

Africa agri-food development programme applications now open

The 6th Africa Ireland Economic Forum recently brought together business people and thought leaders from across Europe at the Convention Centre, Dublin Ireland to focus on strengthening trade links in the agri-food sector. The forum organised by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade saw a number of Tanzanian agri-food companies also take part, including Alaska Tanzania and GBRI Business Solutions. Jennifer Bash, CEO of Alaska Tanzania, addressed the session on *Women and Business - Pathways to Success* highlighting the skills that women can bring to senior leadership roles in companies, and her insights as a successful young entrepreneur.



Ireland's deputy prime minister and minister for foreign affairs, Simon Coveney T.D. opened the forum.

In his remarks he spoke of the enormous potential for agriculture to transform African economies. He shared how for Ireland, agri-business development has been an integral part of Ireland's economic development and transformation story. Over a few decades, Ireland has grown from predominantly small-scale subsistence farming, exporting primary production, to a sophisticated producer of high-end, value-added food. Over €1bn worth of Irish food and drink is exported every month and over the last seven years, Irish agri-food exports have increased by 56%, mainly driven by non-EU trade.

Coveney also announced an expansion and new call for proposals under the Africa Agri-food Development Programme, which is funded by the Irish Government. The objective of the programme is to develop partnerships between the Irish agri-food sector and African countries to support sustainable growth of the local food industry, build markets for local produce and support mutual trade between Ireland and Africa.

[More information on the programme here.](#)