

# Aflasafe production, marketing awaits investor

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

THE government in collaboration with food researchers is in the process of setting up a plant for production and distribution of 'Aflasafe' a product meant to control poison in food.

Aflasafe is a safe and highly cost-effective bio-control product developed by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and partners which drastically reduces aflatoxins in crops.

Speaking to reporters yesterday in Dar es Salaam senior plant pathologist for IITA Dr George Mahuku said the process has been engaged to welcome an investor willing to take part in the commercialisation of the product.

Organised by IITA, the meeting was meant to share the findings with stakeholders and to discuss

business opportunities available in the manufacturing, distribution and marketing of Aflasafe product in the country.

"We have seen that investing in production of the product within the country is cheaper and reliable than importing the product, to reduce costs," he said.

By using aflasafe, Tanzanian processed foods can access the more lucrative regional and international markets, opening greater opportunities for farmers and agro-based processing industries.

Among proposed areas for setting up the factory are Dodoma, Arusha and Manyara regions.

Dr Mahuku said that IITA have been working on experimental basis, "we are not equipped to produce and market it. That is why we are looking for an

investor," he stated.

The institute will provide technical and facilitation support to an investor to make sure that the intended quality of the product is maintained.

Field testing of aflasafe products in Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria and Senegal has consistently shown that Aflasafe reduces aflatoxin contamination by 80 percent to 99 percent in maize and groundnuts respectively.

For her part, the principal agricultural officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Beatrice Pallangyo said that aflatoxin is a poison produced by green mold fungus *Aspergillus flavus* that resides in soil and decaying organic matter in the field. Aflatoxins are found in livestock products such as milk, eggs and meat when livestock are fed contaminated feed.

The government is in the final stages

of registering the product after it has already satisfied with the field trial for aflasafe done by IITA in several regions,

including Manyara, Morogoro, Dodoma and Mtwara.

The study shows that consumption

and exposure to high levels may result in acute symptoms, lower productivity and may often cause death.



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