

# **Tomato farming experience and a training on how to improve production**

The average yield of tomato in Kenya stands at 15 tons/ acre against a potential of 30-35 tons and is a result of various factors such as pests and diseases.

Lack of information on the right agronomic practices and certified varieties is a major setback. Before transplanting of tomatoes is done, the land is surveyed and clearing of weeds even around the neighbouring area is done. Maize and millet are planted around the tomato farm to help protect the tomato by acting as a shield against insects. Challenges in tomato farming include high cost of farm inputs, lack of market, soil- borne pathogens as well as middle men that disrupt market prices.

## **Pest control**

The main control strategy against pests and diseases is the application of agro chemicals. This usually leads to environmental pollution hence danger to human safety due to agro chemical residues in the tomatoes due to lack of information on the farmers' side.

Improved tomato varieties that are resistant to pests and diseases have been developed and most small holders farmers do not use these varieties due to lack of information about them.

## **Best practices**

Using new new seeds that are certified every new planting season is recommended. Seeds from the previous crop usually lead to very low yields and in turn losses for the farmers.

Excess production can be addressed by having a tomato processing factory. This helps farmers handle post harvest losses since the remaining tomatoes that are not bought are bought by the factories.