africa-observer.info.

About EUREPGAP:

The EurepGAP standard is primarily designed to maintain consumer confidence in food quality and food safety. Other important goals are to minimize detrimental environmental

EurepGAP members include retailers, producers/farmers and associate members from the input and service side of agriculture. Governance is by a Board which is chaired by an independent Chairperson. The Board also agrees on the activity plan of the organisation. Sector Committees discuss and decide upon product and sector specific issues. All committees have 50% retailer and 50% producer/supplier representation and hereby creating an efficient partnership. The work of the Committees is supported by FoodPLUS, a not for profit limited company based in Cologne, Germany, fulfilling a secretariat function for EurepGAP.

The Executive Management of Foodplus GmbH (Cologne, Germany), i.e. its Managing Director, signs responsible for the implementation of Policies and Standards. Financial and legal ownership and responsibility for FoodPLUS GmbH holds the EHI Retail Institute via its 100% Subsidiary EHI-Verwaltungsgesellschaft mbH. The EHI Retail Institute also operates the European Retail Academy, a global network of Research Institutes linked to retail activities and topics.

EurepGAP started in 1997 as an initiative by retailers belonging to the Euro-Retail Produce Working Group (EUREP). British retailers in conjunction with supermarkets in continental Europe were the driving forces. They reacted on growing concerns by the consumers with product safety, environmental and labor standards and decided to take more responsibility for what happened in the supply chain. On the other side the development of common certification standards were also in the interest of many producers. Those with contractual relations to several retailers complained that they had to undergo multiple audits against different criteria every year. On this background EUREP started to work on harmonized standards and procedures for the development of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in conventional agriculture.

About DFID

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the part of the UK Government that manages Britain's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty:

www.dfid.gov.uk/.

We are headed by a Cabinet minister, one of the senior ministers in the Government. This reflects how important the Government sees reducing poverty around the world. We have two headquarters (in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow) and 64 offices overseas. We also have over 2500 staff, almost half of whom work abroad.

What is development?

When we talk about international development we are referring to efforts, by developed and developing countries, to bring people out of poverty and so reduce how much their country relies on overseas aid. Many different things can contribute to development which reduces poverty, such as settling conflicts, increasing trade, securing more and better aid, and improving health and education.

Why is the UK Government involved in development?

More than a billion people, one in five of the world's population, live in extreme poverty. This means they live on less than 65p a day. Ten million children die before their fifth birthday, most of them from preventable diseases. More than 113 million children do not go to school.

In a world of growing wealth, such levels of human suffering and wasted potential are not only morally wrong, they are also against our own interests. We are becoming much closer to people in faraway countries. We trade more and more with people around the world.

Many of the problems which affect us, war and conflict, international crime, refugees, the trade in illegal drugs and the spread of diseases like HIV and AIDS, are caused or made worse by poverty in developing countries. Getting rid of poverty will make for a better world for everybody.

About GTZ

The GTZ is an international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development with worldwide operations. It provides viable, forward-looking solutions for political, economic, ecological and social development in a globalised world. Working under difficult conditions, GTZ promotes complex reforms and change processes. Its corporate objective is to improve people's living conditions on a sustainable basis.

GTZ is a federal enterprise based in Eschborn near Frankfurt am Main. It was founded in 1975 as a company under private law. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is its major client. The company also operates on behalf of other German ministries, partner-country governments and international clients, such as the European Commission, the United Nations and the World Bank, as well as on behalf of private enterprises. GTZ works on a public-benefit basis. Any surpluses generated are channelled back into its own international cooperation projects for sustainable development.

www.gtz.de/en/unternehmen/1698.htm

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