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Uganda starts 2026 by hitting bumper agricultural milestones with exports surging, irrigation expanded and disease control scaled nationwide

New figures released today show that the East Africa nation has achieved record export earnings, higher GDP contribution and major productivity investments

Kampala – 22nd January 2026: The Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries today announced a series of major milestones in the agriculture sector, with clear growth in export earnings, household incomes and foreign direct investment in the coffee, cocoa, oil palm, dairy, fisheries value chains, as well as improved mechanisation, expanded irrigation and better disease and pest control.

These results demonstrate that Government is resolute in its program of job creation and inclusive development through raising production and productivity, strengthening commodity value chains, improving marketability, expanding markets reach and accelerating agro-industrialisation.

Maj. Gen. David Kasura-Kyomukama, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry said: *“These results reflect a deliberate commitment to our strategic direction and its aims. Uganda’s agriculture is more than a sector: it is the soul of the nation. It feeds families, sustains livelihoods, and drives exports, industrialization, and job creation. Our focus has been clear - raise productivity, protect farmers from disease risks, ensure water for production, expand value addition and open new markets so that agriculture becomes a stronger engine for household wealth creation. Agriculture is not just Uganda’s backbone; it can be the path through which our nation will achieve the strategic goal of transforming our society from predominantly peasant to a middle class and knowledge based one capable of securing its future. Every household, every farmer, every community is part of this transformation.”*

Agriculture in numbers - key outcomes delivered

- About 70 percent of Uganda’s households are engaged in agriculture, with 7.12 million of 10.8 million households participating;
- In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the agriculture sector’s contribution to GDP was 26.1 percent, with sector growth of 6.6 percent;
- Agricultural exports grew from USD 1.661 billion in Financial Year 2020 /2021 to USD 4.175 billion in FY 2024 / 2025, accounting for 38.49 percent of exports;
- 70 of the 96 manifesto targets set in 2021 were fully achieved (73 percent), 10 ongoing and partly achieved (10 percent) while 16 have not yet been implemented (17 percent);

During the time under review, priority has been focused on those inputs to the sector that deliver the largest impact on household incomes and export earnings - namely research and extension, genetics, pest and disease control, mechanisation, water for production, post-harvest handling, value addition and improved market access.

The major achievements secured since 2021 are:

- Commodity value chain strengthening for strategic crops and livestock;
- Mechanisation support through equipment/machinery/tractor acquisition, hire services, operator training and assembly initiatives;
- Water for agricultural production investments through construction/rehabilitation of multipurpose dams, valley tanks and production wells for Livestock watering, irrigation and fish farming in many parts of the country
- Development of large, small/micro scale irrigation schemes to support many farmers
- Pest, vector and disease control with major national investments in vaccines, cold chain and local manufacturing capacity;
- Post harvest handling and value addition to reduce losses and grow processed exports
- Market access support through standards, certification and export focused trade diplomacy;

Strongest success stories:

Coffee - record export earnings and expanded value chain:

- Coffee production increased from 7.75 million bags in FY 2019 / 20 to 9.3 million bags in FY 2024/25, with the national target of 20 million 60 kg bags driving expansion
- In Financial Year 2024/25, the country earned a record USD 2.2 billion in coffee export revenue from 8.2 million bags, the strongest performance since records began. This contributed about 22 percent of Uganda's total exports and supported incomes for 12.5 million Ugandans;
- Value chain actors and value addition facilities increased from 2,378 in FY 2021 / 22 to 7,477 in FY 2024/25;
- Government mobilised farmers to stump over 15 million old, unproductive coffee trees and supplied over 150,000 bags of organic fertiliser;
- The government supplied over 85 million coffee seedlings across Elgon, West Nile, Rwenzori, Northern, Greater Masaka, South Western, Eastern and Central regions;
- The government also developed and promoted three coffee wilt disease resistant varieties - CWDR 8, CWDR 9 and CWDR 10 with yield potential up to 3.9 tonnes per hectare;
- 30,671 value chain actors were trained on harvesting and post-harvest handling to protect quality and competitiveness.

Cocoa - nine-fold export value growth and rising production:

- Cocoa was the second leading agricultural export in FY 2024 / 25 and Uganda's third highest foreign exchange earner after gold and coffee;
- Export volumes increased from 30,204 MT in 2015 / 16 to 72,545 MT in 2024 / 25;
- Export value of the commodity rose from USD 70.59 million to USD 620.43 million over the same period, an increase of about nine times;
- Production increased from 52,712 MT in 2023 / 24 to 76,173 MT in 2024 / 25;

Oil palm - steady monthly incomes, jobs and import substitution:

- 16,800 hectares were established under a public private producer partnership in Kalangala (11,352 ha), Buvuma (4,100 ha) and Maruzi (1,348 ha);
- Annually, the country produced about 41,000 MT of crude palm oil, supporting domestic processing and reducing the vegetable oil import bill;
- Income earned at the farm level was about UGX 500,000 per acre per month from fresh fruit bunches starting around year four and sustained for up to 20 years;

- Two oil palm mills were established in Kalangala and a refinery established in Jinja producing cooking oil, soap, edible fats and by products including palm kernel cake for animal feed

Community and infrastructure outcomes:

- Government provided ferries supporting logistics including a 604 MT ferry commissioned in 2023 at Kiyindi landing site and an additional ferry introduced in 2024 between Bubembe and Buyama
- Alternative livelihoods support was given for 2,308 households through piggery, poultry, apiary and backyard vegetable gardening
- Support was provided for 72 enterprise groups in Kalangala with financial literacy and institutional development, with 17 linked to the Parish Development Model for financial inclusion

Dairy - near doubling of milk production and tripling of export value:

- Milk production increased from 2.81 billion litres in FY 2020 / 21 to 5.3 billion litres in FY 2024 / 25;
- Export value of milk and milk products increased from USD 92.4 million in FY 2020 / 21 to USD 280 million in FY 2024 / 25;
- 145 dairy processing facilities were established with total installed capacity of 3.4 million litres per day, operating at about 68.7 percent utilisation;
- Government provided quality enforcement and standards compliance across processors and exporters;
- Support was provided for value addition facilities and improved dairy breeds including Jerseys and Ayrshires;
- Government also provided skilling of para veterinarians, artificial insemination technicians and embryo transfer professionals;
- There was increased semen production at the National Bull Stud and Genetic Evaluation Centre in Entebbe

Fisheries - higher production, higher beach value and sustained jobs:

- Fisheries contribute about 3 percent of Uganda's GDP and 12 percent of the agricultural GDP;
- About 1.2 million Ugandans work directly in capture fisheries, with a further 5,000 in industrial processing;

- Fish production increased from 621,987 tonnes in 2021 to 728,369 tonnes in 2023; while the beach value increased from UGX 1.875 trillion in 2021 to UGX 2.200 trillion in 2023.

Tea - seedling distribution to revive a strategic export crop:

- Uganda is among the top 22 tea exporters globally, with export value of USD 54.5 million in 2025;
- 188,981,868 tea seedlings were distributed to 24 tea growing districts;
- UGX 17.262 billion was provided toward domestic arrears for tea seedlings, although there was a total requirement of UGX 56.755 billion;
- Government has finalized plans to procure tea fertiliser, accessed through factories with cost recovery from green leaf deliveries.

Protecting livestock incomes - historic investments in vaccines, cold chain and local manufacturing:

- Foot and mouth disease control
 - The government has provided 19,810,750 doses of vaccine to 116 local governments over the last four years.
 - 220 pharmaceutical fridges and freezers, matching accessories and laboratory supplies were distributed to strengthen cold chain and diagnostics;
 - Hybrid solar containerised cold chain facilities have been established in 53 districts, each with capacity to store 1.5 million doses. Additionally, a national cold storage facility with capacity of about 80 million doses is being constructed in Entebbe.
 - In March 2024 Cabinet approved a policy shift to biannual nationwide mass vaccination of all 44.5 million susceptible livestock starting January - February 2026 under a cost recovery model where farmers would pay for the vaccines while Government funds the administration (vaccinators, storage, transport, cold chain, surveillance and supervision). Official cost recovery prices are UGX 8,000 per head of cattle and pigs, and UGX 4,000 per goat and sheep. Consequently, the government procured 53.6 million doses of foot and mouth disease vaccine, the largest single investment in Uganda's history.
 - The government is building local capacity for an Anti-tick vaccine through the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) who have completed establishment of a local anti-tick vaccine manufacturing facility at Nakyesasa in Wakiso District and is equipping production lines. The

facility has a capacity of over 20,000,000 doses per year, sufficient for national demand and regional supply. Local production is expected to reduce losses estimated at about USD 1.1 billion annually (because of ticks and tick-borne diseases), and facilitate access to a UGX 3 trillion regional market for meat and milk.

