

Food Miles

Separating the facts from the myths: A Kenyan case study

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The basis of Case study

- The Soil Association launched a consultation to tackle the environmental impact of air freighting organic foods.
- Air freight is the fastest growing form of food transport but it emits more greenhouse gases per food mile than any other transport mode

The genesis of the debate

- In Kenya, the first serious debates started in December 2006 and early 2007.
- The Tesco Speech on issues related to food miles in January 2007 (TESCO, CARBON AND THE CONSUMER 18 JANUARY 2007 by Sir Terry Leahy) triggered off many debates.
- This led to the Kenya Flower Council organised national meeting on 15th February, 2007 to bring awareness to the general public.

Food miles stakeholders meeting

- In attendance during this Meeting to discuss strategies to deal with the Threat Posed by Carbon Emissions and Trade Miles Market Requirements were:
- 68 high level participants, led by the Agriculture Secretary, Dr. Wilson Songa
- Tesco's representative, Mr. Richard Brasher, Group buying director.

Expectations

As this was a beginning of discussions
Tesco hoped it would get ideas on

- how best to do carbon labelling.
- wholistic view of the issue of food miles rather than just picking on the issue of air miles.

Soil Association Options

The Soil Association Standards Board considered the following five possible options:

- Take no action
- A general ban
- A selective ban (i.e. with exemptions, introduced over a number of years)
- Labelling air freight
- Carbon offsetting

Impact of the ban: Economic

- In 2006, Kenya's horticultural exports (both fresh and processed) were worth € 530 million
- More than 95 % of Kenyan exports go to the EU.
- **Our appeal, Trade not Aid**

Impacts: Employment

- The sub-sector employs directly and indirectly over four million Kenyans, majority of whom are women.
- It estimated that 80% of all horticultural production is by small scale growers.

...fresh is still small!



...fresh



Naturally Nurtured

Eating organic
means
eating healthy,
nutritious and
safe food

FRU

VEGETABLE



Destruction of industry based on ecological agriculture

- The UK organic food sector has grown significantly in the recent years and in 2005 was worth £ 1.5 billion, representing a 32 % increase over the previous year (DEFRA, 2007), making UK the third largest market in Europe behind Germany and Italy.
- The main objectives of organic agriculture (OA) are to diversify production of food in a sustainable way and, at the same time, ensure ecological sustainability of the farming systems

What really is our contribution?

