

9TH MUZARDI NEWSLETTER

JANUARY-JUNE 2025



Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI)

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Editorial message



Dear readers
I am delighted to present to you another edition of the MUZARDI Newsletter, highlighting the key activities from the first half of 2025.

It has been an exciting and productive period, and in this issue, we proudly share highlights from our research and outreach engagements, public-private partnership initiatives with valued collaborators such as BUCADEF, Holland Greentech, and Syova Seeds, as well as insights into our human resource development efforts. We are also pleased to include heartfelt appreciation messages from two of our former intern students, reflecting the impact of our mentorship and training.

I extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to this issue—your input and support is truly valued.

We hope you find this edition informative and engaging. As always, we welcome your feedback and remain committed to keeping you connected to our work and progress.

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COVER PAGE

PHOTO 1: The New MUZARDI Advisory Committee members with DDG ATP, Dr. Sadik Kassim. PHOTO 2: Ms. Dangan Namulinde, a crop agronomist with Hollad Greentech, explains soil results to Rtd. Bishop Williams Sebaggala. PHOTO 3: Ian Benywanira, a Research assistant at MUZARDI



OUR BRANCHES

JINJA BRANCH

ALONG IGANGA ROAD

MUKONO BRANCH

ALONG BUGERERE ROAD
ADONAI COMPLEX

KAYUNGA BRANCH

OPPOSITE POLICE BARACKS

WAKISO BRANCH

KASAMGOMBE

BUWENGE BRANCH

ENOCK FEEDS OPPOSITE
BUWENGE TOWN COUNCIL (AGENT)

WOBULEZI BRANCH

ON SINZA MALL

KAMPALA BRANCH

OPPOSITE GOODSHEP

KAMULI BRANCH

BUKWENGE ZONE
KAMULI MUNICIPAL

IGANGA BRANCH

IGANGA VET (AGENT)

KALIRO BRANCH

BULAMWOGO VET
OPPOSITE KAMULI ROAD

BUJJUKO BRANCH

MJK VET BUJJUKO
MITYANA ROAD

SOLPROVIT
Feeding NextGen

PRESTARTER

LAYER 20%

BROILER 30%

NUTRITIOUS EGGS

DAY OLD CHICKS

POULTRY CONSULTANTS



Message from Director



As we look back on the first half of 2025, I am filled with deep appreciation for the collective effort that has driven MUZARDI's achievements.

These milestones are the result of a shared commitment to what can be accomplished when teamwork meets partnership.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the NARO Top Management for their strategic guidance, and to our Institute Advisory Committee for their invaluable oversight.

Our gratitude also goes to our esteemed partners like the Buganda Kingdom, Holland Greentech, Syova Seeds Company Ltd, the KOICA Vegetable Seed Project, and the various MAAIF initiatives, for their collaboration and belief in our mission.

We are equally thankful for the close cooper-

ation with our sister NARO institutes, and our academic partners like Makerere University, Uganda Christian University, Busitema University, and Kyambogo University whose expertise and innovation have enriched our work.

I appreciate the MUZARDI team: your resilience, teamwork, remain the backbone of our success. To our clients; farmers, private sector, and agro-industry players your trust, feedback, and engagement keep us inspired.

As we share the highlights in this issue, I invite you to read not just as observers, but as co-owners of the progress we celebrate. Together, we will continue to advance agricultural research, innovation, and outreach for a more resilient and productive Lake Victoria Crescent Agro-ecological Zone. Enjoy the read!

Dr. Henry Aaron Mulindwa



Building on a strong foundation: MUZARDI ushers in new Leadership



Dr. Barbara hands over to Dr. Mulindwa. Mrs. Ssabaganzi R. hands over to Prof. Kizito

On 2nd January 2025, Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) marked a significant leadership transition as Dr. Barbara Zawedde officially handed over the role of Director of Research to Dr. Henry Aaron Mulindwa. This event concluded Dr. Zawedde's impactful five-year tenure, leaving behind a legacy of growth, innovation, and strengthened institutional capacity.

