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# Invitation to Virtual ECHO East Africa Biannual Symposium on Sustainable Agriculture and Appropriate Technologies

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## Invitation to Virtual ECHO East Africa Biennial Symposium on Sustainable Agriculture and Appropriate Technologies

**28th - 30th September, 2021**

Greetings! You are cordially invited to join us for the 6th ECHO East Africa Biennial Symposium on Sustainable Agriculture and Appropriate Technologies 2021 this time by virtual means (online). We hope that you will make time to gather online with us at this very important and effective event for learning, information sharing and networking for those working and serving in the East Africa Region. This online symposium will be a first for ECHO East Africa to host. Participants are encouraged to register online for a \$20 registration fee and that we welcome donations from good-willed individuals to help those who cannot pay this fee. Registration will begin at a later date. Please check back for information on registering.

### **What is a virtual ECHO East Africa Symposium**

Some differences: No visa required, no travel, no hotel! Lower cost, more people, more perspectives! Attendees can also host or attend viewing parties with other delegates with similar interests or working in common regions or locations. This event will take place over three hour sessions from 3pm-6pm Tuesday - Thursday afternoons from 28th - 30th September, 2021. It will involve excellent keynote speakers, 20 minute plenary videos and 5 minute 'lightning talks / presentations' - 2-5 minute subject-specific videos that illustrate how practitioners around the world are implementing techniques and principles based on our four themes, interactive breakout sessions - live discussions with the plenary speakers together with network members representing related topic areas, networking and interaction with speakers and other delegates through the interactive features of our conference app.

### **Background on ECHO:**

ECHO East Africa has a converging mission with a great number of other organizations who also seek to share their knowledge and best practices:

- to improve nutrition, reduce poverty, hunger and physical hardship by engaging farmers more effectively to adapt their farming systems
- to respond to climate change and declining yields in Africa with sustainable options which improve the environment, regenerate soils and water catchments, recycle resources and mitigate the effect of weather extremes

- to combine a wide range of approaches holistically to enhance resilience of the vulnerable and to care for the earth
- to have a relevant response to the current COVID pandemic
- to promote continued learning and sharing through networks

This is the driving force behind our desire to continue our tradition of a biennial symposium to promote this mutual sharing and networking.

### **Highlights anticipated:**

The ECHO EA Biennial Symposium will provide a network and training opportunity for those involved in alleviating hunger and poverty in East Africa. Three-hour sessions on the three afternoons will feature knowledgeable and experienced speakers and a chance to interact with them in workshops and discussion groups led by regional agricultural development workers and experts. Topics are currently being discussed for the event.

### **Potential topics and speakers for the sessions will include presenters from East Africa!**

- Using the ECHO APP to enhance fieldwork
- Conservation Agriculture - simple mechanization / adapting green manure/cover crops / marketing strategies to enhance CA adoption
- Climate-smart Agriculture within different agri-food systems and appropriate technologies
- Improving nutrition of targeted populations
- Emerging livestock development strategies and practices
- Good development practices
- Emerging environmental concerns in food production
- Scaling up and use of social / mass media
- Practicals on assembly and use of mechanical devices to reduce drudgery / increase energy efficiency, processing - post-harvest handling / integrated pest management / grafting or other agronomic practices demonstrated on video.

**Are you interested to make a presentation?** If you are interested in being a presenter at the ECHO East Africa Symposium, **please fill out this form (<https://forms.gle/tmKGdLvBy12riHyo8>)**. We welcome you to create a Video Powerpoint presentation, and / or to combine your Powerpoint presentation with a video of you giving the presentation (which our technicians can then combine with the Powerpoint in the latter case, ideally, you must signal when to advance the slide, or to make a video of a practical demonstration in the field of a practice, tool, or any creative means of conveying your message (role play, dialogue / interview, etc.) ECHO will be able to give you advice on how to make the best possible video even using an Iphone. See the tutorials attached to guide you - it is not as complicated as you might think!!!

ECHO EA requests those interested to make plenary presentations to produce short 20 minute videos of their presentations, and those who wish to demonstrate a technique, tool, or practice as a 'Lightning talk' to produce 2 - 5 minute videos.. Newer versions of Powerpoint from 2016 allow for presenters to film themselves and to appear in a small screen in the corner of the Powerpoint. This is most ideal. If

the video is not done on Powerpoint, ECHO needs you to send an accompanying Powerpoint presentation if appropriate to your message.. Presentations selected for the plenaries during the 3 days will be featured online on the dates of the event. Others not selected but approved for sharing will be listed for viewing through links, whereby viewers can connect to view the sessions during the Symposium week, and a scheduled time will be arranged for 'Meet the presenter' discussion feedback online sessions on subsequent dates within the month following the airing of the sessions, whereby the presenters will be encouraged to meet with viewers online to discuss their questions and responses if any. These sessions will be arranged depending upon feedback from viewers who wish to 'meet the presenter' and presenter availability.

