



Malteries Soufflet Signs a Land Lease Agreement with IPDC for Barley Malting Plant



Malteries Soufflet, a major operator in the world malt market with 27 plants in Europe, Asia and South America, signed a land lease agreement with the Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) to build a malting plant in Ethiopia. It will initially have a capacity of 60,000 metric tons and is expected to be in service in 2020.

The agreement was signed by W/t Lelise Leme, IPDC CEO and Mr. Jean-Benoit Vivet, General Manager of Soufflet Malt Ethiopia, on 13 June 2018, at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Addis Ababa.

The land lease agreement is the culmination of a negotiation between the two organizations, facilitated by the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) and the Ethiopian

Investment Commission (EIC). To this end, a memorandum of understanding was signed by Soufflet, EIC, and ATA in January 2018 to build a 50 million USD barley malting plant in Bole Lemi II Industrial Park.

Although barley production and productivity have grown tremendously in recent years, Ethiopia continues to import nearly 70% of its malt. The emergence of numerous breweries, both domestic and international, means that the demand can be expected to grow, and the country needs rapid solutions to the shortage in domestic supply. In addition, investments such as the one by Soufflet can help smallholder farmers by linking them with large and reliable buyers of barley.

The signing ceremony took place in the presence of senior representatives from the partner organizations, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources (MoALR), Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIARI), Oromia region, and others.

Ethiopian Pastoral Area Veterinary Services Delivery Strategy Validated

The Ethiopian Pastoral Area Veterinary Services Delivery Strategy, targeting pastoralist areas through developing and implementing innovative approaches, was validated on 29 May 2018 in Bishoftu. The strategy was developed by the ATA in collaboration with the MoALR.

While Ethiopia's livestock sub-sector has considerable domestic market and export potential, it is currently hampered by the outbreak of diseases that jeopardize pastoral livelihoods, disrupt trade, and threaten food security. Hence, it is essential to pose solutions to the problems of veterinary service delivery in pastoralist communities through this Strategy.

The Strategy was developed following extensive field surveys, consultations and interviews with key federal and regional government institutions and development partners. Animal health practitioners, as well as private animal health service providers and communities in selected zones and woredas across pastoral regions, were also actively engaged during the process.

The validation workshop was attended by more than 30 participants drawn from MoALR, Ethiopian pastoral regions and key development partners, and officially opened by Dr. Gebre-Egziabher G/Yohannes, State Minister for Veterinary Services and Feed Quality Control.

Participants pointed out the need for the government and private sector to support and invest in the development of livestock in pastoral areas, as well as the importance of implementing integrated interventions in livestock development (in health, feed and water, genetics and market development) as set out in the Livestock Master Plan and GTP II.

Following the validation workshop, the revised strategy will be approved by the GoE and rolled out as part of the GTP II Transformation Agenda. Proper implementation of the Strategy is expected to prevent losses that affect household food security and the number of animals available for domestic and international trade.

ATA Celebrates 8028 Farmer Hotline's Milestones at ICT Expo

The second International ICT Expo, organized by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, with the theme "Transform Ethiopia: A Transformation to the Digital Economy" was held from 30 June - 4 July 2018 at the Millennium Hall in Addis Ababa. The ATA participated in the Expo to display the uses of ICT in the agricultural sector with a focus on four of its projects: 8028 Farmer Hotline, Agricultural Investment Mapping, Ethiopian Soil Information Systems, and e-Voucher for agricultural input sales.

In addition to the booth where staff engaged visitors about the impact of these projects on Ethiopia's agriculture sector, the ATA also sponsored a "Digital Agriculture" panel on the morning of Tuesday 3 July. The panelists, Khalid Bomba, ATA CEO; Dr. Andualem Admassie, Ethio Telecom CEO; Jordan Fabyanske, Dalberg Advisers; and Craig Kadish, SBL Zimbabwe; discussed optimizing infrastructure and services for smallholder farmers through the extension system.

