

# Royal Times

## WORD FROM THE EDITOR:

The last three years have seen a decrease in farming activities in Kenya owing to several factors. We've experienced tough policies introduced to farmers both by the national and county governments. The need to increase production per unit area is wanting since food requirements increase by at least 8% pa. Agriculture happens to be a sector in the economic pillar in the Vision 2030 Blue print. In line with this, Kenya Highland Seed invests on R&D with the farmers' and nations' need at heart. Enjoy the read. - *Royal Seed Marketing.*

## About Us:

Kenya Highland Seed (KHS) was established in 1998 and has been supplying Top Quality Open Pollinated and Hybrid seeds to the farming community since 2000. We have an extensive portfolio of established hybrids under our brand 'Royal Seed', including Tomatoes, Cabbages, Onions, Peppers, Carrots, Watermelons and sell a wide range of large and small vegetable seeds with particular focus on high yielding hybrids. Below are the main factors leading to our Company growth:

- Improved Hybrid Seed
- Focus on working with small scale growers
- Penetration of improved exporter grower products and varieties



 A festive promotional banner for Royal Seed. On the left, a Santa Claus figure in a red suit and hat is peeking over a green sign. The sign contains the following text:
 

royalseed  
 Merry Christmas to all our customers!  
 HAPPY HOLIDAYS  
 LAST ORDER DATE: 17th December 2019  
 CLOSING DATE: 18th December 2019  
 OPENING DATE: 6th January 2020  
 TOLL FREE No. 0800 720 250  
 +254 734 257635

 On the right side of the sign is a map titled "OUR NEW LOCATION" showing a route from the Central Market to the new office. A red arrow points to the new location, and another red arrow points to the Central Market. Text on the map indicates: "DISTANCE 15 KM from Central Market" and "15 minutes drive without traffic".

## **Business Operations:**

Kenya Highland Seed is located along Trans-View Avenue, seniors Estate, 300m opp. Portland Club, Athi River. Our office along Road C, industrial area, Nairobi, is still functional until January 2020, after which operations will shift to the new office.

KHS has over 250 strong distributor network of agro-dealers located in all the significant agricultural areas in Kenya and has a branches in Tanzania & Uganda, as well as agents in Rwanda and Burundi.

Sales in Kenya are through the distributor network supported by our Regional Agronomists, who are aided by field assistants in each region. We ensure that our customers find value in purchase and use of our products by offering excellent customer service as well as extension services.



**Kenya Highland Seed  
Co. Ltd.**  
For greater production

According to the Oxford dictionary, Cabbage is defined as a cultivated plant eaten as a vegetable, having thick green or purple leaves surrounding a spherical heart or head of young leaves. Scientifically, it belongs to the "cole crops" or brassicas, meaning it is closely related to broccoli and cauliflower. Common Varieties: Pretoria F1, Fabiola F1 and Copenhagen.



**Pretoria F1**

Cabbage is a popular vegetable throughout the world because of its adaptability to a wide range of climatic conditions and soil, ease of production and storage, and its food value. For optimal growth, cabbages require well drained soils with a pH of 5.6 to 6.4. Loamy, black cotton and alluvial soils are best suited for this crop.

The crop does well in cooler climates with adequate and well distributed rains. It can also flourish under irrigation in lower altitudes. The common areas include Mt. Kenya region and The Rift valley.



**Fabiola F1**

## Common Diseases

### Pythium Damping-Off

This disease commonly affects seeds and young transplants and is caused by the soil-borne fungus *Pythium* species. Infected seeds decay in the soil. Seedlings and young transplants will "damp-off" or rot at the soil line, before they eventually collapse and die. To cope with this challenge, farmers are advised to select strong varieties like Pretoria F1 and use chemical control methods (Metalaxyl and Mancozeb based chemicals).

### Black Rot

Black rot is caused by a bacterium. Above-ground parts of the plant are primarily affected, and symptoms may vary depending on the type of plant, age of the plant and the environmental conditions. Veins turn black or brown. Infection may spread into the stems. Cutting into the stems often reveals a black-brown discoloration with a yellowish slime present. Symptoms on cauliflower may appear as numerous black or brown specks, black veins and discolored curds. Prevention & Treatment: There are **NO CHEMICAL CONTROLS AVAILABLE**, so disease prevention is very important. Use certified disease-free seed. Use of an early maturing variety like Pretoria F1 will ensure that your crop is harvested on time before the infection spreads.



### Downy Mildew

This disease is caused by the fungus *Peronospora parasitica* and can attack both seedlings and mature vegetable plants. Infected plants develop a gray mold on the lower leaf surface. The upper leaf surface of infected plants first turns yellow and then may turn brown or necrotic. Leaves wither and die. Symptoms differ from powdery mildew in that the downy mildew fungus grows only on the lower surface of the leaf. Development of the disease is favored by moist conditions. Farmers are advised to combine chemical control mechanisms and practice crop rotation to break the fungus survival chain. Remove plant debris immediately after harvest.

## What to Consider

These are some aspects that a farmer should consider while venturing into cabbage production;

1. Disease tolerance.
2. Compactibility
3. Yield potential
4. Field holding capacity.
5. Maturity days

Among the common varieties, Pretoria F1 from Royal seed exhibits superiority and cuts across board, regardless of your region.

Maturing in only 75 days after transplanting, **Pretoria F1** has good head weight (4-5kgs), excellent field holding capacity and enough cover leaves that come in handy during transportation. Pretoria's head compactibility is second to none. Sow Right, Sow Quality, Sow Royal Seed!!