Among the highlights was the establishment of a five-year coffee mother garden demonstration, hosting seven coffee lines with the capacity to produce 40,000 seedlings annually. She also secured two tractors through the VegeSeed project and six modern screen houses supported by KOICA. This enhanced the institute's capacity for vegetable seed production.

Several infrastructural developments were made during her tenure and these included the rehabilitation of the NARO incubation Centre and the local chicken breeding facility. Several innovative research projects such as the FAO partnership, Youth Empowerment initiative, and the Greening the Chicken value chain projects were successfully implemented. Preparations are also underway for the installation of two new coffee screen houses at Kamenyamiggo satellite station, which are expected to further boost coffee seedling multiplication for the Greater Masaka region. As part of the handover event, MUZARDI welcomed a new Advisory Committee, with Prof. Elizabeth Kizito appointed as Chairperson. Other members included Ms. Allen Nandaula (DPMO-Lwengo), Mr. David Lule Lutaaya Muzzanganda (Deputy Kangawo, Bulemezi), and Mr. Kasolo Walusimbi Godfrey.

The ceremony was graced by the Deputy Director General-NARO, Dr. Sadik Kassim, and the outgoing Advisory Committee Chairperson, Mrs. Rebecca Ssabaganzi. Dr. Kassim commended Dr. Zawedde for her dedicated service and outstanding contributions to agricultural research and development at Mukono ZARDI and wished her well in her next level of appointment.

Taking on the office of Director, Dr. Henry Aaron Mulindwa brings over 18 years of impactful experience in agricultural research and community development. Beginning his career at NaSARRI, he later advanced to Principal Research Officer at NaLIRRI, where he championed livestock productivity in beef, dairy, and poultry sectors. His leadership drove successful crossbreeding initiatives in Karamoja, established advanced reproductive technologies, and spearheaded goat meat programs at NaLIRRI. He was also instrumental in developing a Jersey cattle herd for the dairy zero waste platform.

Dr. Mulindwa currently serves on the Board of NAGRC&DB, where he provides strategic leadership in animal breeding, with his expertise in genetics influencing programs across East Africa. Beyond public research, he has also made significant contributions to the private sector through Vetline, where he spearheaded the development of "Detro Pig-Boost"—an innovative data collection tool that empowers farmers with sustainable, data-driven solutions to enhance pig production, health, breeding, and overall welfare in Uganda. As Dr. Aaron assumes leadership, the MUZARDI community looks forward to continued progress and innovation under his guidance as he comes in with vast experience in Animal breeding.

Public Private Partnerships

NARO-BUCADEF train Buganda county extension staff on Climate-Smart Coffee and Banana Farming



Hon. Amis Kakomo gives remarks. Participants receive practical skills in use of spilt level

On May 5, 2025, Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) hosted a refresher training for Buganda kingdom extension staff. The training, focused on climate-smart farming in coffee and banana production and was organized in partnership with the Buganda Kingdom Development Agency (BUCADEF). The training was presided over by Hon. Amis Kakomo, Minister of Agriculture, Trade, and Cooperatives, who commended the collaboration between NARO and BUCADEF. He further encouraged the extension staff to share the knowledge acquired with farmers in their respective counties and to continue fostering partnerships that promote agricultural development in the kingdom.

Dr. Mulindwa Aaron, Director of Research at Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI), welcomed participants from across Buganda counties, including Busiro, Buddu, Kyadondo, Kyaggwe, Mawokota, Bugerere, and Bुरुuli, among others. He emphasized the importance of integrating traditional crops like coffee and banana with modern agricultural techniques, highlighting the potential of combining coffee, banana, and *mutuba* (fig tree) in a single cultivation system for commercial benefits—such as the production of backcloth. He encouraged the extension staff to promote these sustainable practices within their communities.

Dr. Seruwu Godfrey, Senior Researcher with NARO-Mukono, provided guidance on agronomic practices, fertilizer use, and pest and disease management

tailored to climate-resilient coffee farming. For climate-smart banana farming, Mr. Kituuka George the crop technician discussed the use of clean, disease-free suckers, proper spacing, and integrated pest management to enhance banana productivity.

