



**Brussels Rural Development Briefings**  
**A series of meetings on ACP-EU development issues**

**Briefing session n° 11: Meeting food safety standards:  
Implications for ACP agricultural exports**

*11<sup>th</sup> May 2009*

**MEETING SPS COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS IN THE EXPORT OF NILE PERCH  
“NATIONAL EXPERIENCE”**

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*Executive Summary*

The fish processing / export was the first non-traditional export industry in Uganda. It was established in mid-eighties as a cottage fish processing industry. The first fish export was made in March 1989. The infrastructure design / status was inadequate and thus fish quality/safety requirements could not easily be met. Initially, no quality management systems were in place and the Competent Authority Inspectors were not trained.

As a result of the above, there were quality related problems that led to EU Bans. The establishments were asked to meet minimum EU requirements in order to export fish products to the EU market.

Working towards harmonization was a huddle; it called for infrastructure improvement in terms of plant design / layout and implementation of the quality management systems like the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and the HACCP system.

There was urgent need for capacity building in terms of training the Competent Authority Inspectors on how to inspect and monitor establishments for compliance with EU and regulatory requirements and the establishment staff on how to develop, implement and maintain the quality management systems.

This required for substantial funds. Appreciations go to organizations like CDE, UNIDO and USAID for funding projects that helped meet the minimum requirements to pass the EU inspections and to qualify for harmonization.