

# COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF NAKURU

## THE HANSARD

### Third Assembly (Second Session)

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2023**

### Assembly Building

**The House Met At 03:10 PM**

*[The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Elijah Murage): In the Chair].*

### PRAYERS

### MOTION

VISIT TO SEED SAVERS NETWORK-KENYA.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage) There is a Motion from Hon. Isabella Makori, the Chairperson Committee on Agriculture.

### MOTION

SEED SAVERS NETWORK-KENYA

**Hon. Isabella Makori:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker. THAT this House adopts the Report of the Committee on Agriculture on the visit to The Seed Savers Network-Kenya laid on the Table of the Assembly today during the Morning Sitting.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, The Seed Savers Network is a National Grassroots Farmers Organization located along the Nakuru-Nairobi Highway, 600 Meters from Lake Elementaita. Its mission is to conserve Agri-Biodiversity by strengthening Farming Communities to utilise local varieties of Seed Systems for improving seed access and enhanced food and National Security. The Committee visited Seed Savers Network and came up with some Findings and Observations.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Seed Savers Network- Kenya was registered in 2009. The Network has grown to more than 66,000 Farmers, conserving Agricultural Biodiversity across the Country and has 3000 Farmers and groups. The impact of Seed Savers is as follows; 58 000 Farmers have been trained, 43 established Seed Banks, 80 Documented Local Crop Varieties, 35 Documented Roast Crop Varieties, and 300 Kitchen Gardens established.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, at the Seed Bank is where seedlings are stored and this assists farmers in to get local seeds that are not available in Seed Companies or Agro-Vets. At the Seed Bank, before

the seeds are stored, the Seed Manager receives the seeds, and cooling and drying is done. Farmers are trained to establish their own Seed Bank at the community level.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, in Nakuru County, Seed Savers is working with farmers from Subukia, Lanet, Njoro and Naivasha. Concerning Food Safety, it was noted that the safety of our food is threatening, mainly because of the pesticides used in day to day farming. Food Safety starts from production, all the way to marketing and consumption. Mr. Temporary Speaker, Research shows that there is limited information on the Pesticides Database and more on Toxicity Levels.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Kenya imports pesticides from the European Union, China, and India. And reports praise Syngenta as the Leader of the Pesticides Market, with 20% of the Market Share. Pesticides have effects on our Environment, Water Sources, Groundwater, and Chronic Health. Pesticides also cause cancer and are toxic to Natural Resources like bees.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, improper use of Pesticides results in non-compliance with Quality and Safety Standards. Farmers should be fully capacitated to adopt modern and efficient food technologies. Agro-Ecology has an element of guiding the transition to a Sustainable Food and Agricultural System.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, the Committee had some Recommendations that: -

- i. That the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives should inculcate integrated Pest Management Programs, enhance Good Agricultural Practices, and formulate regulations for the Nurseries on safe use of Pesticides.
- ii. The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives should sensitise farmers to embrace Organic Farming.
- iii. The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives should enforce continuous Monitoring and Enforcement of Quality Standards.
- iv. The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives should enhance appropriate Food Handling Practices and adoption of Modern Technologies.
- v. That the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives should ensure farmers are trained on proper use of Bio Pesticides which are environment friendly.
- vi. Agricultural Quality Standards Agencies should ensure adherence to High Quality Standards on food production.
- vii. That the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives should come up with a Policy and a Bill on Agro-Ecology.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, the Committee observed many things there which they were taken through and I request Honorable Wanjiku to second.

**Hon. Mary Njoroge:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, I second the Motion.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): I propose the question that this House adopts the Report of the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives on a visit to The

Seed Savers Network- Kenya laid on the table of the Assembly today during the Morning sitting. The Motion is open for debate. Honorable John Maritim.

**Hon. John Maritim:** Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, sir. I want to congratulate the Agriculture Committee for a job well done. What our able Chair did in terms of the Findings is okay. I also believe that what has been written in this Report is applicable even in our households. Nowadays, we lack huge farms for crop farming or vegetables but we see 300 Kitchen Gardens. I believe that such initiatives could also work in areas where houses are congested areas like slums.