While training on better water and Soil Management, Dr. Eseri Nankya emphasized the importance of better soil handling for current and future generations. It is therefore important to have your soil tested before the planting season, she noted. While Mr. Okumu from Jabba Consults demonstrated key soil sampling techniques and explained how soil testing helps determine pH and nutrient content, guiding farmers on correct fertilizer application before planting.

For Mutuba Cultivation Mr. Sozi, a collaborator with BUCADEF, emphasized the commercial potential of *mutuba* in coffee-banana systems, calling for research into faster-growing varieties and value addition especially in backcloth production.

Participants were taken through hands-on demonstration on coffee and banana planting and climate smart practices, discussions also addressed challenges such as pest and disease control and the use of agrochemicals, with an emphasis on sustainable farming. This initiative marks a significant step towards empowering extension staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to support climate-smart agriculture practices, that benefit farmers and enhance food security in the Buganda region.

Empowering fish farmers: MUZARDI trains Buikwe farmers under the Samaki Poa Project



Participants in a practical session during the training

Zonal aquaculture platforms across Uganda's nine agro-ecological zones continue to report technical knowledge gaps along the aquaculture value chain, particularly among smallholder farmers. Many lack record-keeping systems and business plans, limiting their access to financing. In an effort to bridge this gap, scientists from Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) conducted a five-day intensive training for 25 fish farmers from Buikwe District, held 7th–11th April 2025 at Kamos Fish Farm on Lake Victoria.

The training was conducted in partnership with the Samaki Poa Project, a dynamic public–private initiative co-financed by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). Operating in Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda, Samaki Poa aims to transform aquaculture in East Africa by strengthening food security, generating income, and building capacity across the aquaculture value chain.

Ms. Catherine Nazziwa, an Aquaculture Technician at MUZARDI, facilitated the sessions, blending theory

with practical demonstrations. With her guidance, participants acquired skills and knowledge in aquaculture development based on the following topics; introduction to aquaculture, aquaculture production systems, water quality management, feeds and feeding management, production planning and efficiency, predator control, marketing of aquaculture products

The group consisted mostly of farmers already practicing aquaculture, making the training highly relevant and impactful. The knowledge and skills gained are expected to improve production efficiency, profitability, and sustainability for the farmers. “This year's cohort demonstrated great potential. With the support from Lattice and Samaki Poa, the skills shared during this training will undoubtedly be put to effective use,” remarked Ms. Nazziwa.

MUZARDI continues to build momentum as a key player in the development of Uganda's aquaculture sector, promoting sustainability, building farmer capacity and providing quality fry.

MUZARDI partners with Syova Seeds to empower farmers in Lwengo



Participants in a practical session during the training

As part of efforts to strengthen Public-Private Partnerships, Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) hosted a field day at Kamenyamiggo, Lwengo District on 5th February 2025. This was in collaboration with Syova Seeds Uganda Limited. The event served as a platform for knowledge exchange, input access, and strengthening of farmer-agribusiness linkages.

The field day attracted input dealers, local leaders, extension workers, and farmers from surrounding communities eager to learn about improved seed varieties, crop protection products, and best agronomic practices ahead of the planting season.

“Commercial partnerships like these are essential in improving the flow of quality seeds, fertilizers, and crop protection products across the agricultural value chain,” noted Dr. Seruwu Godfrey, a Senior Research Officer and Centre Manager at Kamenyamiggo.

“Through collaborations with private sector actors such as Syova Seeds, smallholder farmers in the Zone are able to access affordable and quality inputs.”

During the event, farmers received agronomic advice from both MUZARDI researchers and Syova’s technical team. Mr. Kiseka Junior, an agronomist with Syova Seeds, noted the value of working closely with farmer groups and district leaders: “These field days allow us to interact directly with farmers, understand their needs, and guide them on better planning from choosing varieties to identifying markets.” He encouraged farmers to make joint household decisions about what crops to plant, when and how to plant them, where to sell produce, and how to reinvest profits for sustainable growth.

