

REPORT OF THE

CASSAVA WEEK 2025

**"Empowering Cassava Value Chain through Innovation,
Partnership and Climate Resilience"**



GISAGARA ARENA



12-14/11/2025



INGABO FARMERS SYNDICATE

Southern province - Muhanga District-Nyamabuye Sector

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The organizers of Cassava Week 2025 wish to extend their sincere appreciation to the Gisagara District for its exceptional support, collaboration, and active involvement in the preparation and successful hosting of this year's event. Your leadership, logistical facilitation, and continued partnership greatly contributed to the smooth organization and overall success of Cassava Week 2025.

We also gratefully acknowledge the invaluable support of our development partners and funders whose contributions made this event possible:

- European Union (EU)/GWIZA Program under the MUHINZI Project
- GAFSP/IFAD through the SCORE Rwanda Project
- MEDA through the VIRCA Deployment Project
- Agriterra

Your commitment to strengthening Rwanda's cassava value chain and supporting farmer livelihoods remains instrumental in advancing sustainable agricultural transformation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cassava Week 2025 was successfully held under the theme “Empowering Cassava Value Chain through Innovation, Partnership and Climate Resilience.” The event brought together farmers, policymakers, private sector actors, researchers, processors, development organizations, and cooperative leaders to assess sector performance, identify challenges, and chart a collaborative path forward.

The 2025 edition emphasized innovation, improved coordination, climate-smart production, and value addition. Through panel discussions, presentations, field demonstrations, and cooperative dialogues, stakeholders reaffirmed the critical role cassava plays in Rwanda’s food security and rural development.

The event concluded with strong recommendations on seed quality improvement, climate resilience, investments in processing, and strengthening value chain partnerships.

INTRODUCTION

Cassava is one of Rwanda’s top staple crops and a critical source of food, income, and employment. Despite its importance, the sector faces structural challenges that limit productivity and market competitiveness.

In response, INGABO Syndicate launched Cassava Week in 2017 to provide an annual platform for collaborative engagement. Cassava Week 2025 continued this vision, bringing together stakeholders to explore solutions, share innovations, and strengthen partnerships across the cassava value chain.

BACKGROUND OF INGABO FARMERS SYNDICATE

INGABO Syndicate is a farmer-led union founded in 2005 and legally recognized by the Government of Rwanda. Its mission focuses on:

- Farmer technical capacity building
- Advocacy and policy dialogue
- Promoting improved agricultural practices
- Enhancing production and market access
- Strengthening farmer cooperatives

INGABO is a member of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) and the World Farmers Organization (WFO), positioning it to influence regional and global agricultural development agendas.

IMPORTANCE OF CASSAVA IN RWANDA

Cassava is among the top three staple foods in Rwanda. It contributes significantly to:

- National food security
- Household nutrition
- Rural incomes
- Agro-processing industries

However, the sector faces persistent constraints, including:

- Low access to certified planting materials
- Diseases and pests
- Climate variability
- Limited processing capacity
- Weak value chain coordination

Cassava Week serves as a national forum to address these issues.

HISTORY OF CASSAVA WEEK (2017-2025)

- 2017: First Cassava Week organized
- Objective: unite stakeholders across the value chain to address common challenges
- Since then, the event has grown in scope, participation, and national importance
- Each year features a theme guiding discussions and policy direction

By 2025, Cassava Week has become a recognized platform for dialogue, innovation sharing, and value chain strengthening.

CASSAVA WEEK 2025 OVERVIEW

Theme: “Empowering Cassava Value Chain through Innovation, Partnership and Climate Resilience.”