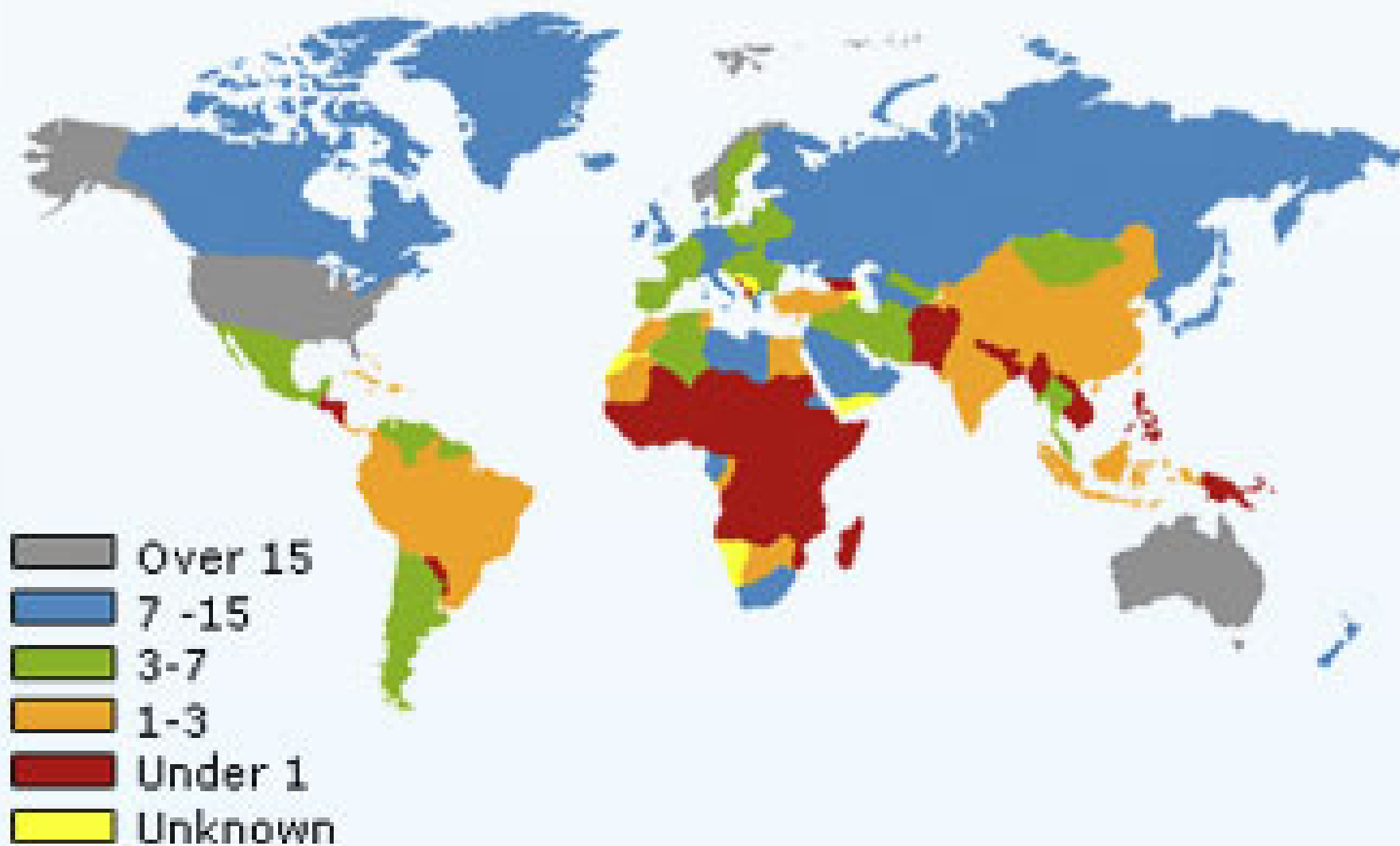
- Fact

Most horticultural products are transported as 'belly cargo' in passenger aircrafts. The incremental fuel consumption is therefore minimal.

- Fact

The few-chartered cargo for horticulture is usually incidental return cargo, after delivery of valuable cargo and relief to Africa.

CO2 Emissions - tonnes annual per person



Research on airfreighted produce

- Garnett (2006) calculates that 1.53 % of fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV) imported into the UK is done by air and this airfreight accounts for 0.23 % of the UK's total CO₂ emissions and 0.2 % of GHG emissions
- Studies by Cranfield University (2007) on Kenyan Roses shows Greenhouse gas emissions will be about 6 times higher in the next 10 years under greenhouses in temperate lands when compared to the same being produced along the equator and air freighted to temperate lands.

Food mile myth:1

- Food miles looked at as the distance the food has traveled from farm to retail outlet, which DEFRA (2005) concluded, as a single indicator based on total food kilometers is an inadequate indicator of sustainability.

Food mile myth:2

- Is there firm evidence to indicate that if the consumers stopped eating imported FFV, fewer planes would fly today or in the future?
- it is important to give the right information to consumers.

Our main concerns

- **Negative perception and non TBT**

Horticultural produce from Kenya with an airplane symbol will lead to a negative perception by consumers who may associate anything with the 'airplane' symbol with ozone layer depletion?

- **Solution: Proposed 'Grown under the Sun' label**

Concerns: Double speak on environmental issues

1. If only **10,000 medium sized farms** in the U.S. **converted to organic** production, they would store so much carbon in the soil that it would be equivalent to taking **1,174,400 cars off the road**, or reducing car miles driven by 14.62 billion miles.
2. U.S. agriculture as currently practiced emits a total of 1.5 trillion pounds of CO₂ annually into the atmosphere. **Converting all U.S. cropland to organic** would not only **wipe out agriculture's massive emission problem**. By eliminating energy-costly chemical fertilizers, it would **actually give us a net increase in soil carbon of 734 billion pounds**.

What have to done to reduce our carbon footprint

Kenya has initiated several projects in the horticultural sector to lower Greenhouse gas emissions including increased use of geothermal hydro and solar energies.

- In 2004, Kenya became the first country in the world to develop geothermal greenhouse heating technology at Oserian Flowers
- In March 2007, the world's largest commercial project using solar panels for heating greenhouses was launched in Kenya at Bilashaka Flowers in Naivasha

Promotion of organic agriculture

- over 180,000 hectares of land under organic certification for export markets, plus another 853ha in conversion
- KOAN in collaboration with Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) developed a set of guidelines for organic production, processing and packaging.
- Harmonization of the organic standards in the East African region is complete and the East African Organic Products Standard is now in use.
- Five international certifiers operating in Kenya, they are: the Soil Association (SA), EcoCert International; IMO; USDA's, National Organic Programme, and BioSuisse.

Conclusion

- The consultations resulted in review of the issue and a new proposal to tie organic certification to Ethical Trade certification
- Consultations end in May 2008

How much carbon will you have emitted to attend this conference?

- Easyjet has stated that its CO₂ output is 97.4 g/CO₂ per km per passenger
- "traditional" airlines emit around 125 g/km because they use older aircraft and fly with more empty seats
- **However, the important question is whether 97.4 g/CO₂ per km is good or bad.**

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• Thank you ALL