Market potential of new hybrid forages for East Africa

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Introduction

- Of the six countries with the largest dairy herd in Africa, five are in the east of the continent. They are home to about 32 million cattle (FAO, 2022).
- Hybrid forages adapted to cut-and-carry systems are necessary for the productive systems that prevail in Africa (Maass et al., 2015).

Objective

Estimate the potential market for new hybrid forages of Urochloa and Megathyrsus maximus, which are being developed by CIAT, for East Africa.

Methodology

- Adoption of improved materials is still very low in the region (Creemers et al., 2021).
- The prevalence of severe food insecurity in East Africa is 27.7%, which is above the African average of 24% (FAO, 2022).
- Thus, new forage hybrids being are a real alternative to face food insecurity and, in general, to provide livelihoods for the most vulnerable population.
- Secondary data on cattle heads, geographic information systems, and commercial prices of forage seeds produced by companies such as Grupo Papalotla (FAO, 2022; Oliphant et al., 2019; Grupo Papalotla, n.d.).
- Through production assumptions consulted with experts, geographic profiling of forage areas, and geometric averages of seed prices, potential market sizes (ha) and values (US\$) of hybrid forages were estimated. This was done for two forage species, namely interspecific Urochloa and Megathyrsus maximus hybrids.

Results

Table 1. Potential markets for new Urochloa and Megathyrsus maximus hybrids in East Africa				Urochloa hybrids	Megathyrsus maximus hybrids	
Country	Market size (ha)	Annual market value (US\$)	Size	352,158 ha	494,471 ha	
				846,629 ha		
Ethiopia	227,543	41,991,683		Total potential market size		
Tanzania	214,304	39,548,608				
Kenya	153,945	28,409,785	Value	US\$ 62,479,997	US\$ 94,648,595	
South Sudan	129,271	24,744,292	l	US\$ 157,128,592		
Uganda	121,566	22,434,224		Total potential market value		





Figure 1. Market share for new Urochloa and Megathyrsus maximus hybrids in East Africa

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Conclusions

The results show significant possibilities for the development of a more sophisticated forage hybrid seed system in the region. However, it is necessary to combine this with a favorable environment for adoption. Adequate information systems, seed marketing facilities, and continuous support through extension services are essential for producers to adopt these technologies.

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