

PREVIEW

—Africa

**COLEACP**

COLEACP PIP director Guy Stinghamer spoke to EUROFRUIT about the interprofessional network's plans for the show.

*What plans do you have in terms of your exhibition stand?*

**Guy Stinghamer:** Building on the success of its previous appearances at Fruit Logistica, COLEACP and its cooperation programmes PIP and EDES have decided to expand their area for 2012, to facilitate networking between fruit and vegetable professionals from the ACP [Africa, Caribbean and Pacific] region and the EU. COLEACP has therefore taken a 60m<sup>2</sup> stand this year, an area for meetings and exchanges between ACP produc-



er-exporters and operators in the European market.

On the stand, there will be a constant presence from representatives of COLEACP, PIP and EDES, but also from ACP exporter associations without a booth. We want the COLEACP stand to be: representative of the ACP fruit and vegetables network; a forum for discussions

about the development of trade and sustainable agriculture in ACP countries; and a promotional showcase for ACP producers and exporters of fruits and vegetables that meet market requirements."

In addition to materials about the various activities of COLEACP, there will also be training materials and technical assistance designed, produced and distributed by the EDES and PIP programmes, such as the current crop management and good practice guides for 35 fruits and vegetables grown in ACP countries. »



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*Are you planning to focus on anything in particular at the show?*

**GS:** COLEACP plans to focus on new issues affecting the development of ACP-EU horticultural trade. Growing concern about climate change has focused attention on food miles, carbon and water management, and this has brought ACP-EU trade into the spotlight. EU consumers have also become more interested in the social impact of the goods they buy and some retailer brands are going beyond quality and food safety to include information about fair/ethical/sustainable trade. These new market challenges are also opportunities for ACP exporters.

We also plan to focus on the role of international trade in the development of local ACP agriculture. Aid for Trade is designed to encourage exports from developing countries to international markets, generating income to finance

development. COLEACP is fully committed to this approach, which involves smallholders in the south in the development of sustainable international trade.

*What do you see as the main value to African companies in participating at the fair?*

**GS:** This huge international fair makes it possible for African companies to meet their customers and identify new ones, and better understand the trends of the European market. Another value is "south-south" networking – in other words, the sharing of experiences between companies from the south.

*What other recent developments have there been?*

**GS:** PIP has started to contribute more directly to the development of local ACP agriculture. Its techni-



cal assistance for the export value chain has facilitated the modernisation of the local horticultural industry. The transfer of local know-how should improve quality and lead to good practices from grower to consumer. PIP is gaining new contacts and performing new activities in countries where the local fruit and vegetable industry is demanding new development, for example in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Malawi, Burundi and Vanuatu. **E**

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