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SPEECH DELIVERED ON FRIDAY 30TH OCTOBER 2020 BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. NDIRANGU KIONI DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE COFFEE YOGHURT, AT THE DEDAN KIMATHI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Acknowledgements and Greetings;

- **Cabinet secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Development, Hon. Peter Munya,**

- **Governor Nyeri County, His excellency, Mutahi Kahiga,**
- **Deputy Governor Nyeri County, Dr. Caroline Karuga,**
- **Council Charman, Dr. Jane Nyakang'o,**
- **Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. Esther Magiri,**
- **Senate,**
- **Students, staff, and invited guests,**

Good morning,

Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT) has partnered with the Mukurwe-ini Wakulima Dairy Ltd (MWDL) to provide demand-driven solutions in the dairy processing technologies through joint research and development initiatives.

The growing competition and consumer awareness on healthy and natural food products has led to the increased research and innovations on foods with the highest quality that meets customer expectations in terms of nutritional and flavor properties.

The dairy sector in Kenya is currently facing a myriad of challenges including poor income for farmers due to limited value addition opportunities. On the other hand, there is an increased consumer demand for natural, healthy, and nutritious food products such as yoghurt due to the rapid emergence of non-communicable diet-related diseases.

DeKUT is endowed with over 280 acres of coffee and is involved in research and innovations of novel dairy and coffee value addition technologies, and their transfer to the industry and the community. Innovators at the Institute of Food Bioresources Technology (IFBT) of DeKUT led by Prof. Beatrice Mugendi developed and patented a novel premium quality natural coffee-flavored yoghurt using modified extraction technologies. Specifically, the invention relates the production of yoghurt with a unique chocolaty candy-like aroma and a sweet, long pleasant aftertaste. According to the Director, IFBT, Dr. Eddy Owaga, the current innovation of natural coffee flavoured yoghurt not only enhances the flavor of yoghurt towards increased consumer acceptability of yoghurt, but it also improves its functionality from improved antioxidative and antimicrobial properties.

As a demonstration of University-industry partnership in resolving a local challenge, DeKUT has signed a license agreement with MWDL towards industrial scale production and marketing of natural coffee flavoured yoghurt in the supermarkets and other retail outlets across the country.

The journey started as an innovation under the Institute of Food and Bioresources Technology (IFBT) as a coffee flavoured yoghurt. The University patented it then started producing its own coffee flavoured yoghurt. As part of the community outreach, the University identified a dairy cooperative that could carry the patented coffee flavor and this is where we identified Mukurwe-ini Wakulima Dairy Ltd (MWDL).

This unique University-industry partnership between DeKUT and MWDL comes at an appropriate time when new policies aimed at promoting value addition of dairy and coffee value chains towards improved food security and farmer incomes are being developed at the level of county governments.

The joint launch of the natural coffee flavoured yoghurt by DeKUT and MWDL is a clear commitment of both organizations working together towards providing emerging consumer solutions with respect to demand for safe, healthy and natural-flavored dairy products. The partnership guarantees the best natural coffee flavoured yoghurt of highest quality that exceeds the customer expectations. Besides contributing to the availability of healthy and acceptable coffee flavoured yoghurt, this innovation is expected to catalyze the involvement of more actors in the dairy and coffee value chain, thus contributing to improved food security and livelihood, especially among the small scale dairy and coffee farmers.

Thank you for coming and for your support as we move forward in this new endeavor.