

## History

The Field Station Farm has been in operation for over 40 years. The Field Station was acquired by the government to start a Faculty of Agriculture in the then University of East Africa's Nairobi University College. The acquisition process of the former Kirima Kimwe Coffee Estate (300 acres) started around 1967/68 in readiness for the first batch of students in 1970/71. Additional excision of 200 acres from Vet. Labs farm came around 1971 to constitute the 500 acre field station. The first students relocated from Chiromo Campus in 1971/72 and started using former Kirima Kimwe Primary school facility as classrooms and laboratories. When lecture halls and laboratories were built in the now Faculty of Agriculture building, the facility was for sometime used as farm offices and stores. It is now residential quarters for University support staff, but may soon acquire new use when the Fish Project matures into a BSc Fisheries degree program.

The farm borders Vet. Labs to the south, Loresho Estate to the east, Mathari River to the north and Vet. Labs Sports Club and Kapenguria Road to the west.

Farm has three mandates:

1. Support teaching
2. Support research
3. Income generation

### Supporting teaching

The farm was started to provide teaching and research services to students and lecturers in the Faculty of Agriculture. It was described as an "open air laboratory" where practical classes, demonstration and experimental research plots could be staged. The farm also serves students in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine who come for practicals on A.I, beef cattle management, pasture management and disease management.

Practicals on crops are done on crops already grown on the farm and in this regard the farm is one big demonstration plot for teaching of various courses in Agriculture. Teaching Departments such as Plant Science and Crop Protection, and Land Agriculture Resource Management Technology (LARMAT), have demonstration plots where crops not grown in the farm are planted to meet their teaching needs. Mechanization and soil and water sections of the Department of Environmental and Biosystems Engineering (E.B.E) use plots in the Field Station for land preparation, and soil and water practicals.

The Farm also offers field or industrial attachment opportunities for students.

### Supporting research

The farm provides land and irrigation facilities to students, staff and collaborating institutions for research. The demand for research land is becoming too high for the comfort of the farm and land for farms I.G.U enterprises is becoming scarce. This is because collaborating institutions are attracted by our irrigation facilities and are taking quite big chunks of land to do seed bulking from which the University gets no returns. Probably the institutions should do research here and bulking elsewhere to reduce the pressure on land and the irrigation facility. Since these institutions appear to be happy with our facilities, it is also time we found out if they could assist in any way by chipping in towards machinery, implements, irrigation equipment etc. to improve the services given to them.

### Income generation

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Published on Field Station Department (<http://fieldstation.uonbi.ac.ke>)

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The farm engages in commercial production and markets its products at its Kiosk at Kabete Campus and other campuses and to generate income for the college.

**Source URL:** <http://fieldstation.uonbi.ac.ke/node/12>