Dr. Damalie Babirye Magala, Head of Technology Promotion and Outreach at MUZARDI, reminded participants that the Kamenyamiggo satellite station is a resource for farmers: “Our doors are always open and ready to work with you to address farmer challenges through research and innovation.”

The day concluded with interactive sessions that bridged the gap between research and on-farm practice. By bringing the private sector directly to communities, MUZARDI continues to not only inform but also empower farmers to take decisions that increase yields and incomes. Through such initiatives, farmers are positioned to access inputs, adopt improved technologies, and engage with markets—that is key to building resilient and productive farming systems in Uganda.



Dr. Seruwu addressing the participants



MUZARDI partners with Uganda Christian University for Recess term



MUZARDI & UCU officials in the planning meeting

Scientists at Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) recently partnered with Uganda Christian University (UCU) to host a 10-week recess term for agriculture students. The programme aimed to strengthen collaboration between the two institutions while supporting technology transfer and hands-on training. The pilot cohort involved 19 second-year students from the Bachelor of Agriculture and Entrepreneurship programme, blending theoretical knowledge with practical field experience.

The partnership was championed by Dr. Elizabeth Kizito Balyejjusa, Director for Partnerships at UCU and Chairperson of the MUZARDI Advisory Committee, marking a significant step toward stronger institutional ties and advancing agricultural training.

During a recess planning meeting, Dr. Mutyaba, Head of the UCU Department of Agriculture, emphasized that the term provides students with practical exposure to complement classroom learning, ensuring they can apply theoretical concepts in real farming scenarios. As the lead practical training partner, MUZARDI provided expertise across multiple agricultural disciplines.

Training areas included annual crops agronomy, organic and sustainable agriculture handled by Dr. Seruwu Godfrey, pasture agronomy by Dr. Isabirye Robert, mechanization, poultry management, and animal health while mechanization, poultry management and animal health handled by District engineer.

Students actively participated in hands-on sessions,

including silage preparation, poultry management, tractor operations, implement mounting, planter use, and sustainable land management practices such as trench establishment and crop agronomy among others.

“This programme helped bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and practical fieldwork,” noted Dr. Seruwu, MUZARDI’s programme coordinator. “The students not only learned theoretical concepts but also applied them in real-time farming situations, making the training more impactful.” he noted. students’ participation and performance will be assessed and awarded marks, preparing them for third-year internships.

As a pilot initiative, this collaboration will undergo a joint review by MUZARDI scientists and the Faculty of agriculture at UCU to assess its effectiveness in terms of structure, content, and timing. While the current format blends classroom lectures and fieldwork, future iterations may shift to a more field-intensive model, depending on feedback and outcomes.

The success of this first cohort lays a strong foundation for continued collaboration between MUZARDI and Uganda Christian University, with a shared vision of enhancing agricultural education, research, and innovation.



Students getting field marking and tractor operation practical's

KOICA Hands over equipment to boost vegetable farming in Luwero and Mukono



Ms. Maria Nampeera hands over keys to Mr. Ronald Mulondo

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), has taken a major step to boost vegetable farming in Uganda by handing over essential agricultural equipment to farmers in Luwero and Mukono districts.

This initiative falls under the ongoing Vegeseed Project—known as Uganda Seed Value Chain Capacity building for key vegetable crops. The project aims to enhance seed breeding, multiplication, and distribution for five key vegetable crops: tomato, pepper (chilli), shallot onion, pumpkin, and *nakati*. The broader goal is to reduce reliance on imported vegetable seeds by strengthening local seed production through certified farmer groups.

