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Kenya secures market access for dried chilli exports to China

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New trade opportunity allows Kenyan producers to enter the Chinese market, subject to strict phytosanitary, food safety and traceability requirements



Kenya has secured market access for dried chilli exports to China, creating new opportunities for the country's horticulture industry to expand agricultural trade with one of Asia's largest consumer markets.

The Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) confirmed the development in an official notice, outlining the regulatory requirements that farmers, processors and exporters must meet before shipping dried chillies to China.

The market opening follows China's decision to permit dried chilli imports from eligible African countries under phytosanitary regulations introduced by the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC). The framework, which took effect on May 1, 2026, establishes requirements for agricultural producers and exporters seeking access to the Chinese market.

Under the regulations, Kenyan farms, drying facilities, processing plants and packing houses must complete registration and certification procedures. Export processing and packing facilities are required to obtain approval from KEPHIS before being registered with Chinese customs authorities.

Each export consignment must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate confirming compliance with the applicable plant health requirements.

Exporters must also implement traceability systems, follow Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) measures, and maintain pest monitoring records for at least two years.

China's food safety requirements include compliance with pesticide residue limits, aflatoxin B1 and heavy metal standards. Dried chillies must also be free from specified quarantine pests and harmful contaminants, including Salmonella, with moisture content not exceeding 13 per cent.

The market opening presents opportunities for Kenyan farmers and agribusinesses to diversify export destinations while potentially encouraging investment in chilli drying, processing, packaging and quality assurance infrastructure.

Compliance with the new requirements will be important for producers seeking to establish reliable export supply chains and maintain access to the Chinese market.

KEPHIS has encouraged farmers, exporters, processors and agricultural industry associations to seek guidance on registration, inspections and export certification procedures.

The development strengthens prospects for Kenya's horticultural trade with China, although commercial shipments will depend on exporters successfully completing the required regulatory and certification processes.