So Mr. Temporary Speaker, this is a good Report. It needs to be followed well and also needs to be implemented in that it will save a lot of people from food insecurity and even on a diet that people need to have for healthy living. Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, I support the Motion.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): We have Hon. Gathuita then we cross to the other side.

**Hon. James Mwangi:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, I rise to support the Motion on the basis that Agriculture is one of the backbones of this Country, I think Seed Savers made a very remarkable stride ahead in doing some things that as a Committee we observed, like Seed Banks. Mr. Temporary Speaker, it is very hard to have a Seed Bank in most of the areas and with the visit of that Seed Bank, I came to realise that to maximise food production, we need such a thing as a Seed Bank so that this County can do Commercial Farming. Mr. Temporary Speaker, Commercial Farming means that the inputs and outputs should have a relevant margin so that the Farmers can be maintained in that farming field.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, the other issue was about Kitchen Gardens. In this era, we have a shortage of resources like land. Land is becoming scarce and very expensive and with Kitchen Gardens, I think it is high time as Honorable Members and the House to encourage our County to sensitise our Community to do farming on Kitchen Gardens so that we can utilise the small resources we have and to maximise production. Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, I do support it.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Alex.

**Hon. Alex Mbugua:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker. First is to start by commending the Committee on Agriculture and say that this is a good masterpiece of a Report they are giving to this House. If you go through the Report, you will realise the essence of such a Report on such an important Committee that is a backbone, since Agriculture is the backbone of this Country; and so we should come up with ways in which Agriculture shall be integrated into the Society and more so, the farmers.

By far and reach Mr. Temporary Speaker, Nakuru County has vast of its land covered under Agriculture. If you come from Naivasha, you will find vast land being covered by Flower Farms. Such Agricultural activities bring along the use of Pesticides and such Pesticides, from a medical perspective, become hazardous to the people since they affect the breathing system. How do we

manage such waste? I have observed good farming here and the request from this Committee that among its Observations, one of it should be embracing Organic Farming. Mr. Temporary Speaker, if we engage and work with Organic Farming within the County, we shall ensure that our people feed on the right foods.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, in Naivasha, people are affected by respiratory diseases, other people, like those from Kuresoi, do maize farming and other things; they might one time suffer from cancerous cells Mr. Temporary Speaker and this will be mainly so, because of the pesticides. When you look at Britain and even the USA, they have rules that contain and control the use of Pesticides in their Country. Mr. Temporary Speaker, in this Country, in Bungoma and Murang'a Counties, they have come up with Acts in their Departments or the Assembly that will contain and control the use of Pesticides within the boundaries of those Counties. Mr. Temporary Speaker, a healthy Nation will help us sustain our future.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, such a Report and more so on food production is very important. When I listen to the President speaking, he always says that when you add fertilizer to the farming inputs on your farm, the production goes high but without the requisite knowledge the farmers might end up using chemicals that will end up destroying them in the future. Mr. Temporary Speaker, I stand with the Committee on the same and I would like to ask you contain Hon. Muraya that next time he should not be using live audios within the Premises of the Assembly when we are having debates of such caliber. Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker. And he is out of time Mr. Temporary Speaker.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Muraya are you in decorum? Where are the Whips?

**Hon. David Wathiai:** Mr. Temporary Speaker, if Hon. Muraya is not in decorum then I believe he should be headed out of this House so that we can go on with the discussion of the Report.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Muraya.

**Hon. Joseph Muraya:** Mr. Temporary Speaker, I want to know whether the Honorable Member is among the Whips to check on whether I am in decorum. I am waiting for the Whips to give back a Report to you that I am not in decorum.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Michael Gathanwa, you can confirm whether Hon. Muraya is in decorum.

**Hon. Michael Gathanwa:** Mr. Temporary Speaker the Honorable Member for Viwandani, Hon. Muraya is not in decorum and it is not the first time. You should take a step and maintain the order in this House.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Muraya, walk out and come back when you are in decorum.

**Hon. Joseph Muraya:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker.

*(Honorable Joseph Muraya leaves the House)*

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Let us continue with our debate. Hon. Wajeff.