The 2025 event specifically focused on:

- Advancing innovation in production and processing
- Strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships
- Enhancing resilience to climate change
- Improving farmer access to markets
- Promoting inclusive value chain governance

EVENT OBJECTIVES

1. Assess the current status of Rwanda's cassava value chain
2. Identify constraints hindering productivity and growth
3. Share innovations and technologies for improved production
4. Strengthen linkages among farmers, private sector, and government
5. Develop actionable recommendations to enhance the cassava sector
6. Promote climate-smart agricultural practices
7. Encourage youth and women participation in the cassava value chain

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The event adopted a participatory, stakeholder-driven approach, including:

- Expert presentations
- Farmer-led demonstrations
- Panel discussions
- Cooperative dialogues
- Interactive Q&A sessions
- Exhibit displays
- Networking and partnership-building engagements

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

The Cassava Week 2025 brought together approximately 200 participants from key stakeholder groups across the cassava value chain. Attendance included:

- **Government Leadership**
 - Governor of the Southern Province, Alice KAYITESI
 - District Mayors:
 - Jerome RUTABURINGOGA, Mayor of Gisagara
 - Valens HABARUREMA, Mayor of Ruhango
 - Vice Mayors in charge of Economic Development from:
 - Gisagara
 - Nyamasheke
 - Rusizi
 - Bugesera
 - Kayonza
 - District-level security officers

- **National Institutions**

- Representative from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)
- Representative from the Rwanda Meteorology Agency

- **Development Partners**

- IFAD
- MEDA
- AGRITERRA
- IITA

- **Farmer and Cooperative Organizations**

- Representatives from cassava cooperatives
- Representative of IMBARAGA Farmers Federation
- Representatives of AVSI
- Representative of PAFO (Pan-African Farmers' Organization).

- **Academia and Research Institutions**

- University of Rwanda / CAVM
- Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB)

- **Private Sector Actors**

- Cassava seed multipliers
- Cassava processors
- Youth entrepreneurs involved in cassava value addition

- **Financial and Insurance Institutions**

- BRD
- DUTERIMBERE
- CLECAM EJOHEZA
- URWEGO Opportunity Bank
- RADIANT Insurance
- CPF INEZA

Participation reflected the diversity of actors vital to the cassava value chain.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CASSAVA WEEK 2025

A key highlight of Cassava Week 2025 was the address delivered by the Governor of the Southern Province, Mrs. Alice KAYITESI. She expressed her appreciation to the organizers and participants for their commitment to advancing the cassava sector. In her remarks, she emphasized the overarching purpose of Cassava Week, which included:

- Strengthening knowledge across the entire cassava value chain;
- Promoting the value and importance of cassava as a strategic crop;
- Sharing research findings to inform evidence-based decision-making;
- Enabling stakeholders to assess progress made in developing the cassava value chain, identify remaining gaps, discuss challenges and solutions, and explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration.



Mrs. Kayitesi concluded her address with key recommendations aimed at strengthening the cassava sector:

- Farmers were encouraged to adopt improved cassava planting materials and increase productivity, given cassava's importance as a major economic crop in the Southern Province.
- Cassava seed multipliers were urged to expand the production of high-quality cassava seeds, in close collaboration with the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) and with quality assurance from RICA, to ensure timely access for farmers.
- Cassava-related cooperatives were called upon to deliver strong, efficient, and high-quality services to their members across the cassava value chain, ensuring access to clean seeds, promoting improved production techniques, supporting access to better markets, and encouraging value addition where possible.

In the same vein, the Mayor of GISAGARA District, Mr. RUTABURINGOGA Jerome, thanked those who attended Cassava Week and extended his gratitude to INGABO Farmers Syndicate for choosing to host the event in his district, noting that GISAGARA is an ideal location because of its strong engagement in cassava farming.

From a partnership standpoint, the representative of IFAD, Mr. NTUKANYAGWE Aimable, emphasized that IFAD's mission is to work hand in hand with the Government of Rwanda to improve the livelihoods of farmers through increased agricultural productivity particularly supporting cassava production, in partnership with INGABO Farmers Syndicate. He affirmed that IFAD will continue its support to the greatest extent possible.

KEY SESSIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Opening Ceremony

On the first day of Cassava Week 2025 (12 November 2025), Ms. KANTARAMA Cesarie, President of INGABO Syndicate, officially welcomed all participants. In her remarks, she highlighted the overall purpose of the event and provided an overview of the current state of cassava production, including farming practices, access to clean planting materials, productivity trends, market access, and value addition. She also emphasized the key challenges that continue to affect the cassava value chain. Additionally, she expressed appreciation to development partners for their sustained collaboration and support.



Keynote Address

Focus on national cassava strategy and investment opportunities.