Mechanisation and water for agriculture production - moving households from subsistence to commercial farming:

The government has delivered mechanisation as follows:

- 1,080 four wheeled tractors and matching implements were acquired and provided to farmer groups.
- 1,350 power tillers or walking behind tractors and associated implements were acquired and distributed, with procurement for additional units of 2,000 single axle tractors in advanced stages;
- 2,036 equipment/tractor operators, mechanics and technicians were trained and deployed for safe and efficient use, operations, repairs and maintenance of the equipment and tractors/implements
- Five sets of heavy earth moving equipment/machinery were deployed for valley dams, valley tanks, fish ponds, farm access roads and land clearance/ opening, accessed at subsidised hire rates of about UGX 480,000 per acre compared to about UGX 2,000,000 per acre in the private market using privately owned machinery/equipment;
- The government has set up a pilot tractor hire service using 30 tractors at subsidised rate of about UGX 60,000 per acre compared to the open market rate of about UGX 120,000 per acre.
- Construction and equipping of 6 mechanisation centres in Namalere, Agwata, Kiryadongo, Mbale, Sanga and Buwama and Iganga to ease mechanisation services and equipment access and use
- Building local industry
 - A tractor assembly plant is being established in Nakawa under phase one with a planned second plant at Namalere;
 - Private sector is being supported to establish a single axle tractor assembly plant in Namanve, expected to reduce tractor costs by over 40 percent.

Water for production and irrigation delivered:

- Completed large scale irrigation schemes:
 - Doho II, Butaleja - 1,373 ha

- Mubuku II, Kasese - 480 ha
- Ngenge, Kween - 880 ha
- Olweny, Lira - 600 ha
- Agoro - 650 ha
- Rwengaju, Kabarole - 116 ha
- Tochi, Oyam - 500 ha
- Kirema medium scale scheme, Nakaseke
- Additional delivery and progress
 - These schemes increased total area under formal irrigation by 3,576 hectares
 - Wadelai irrigation scheme, Pakwach - 89 percent cumulative progress
 - Acomai, Bukedea - 1,480 ha, Atari, Kween or Bulambuli - 680 ha and Namatala, Budaka or Mbale or Butaleja - 3,450 ha are 99 percent complete
 - Ongoing schemes include Kabuyanda -70 percent, Sipi - 2 percent, Namaitso - 70 percent and Chembobai - 30 percent, with Unyama and Namalu under procurement and Matanda under procurement
 - Atari Irrigation scheme -680Ha

Water storage and climate resilience:

- 600 valley tanks were constructed nationwide with capacity ranging from 10,000 m³ to 100,000 m³;
- Construction is ongoing for nine valley dams with total capacity 16,760,000 m³ and 60 valley tanks with total capacity 380,000 m³ in many parts of the country.
- 116 solar powered irrigation systems were established in multiple districts;
- 6,000 micro scale irrigation facilities were delivered under the UGiFT co-funding arrangement in 135 districts, with Government contributing 75 percent and the farmers cost share by 25% of the total cost.

Looking ahead - the 2026 - 2031 commitments that build on delivery:

The next phase of the government strategy will deepen agro-industrialisation and ensure more households gain stable incomes from agriculture through intensified productivity measures, reduced post-harvest losses, stronger standards and expanded market access.

Key commitments include:

- Increase investment in inputs, extension, pest and disease control and enforcement of input quality standards;

- Deepen the Parish Development Model to guide smallholder farmers into high value intensive enterprises while enabling large scale producers to supply industry;
- Set up a fertiliser fund to improve access and affordability;
- Regulate the tea sub sector to ensure compliance with international quality standards;
- Strengthen breeding and genetics through NAGRC and DB and certify private breeders to complement Government programmes;
- Invest in animal feeds production for cattle, fish, piggery and poultry;
- Establish regional fish hatcheries to increase availability of fingerlings and fries;
- Invest further in irrigation schemes, valley dams, valley tanks and solar powered systems to support farming communities.
- Purchase more mechanisation equipment and establish zonal mechanisation centres for access to machinery, repairs, training, maintenance and technology testing;
- Expand cold chain, packaging and storage and establish a national sanitary and phytosanitary export training and demonstration facility at Namalere;
- Set up border export zones, strengthen standards, certification and market intelligence and establish a National Marketing Company (NaMCO) to champion Ugandan commodities locally, regionally and internationally; and
- Operationalise an export guarantee scheme to de risk exporters and unlock patient capital.

Uganda’s agriculture sector is a story of deliberate strategic action by government resulting in resilient growth and farmer empowerment. It is not only about securing livelihoods but also positioning the nation as a competitive player in global markets. The sector strategy embodies a bold vision: transforming agriculture into a powerhouse of industrialization, exports, and inclusive prosperity.

These results show how Uganda’s agriculture is now a heartbeat of economic transformation. With bold commitments for 2026–2031, the sector is poised to secure Uganda’s place as a global agricultural powerhouse, delivering inclusive growth and prosperity for generations to come. *ENDS.*

Notes for Editors:

Agricultural exports compared to total merchandise exports

Indicator	FY 20 / 21	FY 21 / 22	FY 22 / 23	FY 23 / 24	FY 24 / 25
Agricultural exports (USD bn)	1.661	2.085	2.453	2.697	4.175
Total merchandise exports (USD bn)	5.278	3.837	5.466	7.818	13.40
Agric share of total exports	31%	54%	44.87%	32%	31.15

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