Following the panel, the ATA organized an event to celebrate the 8028 Farmer Hotline reaching the major milestone of 30 million calls and 3.6 million unique callers. The hotline was launched in July 2014 to provide Ethiopia's smallholder farmers and Development Agents with quick access to agronomic information, and to gather information to enable policy makers to make decisions in real time. Smallholder farmers, Development Agents, and woreda agricultural experts who have contributed to the system's success were recognized and awarded. The event was attended by a number of key agricultural stakeholders, government institutions, and development partners.



Galema Union Seed Processing Plant Inaugurated in Bekoji, Oromia region

A seed processing plant with a capacity of five metric tons (50 quintals) of high-quality seeds per hour (considerably higher than average) was inaugurated in Bekoji, Arsi zone of Oromia region on 23 June 2018. The plant is owned by Galema Farmers' Cooperative Union (FCU), which has 122 primary cooperatives (PCs) with more than 85,000 smallholder farmer members in four woredas. The new facility will serve 22 seed producer cooperatives and approximately 19,000 farmers across six woredas.

The ATA has been providing technical and financial support to unions and PCs through its Cooperative Based Seed Production (CBSP) project, in order to capacitate them in supplying farmers with improved seed in a timely and affordable manner. Access to improved seed remains a challenge for smallholder farmers, who often resort to producing their own seeds due to the limited quantity and high cost of seeds supplied through the formal sector. CBSP has the potential to bridge this gap between the formal and informal seed sectors, as well as to improve farmers' incomes and livelihoods.

For the Galema Union seed processing plant, the ATA has provided financial support of 9.1 million ETB while the union contributed a matching fund of close to three million ETB.

The financial support was used to purchase the processing machine, build warehouses and laboratories, and purchase vehicles. The modern plant is now equipped with a pre-cleaner, grader, indented cylinder, gravity separator, as well as weighing and packing parts to process barley, wheat, faba bean, peas and other grains.

In the course of its effort to support unions engaged in seed production and marketing to become professional and viable farmers' seed enterprises, the CBSP project has provided training for 1,032 smallholder farmers who are members of seed-producing PCs. The training includes seed production techniques, post-harvest management, marketing and business skills, as well as cooperative leadership skills.

CBSP has also created linkages between unions and other institutions to create a conducive environment for seed production, processing and distribution, and access to finance. For instance, the ATA has facilitated a contract agreement between Galema Union and the Oromia Regional Agricultural Research Institute (RARI) for the institute to sustainably provide early generation seed for seed production.



ATA and MoALR Release Joint Position Paper on EthioSIS Outcomes

The ATA and MoALR have jointly released a position paper on the outcomes of the Ethiopian Soil Information System (EthioSIS) project and the next steps to be taken. EthioSIS was launched in 2012 to analyze the soil fertility status of Ethiopian agricultural soils and recommend customized fertilizers at the woreda level. The project has collected and analyzed over 80,000 samples from 748 agricultural woredas, and is in the process of developing regional soil fertility and fertilizer recommendation atlases.

As the project nears its completion, the ATA and MoALR held a workshop in March 2018 in Adama on the topic of “Recent Developments in Soil Fertility Mapping and Fertilizer Advisory Services in Ethiopia”. The workshop gathered participants from the Regional Bureaus of Agriculture and Livestock Resources; EIAR and RARIs, international and local experts, Development Agents, and university professors for three-day deliberations. The result was a draft resolution called the “Adama Declaration”. The Declaration outlines 10 points to enhance the alignment and understanding of stakeholders around the EthioSIS project. Among these are recommendations to: develop standardized national protocols for soil surveying; validate generic thresholds and critical values for soil- and crop-specific fertilizer recommendations; address issues of low-quality fertilizer supply; and give immediate attention to generating Ethiopia’s soil resource map. These actions were jointly agreed as being critical to ensuring that farmers have the knowledge, inputs, and techniques to maintain fertile soils in a sustainable manner.

The joint position paper is available at: <http://www.ata.gov.et/download/>.



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