

*Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen*

First of all, I would like to convey the apology from Principal College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Prof Agnes Mwangombi, for not being able to be with us opening this morning as she attending other official duties.

We are delighted and honoured to host you for this short course in Greenhouse Crop Production today and to welcome you to College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Upper Kabete Campus.

I recognize that this course is principally designed to enhance your competences in greenhouse crop production with emphasis on hands-on training. Faced with reduced acreage for farming due to population growth, rapid rural urbanization and unpredictable weather conditions, many Kenyans are turning to greenhouse technology as a way of increasing food production and supplement their incomes. Greenhouses technology offers a means of increasing productivity by improving water use efficiency, reducing the incidence of pests, enhancing production of a range of horticultural crops and effective use of small acreages. Recently, simple greenhouses and tunnels have been designed and marketed in various parts of the country by various companies. However, producing crops in greenhouses/tunnels requires specialized management which many growers lack. In addition most growers lack the business skills required to ensure the sustainability of greenhouse production. For successful operations, greenhouse growers need to have competencies in crop production practices, marketing and financial management. This course therefore will impart the required knowledge and develop the competencies required to ensure a sustainable greenhouse production.

Ladies and gentlemen, today's multifaceted agricultural industry and fast changing world calls for a close partnership between learning institutions, farmers and industry. I hope this training will highlight possible avenues for increasing productivity and also come up with beneficial, cutting-edge knowledge and skills, which can positively impact the small scale farming.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to the Women Enterprise Fund for sponsoring this training and their cooperation. I also take this opportunity to thank the organizers

I wish the participants a very fruitful and productive sessions and with that, I declare the Short course in Greenhouse Crop Production open.

Thank you