On 31st January 2025, the KOICA and NARO-MUZARDI, officially handed over a Holland tractor and plough to the farming community in Bowa-Bulemezi, Luwero. The equipment was received by the Kangaawo

of Bulemezi, Mr. Ronald Mulondo, during a ceremony attended by several Luwero District leaders, including LC V Chairman Mr. Elasto Kibirango, District Agricultural Officer Mr. Ssemigga Wilberforce, Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Henry Musisi, and Deputy Kangaawo Mr. David Lule Lutaya Muzzanganda. Ms. Maria Nampeera hands over keys to Mr. Ronald Mulondo

The project aims to enhance seed breeding, multiplication, and distribution for five key vegetable crops: tomato, pepper (chilli), shallot onion, pumpkin, and *nakati*.

Mr. Mulondo urged the farmers to make optimal use of the equipment to improve household incomes and food security, emphasizing the importance of producing for both consumption and market.

So far, other farm equipment's were also distributed to 40 beneficiary farmers across Nama and Goma sub-counties in Mukono, as well as in Bowa - Luwero on 15th and 19th May, 2025 respectively. Items distributed included tarpaulins, pangas, wheelbarrows, spades, knapsack sprayers, and watering cans.

The Deputy Kangaawo Mr. David Muzzanganda, who oversees activities at the Bowa-Bulemezi Farmer Training Centre on behalf of the Buganda Kingdom, reported that the tractor was already in use. He also noted that small fees collected from tractor hires were being reinvested into maintenance and operational needs at the Centre.

The Vegeseed Project is positioning local farmers to play a key role in vegetable seed production and agricultural transformation. The recent handovers mark a critical milestone in building resilient, self-sustaining farming communities in Luwero and Mukono.

As the project evolves, it is expected to further boost productivity, reduce input costs, and empower farmers to generate income while ensuring food security across the region.



Bowa – Luwero farmers and Goma-Mukono farmers receive the farm equipment

The LC V Chairperson Mr. Kibirango highlighted the complementary impact of the government-supported micro-irrigation project, encouraging farmers near water sources to take advantage of the opportunity for year-round production. So far, other farm equipment's were also distributed to 40 beneficiary farmers across Nama and Goma sub-counties in Mukono, as well as in Bowa - Luwero on 15th and 19th May, 2025 respectively. Items distributed included tarpaulins, pangas, wheelbarrows, spades, knapsack sprayers, and watering cans. At the handover event in Nama sub-county, the LC III Chairperson Mr. John Bosco Isabirye expressed gratitude to KOICA, NARO, and the Government of Uganda for their continued support. He encouraged farmers to take care of the equipment and remain committed to improving their livelihoods.



From the Soil up: A Growing Partnership between Holland Greentech and MUZARDI



Collecting soil samples from the field and interpreting the results by Ms. Dangan of Holland Greentech

It all began with a quiet moment in the fields of Mukono. In April 2025, a team from Holland Greentech Uganda and MUZARDI visited the farm of Rtd. Bishop William Sebagala to conduct a soil testing exercise. But what unfolded that day was far more meaningful than a scientific procedure. As they dug into the earth, they were not just collecting data, they were connecting with the land, listening to its story, and engaging with the farmers who depend on it every day.

That simple act marked the beginning of a relationship with Bishop Sebagala and strengthened the broader journey that Holland Greentech and Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) are making to support farming communities. What began as a technical visit quickly evolved into a shared vision one rooted in the belief that agriculture should be inclusive. It was about combining research with real-world solutions to make farming more accessible, productive, and sustainable for smallholder farmers across Uganda.

From that moment in Mukono, the collaboration grew, nurtured by a mutual understanding of the challenges farmers face and a shared commitment to address them. Holland Greentech brought expertise in smart agricultural technologies, while MUZARDI contributed deep knowledge of local farming systems and

research-based innovations. Together, they began to shape a partnership that is both practical and personal.

As part of the collaboration, Holland Greentech trained two MUZARDI staff members on using a soil scanner, followed by practical soil testing at Ntawo Station. This hands-on experience ensured that the technology could be effectively applied within MUZARDI's research and outreach programmes.

"This partnership is not just about collaboration—it is about connection. It is about two institutions coming together with a shared purpose: to support farmers, strengthen communities, and build a future where agriculture is guided by knowledge and driven by innovation."

