

processors/miller, markets and end-users.

7. **Protect farmers from Price violation at all levels.** Guaranteeing farmers a reasonable price for their products which may encourage them to invest in intensive cassava production and also venture into value addition.

• **Essential requirements**

Regardless of the grades, the cassava root shall be: About 300g and above in weight, not less than 20 cm in length, whole, not affected by rot, mold or deterioration, practically free of pests, free of abnormal external moisture, free of any foreign smell and/or taste and graded into superior quality, good quality and the low quality which is characterized by slight defects in shape. The bruising must not exceed 20% of the surface area of the cassava.

These cassava roots shall be well packed to protect them from mechanical, heat, and frost damage and in containers, which will safeguard the hygienic and nutritional quality of the product. These containers must be made from packaging material that will not impart any toxic substance and smell to the product. In addition the container shall be marked/well labeled with the name "cassava root", name and location address of the exporter and/or packer, country of origin and name of town or city. Cassava roots should comply with National Agency Food standards to trace and eliminate pesticide residues and follow the International Code of Hygienic Practice

• **Local Food Policy and Quality Standards**

The Uganda, cassava standards are consistent with the East African Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology & Test Act, 2006 (EAC SQMT Act, 2006). Article 15(1) of the EAC SQMT Act, 2006 states that "Within six months of the declaration of an East African Standard, the Partner States

shall adopt, without deviation from the approved text of the standard, the East African Standard as a national standard, and withdraw any existing national standard with similar scope and purpose".

Based on this, two standards are well distributed-for fresh cassava and for cassava wheat composite flour. The fresh cassava standard provides recommended practices for production, storage, packaging and transportation of fresh cassava intended for human consumption. The standard also recognizes the indispensable reference documents as "EAS 38, General Standard for labeling of prepackaged foods", EAS 39, Hygiene in the food and drink manufacturing industry- Code of practice", and CAC/RCP 53, Code of hygienic practice of fresh fruits and vegetables". The "Cassava Wheat composite flour-specification" specifies specific quality factors such as particle size, total cyanogen content and fortification, food additives, contaminants, hygiene, packaging, weights and measures, labeling, methods of sampling and criteria of conformity.

Other existing cassava standards) include the "EAS 740, Cassava flour- Specification", EAS 744, Cassava and cassava products- Determination of total cyanogen –Enzymatic assay method" and "EAS 739, Dried Cassava Chips - Specification".

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Strengthening

Agribusiness Ethics,
Quality Standards,
& ICT Usage in
Uganda's Value Chains



**INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL FOOD POLICY AND QUALITY STANDARDS
Cassava Value Chain**

Compiled by

"Strengthening Agribusiness Ethics, Quality Standards & ICT usage in Uganda's value chains" (AGRI-QUEST) Research Project together with stakeholders in the Cassava Value Chain

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Preamble:

Food policies, best practices and standards exist at both International and local level. Their focus is to ensure public safety, facilitate trade and ensure sustainability. In this vain, harmonization of standards has been done to ease movement of goods and they become more stringent over time as indicated in the amendments. Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) is the custodian of standards in Uganda. Though access to them is only possible after payment. This limits public awareness and uptake of the recommended codes of practice and guidelines. However, basic information has to be passed on to players who cannot easily access or buy these standards since they participate in agribusiness. This will make them appreciate these policies and standards hence contributing to having a better agribusiness climate.

Hence, “Strengthening Agribusiness Ethics, Quality Standards & ICT usage in Uganda’s value chains” (AGRI-QUEST) project presents this basic information on policies and standards in a simplified form in order to facilitate small scale (bottom of the pyramid) players access it so as to actively participate in agribusiness in a way which penetrates up to international level. This is hoped to aide them in decision-making with respect to procedures observing international food and agriculture policy and practices, but acting at local level.

Cassava Value Chain

• **International Food Policy and Quality Standards**

According to Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the Strengthening of cassava production in a sustainable manner would call for demand-driven approach to technology development, accrued investment, political commitment, and institutional support among others. The present cassava production being characterized by low levels of technology uptake, high production costs, post-harvest losses, and weak linkages to markets both locally and domestically, there is a need to transform this sector which would require tracing profitable areas along the cassava value chains and identify market preferences, as well as strategies for reducing price variability and enhancing the quality, volume and reliability of production. Some of the proposed policies include:

1. **The Promotion of “Save and Grow” farming approaches and practices** which include reduced tillage, the use of cover crops and mulches, mixed cropping, use of organic fertilizers such as composting, crop rotation among others.
2. **Enhance and support cassava research and technology advancement through Applied/ practical research** which will enable

the development of cassava varieties with are free from diseases and pests. This research will further develop water-efficient irrigation technologies and appropriate farm machinery necessary for cassava productivity and value addition aimed at profitability.

3. **Need to facilitate improvements in the input supply chain through** Governments encouraging private investment in the production of inputs, and establish credit lines to enable private suppliers to organize bulk procurements that ensure their timely availability.
4. **Integrated Pest management (IPM)-policy through** Cassava intensification programmes which draw on resistant cultivars, biological control agents, bio-pesticides and habitat management to protect crops.
5. **The Improvement of rural infrastructure such** as constant rehabilitations of rural roads, development of new roads to link farmers to markets locally, development of community silos, warehousing and stores, and increasing the processing capacity in production zones will help to link cassava farmers and processors to growing markets for intermediate products that have a longer shelf life, contribute to price stabilization, reduce postharvest losses and lower transaction costs. With appropriate technology and equipment, community-level processing plants could produce high quality cassava flour, grits and chips for rural and urban-based industries, allowing growers to retain a bigger share of the value-addition.
6. **Develop the cassava value chain.** This value chain development begins from the farmer to the end-user. Governments should promote private investment in cassava processing, and foster associations that link seed-producers, growers,

Food Standards	What is a standard
Food standards can be defined as guidelines, measures, or rules that concern food from raw material to finished products or retail presentation. Food standards seek: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To promote safety and protect the consumer; ii. To limit the sale of unwholesome products; and iii. To simplify the marketing of food products. 	ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996 defines a standard as a document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context. Standards are varied in character, subject, and medium.

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