**Guidance on how to make videos:** As discussed above, Powerpoint users can create narrated powerpoint videos of their presentations using techniques existing in Powerpoint 2016 or the newer version existing in Office 365 or Office 2019. This works great for prerecorded symposium plenaries or other presentations. If a presenter would like to do a separate personal video of introduction or wrap up, that can work also. A great example of a prerecorded plenary is this by Dr Kristin Davis. (<https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/b239460f-06d5-43f8-80d2-8aa6847e46b1>) The instructions for the two methods differ somewhat, so here attached are tutorials for each.

Office 2016 Powerpoint

<https://youtu.be/DYGfF2R1kjY> (<https://youtu.be/DYGfF2R1kjY>)

Office 365 Powerpoint

<https://youtu.be/D8JV3w4TOVw> (<https://youtu.be/D8JV3w4TOVw>)

For those able to coach others, we suggest practicing the lessons with a 2 or 3 slide Powerpoint to get familiar with the process.

Microsoft's tutorials

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/turn-your-presentation-into-a-video-c140551f-cb37-4818-b5d4-3e30815c3e83> (<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/turn-your-presentation-into-a-video-c140551f-cb37-4818-b5d4-3e30815c3e83>)

[For video output format, please use mp4.](#)

ECHO takes this opportunity to thank in advance all participants for investing time and resources by (a) registering members to attend, (b) funding someone who cannot attend with \$20 donations, (c) facilitators/presenters from all corners of the region who offer presentations by video / powerpoint, (d) the organizing team of this event. We anticipate that the time together offers us opportunity to raise our awareness of issues, know best practices worthy of scaling up, and introduce us to new partners, farming development organizations, and public and private sector actors. There is a good chance that the Symposium will help us to form hubs or communities of practice to consider how better to encourage each other in our work to help farmers to develop resilient systems.

The Symposium daily Schedule is still under development, but will be sent to you in advance so that you can fully participate and choose options best suited to your own work.

**DEVOTIONS** -(daily devotions can feature among the presentations - would you like to offer one or a series of 3 devotions?) These are vital to the Christian to center on the Source of all knowledge, strength, and power for service.

**PLENARY SESSIONS** - The ECHO Symposium will provide 2-3 plenary sessions each featuring knowledgeable and experienced speakers on topics with broad relevance.

**LIGHTNING TALKS / PRESENTATIONS** - The ECHO Symposium will provide 2-3 short presentations related to the themes of the plenaries, mixed between the longer presentations

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS** - these will be discussion groups facilitated by the organizers to encourage a give-and-take of practical experience and interacting with the speakers.

**NETWORKING:** ECHO events are considered networking opportunities. This means you, the delegate, are the most important resource. Your participation in breakout sessions sharing what has or has not worked well, a "good idea", why it failed, a promising innovation, how to integrate farming work with church activities, or other lessons learned in your work. You will have a chance to communicate with all those who register for the event, and hopefully you can share your needs. You will have the opportunity to share your questions as the presentations are being given by interactive dialogue in the conference mobile app so that others may comment and facilitators can help prioritize questions to be addressed within the limited discussion time.

**PRESENTATIONS ON VIDEO LINKS:** A number of presentations may not be able to be utilized during the 3 days, but all quality videos submitted will be accessible during the week or thereafter by links shared with symposium participants.

**POST-SYMPOSIUM 'MEET THE PRESENTER SESSIONS'** will be offered on Zoom calls, based upon feedback and interest to meet the presenter, on specified dates based upon sign-ups as a show of interest. Our hope is to offer excellent examples of sustainable agriculture technologies appropriate to the poor farmers through these additional sessions.

Lastly, please know we at ECHO are here to serve you, both through this event, and thereafter, through our excellent website, [www.echocommunity.org](http://www.echocommunity.org) and the new **ECHO APP (<https://www.echocommunity.org/resources/acce2a92-f57c-415c-a1c5-bc29c03fcca4>)** which we hope you will become a future user and contribute to its improvement. We trust that these resources will benefit your professional experience and effective delivery of support to the small-scale farmers and farmers whom we all serve.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information if needed. We look forward to hearing from you and confirmation that you will engage with us during this event!

With God's blessing, and kind regards,  
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**Please take note that the content from the 2020 International Agriculture  
Virtual Conference is now available on ECHOcommunity.org and in the  
ECHOcommunity Mobile App.**

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<http://edn.link/3td3m>