For Holland Greentech, the partnership represents an opportunity to go beyond providing services and agricultural inputs to becoming a true partner in the farmer's journey. For MUZARDI, it brings research to life, ensuring that innovations reach the field and directly benefit farmers. For Holland Greentech, it is a chance to go beyond bringing services and agricultural inputs to the farmer to becoming a true partner in the farmer's journey. For MUZARDI, it is an opportunity to bring research to life, making

MUZARDI Scientists participate in the Harvest money expo and Jinja show 2025



The team interacts with a farmer at the expo

This year, the Harvest money expo took place on 14-16th February 2025 and was attended by business partners, farmers, private sector and students. The expo is considered as a one stop Centre for information, knowledge, inputs, contacts and engaging with the experts in the agriculture and business field. Several NARO institutes, ministries, private, international companies and academia came in to showcase and engage with the public as the ultimate consumers.

The 9th edition of the Expo, took place at Mandela National Stadium and was coordinated by Vision group under the theme, "Farming as a Business, Value Addition, and Co-operatives." Among the key areas of focus during the expo were post-harvest handling and value addition of agricultural technologies.

This meant that several players showcased products along the value chain while NARO Scientists interacted with end users of research products. MUZARDI was able to showcase vegetable information materials and seeds of Nakati, Bugga, Jjobyo, African eggplants, okra and information materials. The three day event had

the team interacting with several stakeholders per day. While officiating at the event, Hon. Frank Tumwabwe, Minister of Agriculture Animal Industries and Fisheries, urged farmers to work closely with NARO to combat challenges like management of Aflatoxin.

The adult show was organized under the theme; "Technological Innovations driving farm Wealth".

MUZARDI showcased technologies of urban farming, seed, spices and herbs and information materials.

On 27th June -12th July MUZARDI staff also participated in the National Jinja Agricultural show for both adults and students. The adult show was organized under the theme; "Technological Innovations driving farm Wealth". MUZARDI showcased technologies of urban farming, seed, spices and herbs and information materials.



The team interacts with pupils at the Jinja education show

rials. The event was attended by different private sector players and NARO institutes that provide agricultural inputs. The Jinja show provides a platform for stakeholder learning, display of agricultural products, quality seed inclusive and demonstrations. It further enhances interaction with key policy makers and value chain actors.

“The expo is considered as a one stop Centre for information, knowledge, inputs, contacts and engaging with the experts in the agriculture and business field.”

Dr. Sadik Kassim DDGTPNARO, while representing the Minister of agriculture, called on participants to embrace innovation as key driver of farm wealth and national prosperity.” MUZARDI further participated in the student show under the theme, “Seeds of change: Young People driving innovations to Harness Agricultural wealth.”

Dr. Mwambu Paul, MAAIF Commissioner of Crop

inspection and Certification, while representing the President, noted that under the National Development Plan (NDP) 1V, government was currently prioritizing, Agriculture, Tourism, Minerals and Services. The agricultural show was in line with this strategy. The student show was attended by more than 5000 students from different parts of the country. Learners were therefore exposed to the technologies in the NARO village and knowledge products.

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MUZARDI strengthens staff communication skills with digital techniques



Ms. Maria Nampeera engaging the staff

In today's fast-paced, tech-driven world, effective communication is key not only within organizations but also between researchers and the communities they serve. Recognizing this, the MUZARDI Technology Promotion Team organized two targeted staff capacity-building sessions on 13th and 24th May 2025, focusing on smartphone video production and article writing respectively.

These hands-on trainings were part of a broader initiative to strengthen staff ability to communicate research findings and share innovations with both peers and the public. With mobile phones now a staple tool in everyday communication, the sessions emphasized practical skills in video recording, photography, and writing for diverse audiences.

“As scientists, it's essential that we communicate our research clearly and effectively to influence agricultural development especially at the grassroots level,” noted Dr. Damalie Babirye Magala, who led the training efforts.

Dr. Magala further explained that the team realized a growing need to build digital communication skills among fellow staff. This led to the passion to empower them in capturing, editing and sharing

field content through short videos, good pictures, or short stories/articles MUZARDI can enhance both visibility and impact of its work across the zone.