Value Chain Analysis Presentation

Experts provided updates on seed systems, processing, marketing, and policy implications.

Farmer Testimonies

Farmers shared experiences on climate challenges, improved varieties, and cooperative success stories.

Exhibitions



Field Demonstrations

Demonstrations on improved practices, planting techniques, and pest management.

Cooperative Networking Session

Promoted inter-cooperative collaboration and market linkage development.

KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

- Seed shortage remains a major limiting factor
- Need for certified, disease-resistant varieties
- Processing industries lack raw material consistency
- Climate change affecting yields and crop survival
- Poor coordination among value chain actors
- Need for market information systems
- Women play a critical role but face resource constraints

CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

1. Limited access to quality seeds
2. Inadequate extension services
3. Climate shocks (drought, irregular rainfall)
4. Post-harvest losses
5. Low mechanization
6. Weak cooperative governance
7. Limited private sector investment
8. Poor market structures

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen certified seed multiplication systems
- Increase farmer training on climate-smart agriculture
- Invest in modern processing facilities
- Promote cooperative management training
- Improve extension service coverage
- Facilitate market linkages
- Encourage youth engagement through agribusiness models
- Develop partnerships with research institutions

OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Strengthened dialogue between farmers and policymakers
- New partnerships initiated among cooperatives and processors
- Increased awareness of climate-resilient practices
- Commitment from stakeholders to invest in seed systems
- Identification of specific value chain investment opportunities
- Agreement to create follow-up working groups

RESOLUTIONS

Cassava Week 2025 reaffirmed INGABO's leadership in advancing Rwanda's agricultural transformation. The event served as a strong platform for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective decision-making. As cassava remains central to national food security and rural development, continued investment, innovation, and strategic partnerships will be critical to sustaining progress.

Over the three-day event, and following extensive thematic discussions, review of showcased activities, and key insights gathered during the launch of the improved cassava seed multiplication initiative at the CATM Cooperative's new screen house facility, the following resolutions were adopted:

No.	Resolution	Responsible Parties
1	In collaboration with various institutions, farmers will increase efforts to double cassava production from 14.4 tons to 28 tons by the year 2029.	• RAB • MINAGRI • INGABO FARMERS SYNDICATE • LOCAL GOVERNMENT • FARMERS
2	In collaboration with relevant institutions, security will be strengthened in seed multiplication fields, and farmers will be encouraged to use seeds produced by certified seed multipliers.	• RAB • RICA • IITA • MEDA
3	In collaboration with relevant institutions, more efforts will be put into raising awareness about weather forecasting and climate change.	• FARMERS • LOCAL GOVERNMENT • INGABO FARMERS SYNDICATE • METEO RWANDA • REMA
4	Create an online platform to improve the marketing of services and products within the cassava value chain.	• INGABO FARMERS SYNDICATE • IITA • IFAD • EU
5	Cooperatives are required to improve governance and management so they can effectively meet the needs of their member farmers.	• RCA • LOCAL GOVERNMENT • OTHER PARTNERS
6	Processors are required to focus on product quality and standards based on market requirements.	• CASSAVA PROCESSORS • MINICOM • COOPERATIVES
7	Based on the importance of the ZAI PIT technique, all institutions are requested to collaborate in raising awareness so that it is adopted widely.	• LOCAL GOVERNMENT • INGABO FARMERS SYNDICATE

No.	Resolution	Responsible Parties
8	Given that cassava is one of the prioritized crops in Rwanda, it should be integrated into the FOBASI program in districts where it is widely grown.	• LOCAL GOVERNMENT • MINAGRI
9	Regarding agricultural insurance, INGABO Syndicate will advocate for revising the calculation of capital requirements so that they align with current conditions, and for extending insurance coverage to include seeds in the field.	• MINAGRI • INSURANCE COMPANIES
10	Improve coordination between RAB and RICA and harmonize information related to cassava seed variety names.	• RAB • RICA
11	Establish district-level forums to discuss agricultural investment matters.	• LOCAL GOVERNMENT • MINICOM • BRD



PHOTO GALLERY







INGABO FARMERS' SYNDICATE

Our Partners:

