



## MAKUENI DIVERSIFIES FRUIT VALUE ADDITION TO ENHANCE PRODUCTION OF THE PROCESSING PLANT AND CATALYSE THE RURAL ECONOMY

Makueni County leads in mango production in Kenya with a total of 4,311,375 mango trees grown by 28,696 farmers. But until 2017, about 30–40% of its mango produce was going to waste.

In 2017, the County Government through the Makueni County Fruit Development and Marketing Authority (MCFDMA) Act, 2017, established the Makueni Fruit Processing Plant (MFPP) in Kalamba to stem post-harvest losses and raise incomes for fruit farmers in the County. This was going to be achieved through increasing market competitiveness for the local farmers while stopping their overexploitation by the middlemen who purchased mangoes at a throw-away prices during the peak season for mangoes in the County. MFPP would purchase the mangoes at KES 21 per kilo at the factory gate. Due to lack of capacity to make juice, the plant only produced mango puree which it sold to juice-making companies.



*Makueni County Governor Kivutha Kibwana touring the mango processing line*



*The start of tomato pulping at the Kalamba-based plant on October 30, 2020*

While the plant could process 5 metric tonnes of raw mangoes to produce 3,000 litres of puree (mango concentrate) per hour, it nearly shut down operations during the mango offseason and also due to frequent power outages, among other challenges. It processed 3,000 metric tonnes per season, leaving about 300,000 metric tonnes to go to other markets.

To save the plant from closure and to guarantee its continuous operation even when mangoes are out of season, the County government decided to diversify its operations to include value addition to other fruit varieties produced in the County. It bought a new line with a processing capacity of up to 8,000 litres per hour to produce refined ready-to-drink juice and tomato pulp with plans to start bottling water. It has also addressed frequent power outages by applying for direct connection and increasing collection points.

*If your County is not already exploiting the local resources through value addition and increased income for its citizens, propose a viable project and work with them to uplift the living standards of fellow citizens.*

Visit <https://maarifa.cog.go.ke/> to learn more about this initiative as well as other successful COVID-19 response initiatives our counties are undertaking.