



Esada news

An African cheese fest

More than 1 500 people attended the second Annual Wine and Cheese Festival sponsored by the Eastern and Southern Africa Dairy Association (Esada). This illustrious event took place at the Carnivore Grounds in Nairobi in September this year.

The event was accompanied by a cheese-making training workshop for local cheese-makers, presented by Kobus Mulder, a prominent cheese-maker from South Africa. The festival included exhibitors of Kenyan-produced cheese and dairy products, as well as importers of wine and international cheeses.

Following last year's successful festival, this year's event expanded opportunities to raise awareness of cheese products and to improve

quality and packaging. Dr Kipkirui Lang'at, executive director of Esada, said people in the east African region consume milk mainly in liquid form. This year, in addition to cheese, they also promoted yoghurt.

During the festival celebrity guests took part in a cooking competition using cheese as the main ingredient. The event was also broadcast live on *Hot 96 FM*, a local radio station. Brown's Blue Cheese was selected as the best cheese product in the competition. Meru Central Dairy Yoghurt under the Mount Kenya Fresh brand name, won first place for the best yoghurt and best overall dairy product.

Dr Lang'at is hopeful that next year's festival will build on the successes of the first two years.

Cultured dairy products course

Esada, in collaboration with Egerton University, recently conducted its inaugural four-day Eastern Africa cultured dairy products short course at the Egerton University Njoro Campus. The course is supported by USAid through the RATES office. Twenty-two participants from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda attended the first course.

The course is designed to provide participants with an overview of basic dairy technology and the manufacture of cultured dairy products including cottage cheese, yoghurt, lala (traditional fermented milk), cream cheese. The CDPSC includes both lectures and laboratory exercises dealing with:

- Milk composition and coagulation
- Metabolic and technical aspects of starter cultures

- Flavouring systems for cultured dairy products
- Processing hygiene.

Generally, the course is aimed at providing the professionals working with cultured dairy products with an understanding of the science and technology that underlies their industry, and to make them better able to respond to new situations that arise in the manufacture of their products. Participants also get the opportunity to evaluate sample dairy products in lab sessions.

Esada will incorporate this course in its annual programme of activities. The organisation invites any feedback and comments on training programmes that readers would like included in the existing range of short courses. **DMA**