While representing the Director, Dr. Seruwu Godfrey emphasized the value of the training “he noted. “This is an opportunity for staff to learn how to capture videos using their smartphones a skill that is increasingly important in today's digital world.”

The trainings received positive feedback from staff, who expressed excitement about integrating these new skills into their fieldwork and farmer engagement activities.

Looking ahead, the institute plans to continue blending both digital and traditional communication methods to share research achievements, innovations, and success stories with communities in the Lake Victoria Crescent Zone (LVCZ) and beyond. By strengthening internal communication ca-



Mr. Mutyaba Robert engaging the staff

capacity, the organization is better positioned to support knowledge exchange, influence policy, and improve livelihoods through science.

My internship Experience at MUZARDI: A Transformative Journey in Agriculture



*By Anthony Dada,
Busitema University Intern*

When I began my industrial training, I had one clear goal—to gain knowledge and skills that could help me make a real difference in agriculture, especially in reducing food wastage, a challenge that continues to affect our communities. Looking back, I can say with confidence: my internship at Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI) has exceeded every expectation.

From day one, the staff and technical team welcomed us with open arms, creating a supportive, hands-on environment where learning felt both exciting and accessible. Every intern was actively engaged in practical activities that brought theory to life and made complex skills easier to grasp.

Over the course of my training, I gained a set of skills like extracting avocado oil, managing aquaculture systems, and grafting fruit trees. Grafting, which seemed so challenging at first, became second nature through practice and guidance, and I now see it as a potential income-generating skill for the future. In aquaculture, I learned to handle live fish and mastered fish sexing—a task that demands both patience and precision. I also took part in data collection for research experiments, which sharpened my analytical and problem-solving abilities.

Beyond technical skills, MUZARDI equipped me with valuable insights on turning agriculture into a profitable business—whether through urban farming innovations or producing grafted seedlings for commercial sale. Serving as Team Leader for Group D gave me the chance to strengthen my leadership and interpersonal skills, encouraging teamwork and shared responsibility among my peers. Most importantly, this internship changed the way I view agriculture. I no longer see it only as a science or pro-

fession, but as a powerful tool for community empowerment and youth transformation. I am eager to share what I have learned—like avocado oil extraction—with fellow youth and farmers in my community, helping them see the untapped opportunities agriculture offers. My time at MUZARDI has been truly transformative. I am deeply grateful for the mentorship, the practical exposure, and the renewed passion I now carry. With clearer goals and stronger skills, I am ready to contribute meaningfully to Uganda's agricultural sector and be part of the change I once hoped to witness.

A Reflection on my internship at NARO–MUZARDI



*By Ian Eric Barankiriza,
Makerere University Intern*

My internship at NARO–MUZARDI has been great, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who made it such an enriching and memorable experience. To the NARO–MUZARDI team, thank you for your unwavering mentorship, guidance, and care. Your openness in sharing knowledge, skills, and experience not only broadened my understanding of agricultural research and development but also deepened my passion for contributing to this vital sector.

I am especially thankful to the staff for creating a welcoming and supportive environment that nurtured both professional growth and personal development. Your patience, encouragement, and constructive feedback gave me the confidence to apply myself fully and acquire practical skills that I will carry into my career.

To my fellow internees—both from my university and other institutions—thank you for the teamwork, friendship, and vibrant exchange of ideas we shared. Our collaborative spirit and shared experiences made every challenge easier and every success more rewarding.

This internship offered more than just hands-on experience; it provided invaluable networking opportunities, it was a platform to apply academic knowledge in real-world, and helped expose me to different innovations in agriculture. As I move forward in my professional journey, I will treasure the lessons learned and the relationships built here. Thank you, NARO–MUZARDI, for being a true stepping stone toward my future.

