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Teas and Infusions



World's first higher education institution dedicated to tea opens in Kenya

Government of Kenya, LIPTON Teas and Infusions, and the University of Kabianga create the Lipton Tea Innovation & Technology Academy

- New global centre of expertise in tea quality and responsible practices
- Specialized courses to bachelor's, master's and PhD level
- 3000 students subsidized to train per year in the heart of Kenya's tea region

Nairobi, 22 February 2024 – The President of Kenya, His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto, has officially inaugurated the Lipton Tea Innovation & Technology Academy with its mission to make Kenya the world centre of advanced skills and knowledge in tea cultivation.

Co-funded by the world's largest tea group and the biggest purchaser of Kenyan tea, LIPTON Teas and Infusions, along with the Government of Kenya's Ministry of Education and the University of Kabianga, the Academy is the first higher education institution to be dedicated to tea.

As many as 3000 Kenyans each year will gain professional training at the Academy to support the development of the country's largest export industry beyond the production of superior raw materials and into creating talent that is sought worldwide.

By creating the international pinnacle of quality and responsible practices, the Academy will further enhance Kenyan tea's designation of origin as synonymous with premium value which will in turn help raise living standards throughout the region.

Kenya already grows some of the world's finest teas and the country's highlands are renowned for their perfect climate and conditions. Tea contributes around 23% of all Kenya's foreign exchange earnings and around 5 million people in the country are directly or indirectly involved in its production. The Academy will especially encourage and support women's education and empowerment. It is estimated that around 60% of workers in the Kenyan tea industry are women.

The Academy will provide vocational training as well as bachelor's, master's, and PhD level courses. The curricula have been structured to create the highest standards of tea cultivation, harvesting, and processing, and vary from introductory skills in business and diversifying farm incomes to advanced scientific research and technological innovation.

As part of LIPTON Teas and Infusions' efforts to elevate the tea industry and create value for all, the company is licensing its Intellectual Property including drought and pest resilience development plus remote sensing and AI-enhanced analytics for free.

The President of Kenya, His Excellency, President Dr Ruto, said: *"This pioneering initiative will position Kenya as a global hub for training top-quality tea professionals and facilitate innovation throughout the tea value chain, as well as technology transfer. The Academy will also facilitate the upskilling of existing tea farmers, thereby driving the transformation of the tea industry to deliver maximum benefits for households, the value chain and the national economy."*

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Nathalie Roos, Chief Executive Officer of LIPTON Teas and Infusions, said: *"By investing to create more value, we can share more value for the benefit of all. The Academy reinforces our commitment to the Kenyan tea industry and the steps it is taking to raise standards in terms of quality, as well as human and environmental protections. Higher education, available to more people, is the cornerstone of our shared future. The Lipton Tea Innovation & Technology Academy will create an outstanding and renown pool of talent that will be sought after by all tea regions around the world."*

The University of Kabianga has been chosen as the site for the Academy since it sits in the heart of the tea growing region of Kenya and can be accessed easily by workers and professionals. It also has its own tea farms that can be used for training and research and has a thriving agricultural sciences school. The Academy curricula and academic research programs will be developed locally in partnership with Cranfield and Oxford Universities in the UK, long-standing partners of LIPTON Teas and Infusions.

University of Kabianga Vice Chancellor Prof. Eric Koech (Ph.D, MBS) said: *"University of Kabianga is committed to contributing to the socio-economic transformation and development of tea sector through modern training, research and innovation in tea value chain whilst leveraging on sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in partnership with LIPTON Teas and Infusions."*

Professor Mette Morsing, Director of The Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford said: *"The Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford is collaborating with LIPTON Teas and Infusions to research regenerative business practices in the tea industry. We are excited about the launch of the Lipton Tea Innovation & Technology Academy and the opportunity it provides to disseminate new knowledge and best practices, and to promote positive industry change."*

Professor Andrew Thompson, Head of Soils, Agrifood and Biosciences at Cranfield University, UK said: *"In partnership with LIPTON Teas and Infusions, Cranfield are developing new ways to improve the sustainability of tea production, and we are very excited to have an opportunity to help train the next generation of Kenyan farmers and researchers who will be so important for driving future innovations."*

The Academy is now open for students to enrol ahead of the first courses due to begin towards the end of the year.

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About LIPTON Teas and Infusions

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LIPTON Teas and Infusions is the world's largest tea business, with world-class brands that are household names such as Lipton, Pukka, TAZO, T2 and PG Tips.

With production sites in 4 continents and a presence in more than 100 countries, LIPTON Teas and Infusions' products are enjoyed by hundreds of millions of consumers around the world each day.

As an independent company since July 2022, LIPTON Teas and Infusions is united in one purpose: creating value for all with every sip, from plant to cup.