**Hon. Willison Mwangi:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, I rise to support the debate on the issue of using Organic Fertilizers bearing in mind that in recent times we have been having issues of so many chronic diseases within our community, most cases being as a result of use of chemicals.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, we have International Communities that consume foodstuffs that come from our Country and when we check on Continents like Asia and Europe, most of them consume Organic Foods. Mr. Temporary Speaker, when we look at our own Country, it has been like a dumping site for every chemical that is being manufactured. When you look at a Country like China that is producing so many Agro Chemicals, you find that the tests are being done in our own Country. Most of the Members of our community are not aware of the Chemicals they are using and that is why they end up having cancer.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, if you check on the cause of death in our community you will find that out of ten people dying, seven are dying out of cancer. When you check on this Report, this team visited this Company and they are using Organic Fertiliser. If at all we adopt and advise our farmers to use the right seeds and chemicals which are organic, then we shall evade diseases that are killing our people. We would urge our County mostly the Directors and the Field Officers that are helping our Farmers, to request them to utilise their crops using Organic materials.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, when you check on the exports that we are getting out of this Country, every time they have to go for analysis and when the analysis is done, the residue levels are above the required levels. The maximum levels are very high and that is why most of our farmers are lacking the market because of the MRL.

Therefore Mr. Temporary Speaker, I am requesting the Agriculture team in our County and across the Country to use the required materials which are Organic in terms of the Pesticides and also in terms of the Fertilizer so that we can save our people from deaths that are occurring because of toxins that are getting into our crops.

Also Mr. Temporary Speaker, when we check on our Blue Economy, whatever we are using on the Highlands is being washed into our Lakes. When you check on Lake Naivasha where we usually consume the fish that is coming from the Lake, most of the fish that we consume also have toxins. Hence, this is a necessary debate that is supposed to be adopted very fast to make sure that whatever we are consuming and giving out to our community is fresh and without toxins. So, I rise to support and also to request the County Government and the National Government to come together to make sure that such a Report is adopted and put to practice. Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Hon. Gathanwa.

**Hon. Michael Gathanwa:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker, I am one of the Members of Seeds Savers-Kenya. I am a farmer and I use their seeds and I have adopted Organic Farming. As a Country we are quickly moving to being Digital and in Computer Technology, they usually say “*Garbage In Garbage Out*”; meaning what we take is what we become and as you have heard, 44% of the Pesticides that we are using have been banned in the European Countries and the same Countries are the Manufacturers and then they supply to us but still we cannot export back whatever we produce using the same products they have manufactured back to their Market.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, it begs the question of why one would refuse to take something they have manufactured themselves. Kenya is a youthful Country with a population of about 70 percent Youth. It would be very important for us to take care of our population. If we are exposed to long-term illnesses or unhealthy food, then we are putting a whole Nation at risk and this should be taken as a National Security concern because we are putting the whole Country under some form of threat because of the products that we are using. Mr. Temporary Speaker, it is also important for us to know that originally the Seed Savers seeds were being grown here and have proven to be resilient to drought and diseases. Mr. Temporary Speaker, if we use these seeds, we are going to use less of the Pesticides.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, I want to support the recommendations that have been brought forward by the Committee, of the Agriculture Department coming up with a Bill on Agro-Products and also, we are calling on the National Government, we know that this debate has been taken to the National Assembly a couple of times but because we are dealing with Multi Nationals who are also bigwigs, I do not know what happens then it flops.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, it is high time that we put a very serious and calculated approach to this issue by encouraging Organic Farming. It has also been proven that it is our lifestyle that is bringing about diseases that were not there. We have seen people in their early 20s dying of cancer and who come from families with no history of the disease; meaning they are picking it from their lifestyles. I believe it is what we are taking in, as we have said “*garbage in garbage out*”. I support the Report.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Thank you. I now call the mover to reply.

**Hon. Isabella Makori:** Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank Honorable Members for supporting this Motion. In fact Mr. Temporary Speaker, with the current rains, some people have planted wheat and you find them spraying roundup forgetting that we are the consumers. So, I wish the implementers act to make sure that we go the Agro Ecology way to prevent our people from dying. Thank you Mr. Temporary Speaker.

**The Temporary Speaker** (Hon. Elijah Murage): Thank you. I now put the question that this House adopts the Report of the Committee on Agriculture on a site visit to Seed Savers Network Kenya laid on the table of the Assembly today during the morning sitting

*(Question put and agreed to)*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

This House stands adjourned till tomorrow at 9.30 am

**The House rose at 4.10 PM**