Pictorial



Dr. Mulindwa A.H (Director MUZARDI) and Dr. Barbara. Z attend the handover of tractors to Buganda County chiefs by Ow'ekitibwa Charles Peter Mayega



Students on a study tour at the banana demonstration



Farmer from Africa Initiative LTD on a study tour of MUZARDI activities

Students on a study tour at Mukono ZARDI

Fostering a vibrant, skilled, and motivated workforce at MUZARDI

Human Resource Management remains one of the most pivotal functions at the Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI). It is through this function that we shape, support, and sustain a workforce aligned with NARO's core mission, vision, and objectives—fueling excellence in agricultural research, innovation, and outreach. The start of 2024/2025 Financial Year, MUZARDI's staffing stood at 59.2% but with continued recruitment efforts, staffing levels are expected to rise in future.

Recent months have seen the addition of key personnel, including a Procurement Officer Mr. Sanya Godfrey, Research Officer – Ms. Lorna Kwaka, and Senior Administrative Assistant- Ms. Gertrude Namutebi. Some staff have also been transferred to other NARO institutes, among them the long serving Administrative assistant, Ms. Ajibo Stella to the National Forestry Resources Research Institute (NaFORRI). The institute also benefits from project-based contract staff and volunteers from different universities and training institutions. In order to retain our qualified staff MUZARDI is im-

plementing various strategies to promote staff welfare and morale, among them; Weekly wellness/health walks to enhance the staff physical and mental health. Several committees have also been put in place to increase staff engagement and recognition of outstanding staff. For the month of May, Mr. Mukwaya Israel received a token for the best employee having supported the management and appearance of the livestock unit.

In line with NARO's Human Resource policy skills development is ongoing among different categories of staff, so far 3 members are pursuing PhDs, and 2 Master's degrees under self-funding as well as donor sponsorship. To enhance communication and staff relations; regular staff meetings and the open-door discussions have been adopted to strengthen and address grievances.

MUZARDI remains committed to attracting, developing, and retaining a dynamic workforce. Our staff are our most valuable asset in advancing agricultural research and development in the Zone.



*Mr. Sanya Goffrey
Procurement officer*



*Ms. Lorna Kwaka
Research Officer*



*Ms. Namutebi Gertrude
Senior Admin. Assistant*



*Ms. Ajibo Stella
Senior Former Admin. Ass*



Management team engaging the lower staff in a meeting



HEALTHY TIPS

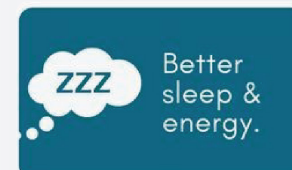
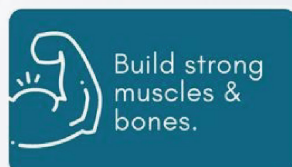
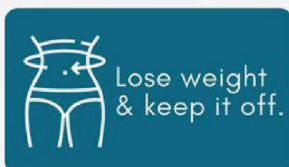
Tips to save vitamins during preparation of vegetables

1. **Use fresh produce quickly** and store it properly to prevent nutrient loss.
2. **Minimize peeling and cutting**—nutrients are often just under the skin and exposure to air degrades them.
3. **Avoid soaking vegetables in water**—water-soluble vitamins like B and C can leach out.
4. **Use gentle cooking methods** like steaming, micro-waving, or light stir-frying.
5. **Cook briefly and at low temperatures** to avoid destroying heat-sensitive vitamins.
6. **Cook with the skin** on when possible to retain nutrients and add fiber.
7. **Reuse cooking water** (from boiling) in soups or sauces to recover leached nutrients.
8. **Add lemon juice or vinegar** to help preserve vitamin C during cooking.



Staff participate in exercises after the health walk

IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE



SEEDS OF GOLD

Explore Our Products & Services and How We Can Work Together

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- Greenhouses – Affordable, durable & climate-smart designs
- Agronomy Support – On-site visits & tailored crop advice
- Partnerships & Institutional Projects

23 - 24 AUGUST 2025

STARTING AT 9:00 AM

MUKONO MUZARDI

NTAWO STATION

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Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MUZARDI)



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LinkedIn: NARO MUZARDI