## WE SHOWED UP!

It is that time of the year again, that we get to close 2019 in style. The much awaited farmer's day came, and as always, Royal Seed did not disappoint.

The Nairobi International Trade Fair (NITF) commonly known as; **The Nairobi Show**, ran between September 30th-6th October.



Royal Seed Stand at NITF

This is when we get to showcase our brand's different products and new innovations, and at the same time, interact with our clients.

Over the Years, Royal Seed has been on the fore front in ensuring our products are at their best to give farmers the expected optimum yields; Led by a team of our agronomists with vast experience on Best Agronomic Practices.



Royal Seed Registration desk at the event

As one of the stakeholders in the Industry, Royal Seed again like in previous years wasn't left out. Had our demo plot with Pretoria F1, Spinach, Red Cabbage, Kales, Bravo, Terminator F1, Rambo among others.

With the different growing needs of our farmers, Royal Seed has gone a notch higher on innovations

and have new products such as **Terminator F1**, **Rocky F1** which are strong **TYLCV / TSWV**. The products have already been commercialized, and very positive feedback coming from both farmers and final consumers. We'll be glad to have meet you at NITF in 2020. Come, Learn, ENJOY!!



Staff and Farmers sampling Asali F1



Royal Seed Agronomist Training Farmers

## GROWN WITHIN, EATEN ABROAD

The growing and export of horticultural crops in Kenya dates back to early 1970s. Horticultural crop production has been one of the key economic activities, has greatly contributed to the national GDP over the years. This coupled with the value chains being supportive to the small-scale farmers' livelihood, it has been deemed as a valuable economic activity among the farmers involved. French Beans constitute about 60% of exported food crops from Kenya



### Challenges Facing Marketing Of Horticultural Produce

#### Accreditations and certifications

There have been developed quality management systems for agricultural systems, which help to standardize the safety, quality and legality of the produce from farms. These standards include Good Agricultural Practices standards like Global GAP, Social standards like GRASP, Fairtrade, SMETA, and other general standards like ISO.

The destination markets for the Kenyan produce are nowadays insisting on certification to these standards prior to establishment of business relationship with Kenyan growers. The certification comes with a cost, hence, the grower groups and small scale farmers have not been able to afford the cost of certifications. There is need for the small scale farmers to be organized as a group, and be accorded the support that is required for the certification of their produce. This will in turn translate to improved market access of the produce.

### Food safety delivery

The target markets will from time to time review the chemical application list, and it is important to keep the farmers informed on these developments, lest they use chemicals which have since been banned for use.

The safest way to hedge this is by planting varieties that will need minimal chemical application. The most common sprays are mostly against fungal infections like rust and anthracnose, which are quite difficult to control. Tolerant varieties such as **Moonstone**, **Seagull** and **Serengeti** are preferred by most growers as it not only saves on time and cost, but also safe in the sense that it ensures minimal/ nil chemical residue due to less use of the same. Lately, KEPHIS have been very strict on MRLs on both local and export crops.

(French Beans In Field PIC)

### Market access linkages

The farmers need to operate with licensed dealers, who are able to create a marketing channel for the produce the farmers grow.

### Value addition

Processing (which may include sorting, grading packaging, cold storage) is expected to be done by the produce dealers on behalf of the producer groups. This in the long run fetches more income for the farmer and country at large.

# We got you covered!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

By: Olwoch George

Tomato production forms an integral part of Kenyan livelihood and economy. In the recent past, there has been an influx of pests and diseases into the farmers' fields due to changing weather patterns. The leaders being Viral and Bacterial diseases.

**Viral diseases** can negatively affect **tomatoes** by drastically reducing yield and/or fruit quality hence causing significant economic damage.

**Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus (TSWV)** is the latest entrant into our farming environment. The virus is commonly spread by thrips. Additionally, movement of infected plant material may result in TSWV being introduced into a new setting.

TSWV, like the other common viral diseases, can infect a large number of ornamental, weed and vegetable species. Its cosmopolitan nature makes it a frequent disease problem in open field production as well as greenhouses. It is particularly devastating to tomato.

## Symptoms and Signs

- Stunting
- Chlorotic or necrotic rings form on the leaves
- Dark streaks on stems, and brown shoot tips.
- Young fruit often appear mottled and develop light-coloured concentric rings.
- Mature fruit exhibit large white or yellow blotches that make them unmarketable.

## SOLUTION: Use resistant varieties

**Royal Seed** has a vibrant innovation division that walks with the farmer, assesses farmers' needs and challenges, analyses them and develops the most appropriate solution.

**ROCKY F1** is the best variety with TSWV resistance. Besides TSWV resistance, below are additional tolerances of this great variety:

- Tomato yellow leaf curl Virus (TYLCV)
- Bacterial speck.
- Verticillium wilt (Vd. & Va.)
- Fusarium wilt (Fol: 1)

## Characteristics of Rocky F1

- Early maturing; 75 days from transplanting
- Good average fruit weight of 130-150g.
- High yielding with a potential of 30 tonnes per acre.
- Excellent shelf life; 21 days after harvest.



Plant **royalseed** in  
**2020**  
HAPPY NEW YEAR



Call: Toll Free No. 0800 703250. Website: [www.royalseed.biz](http://www.royalseed.biz)

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Next Issue : March 2020

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