

Kerry's East Africa CEO Forum unites 100 F&B leaders to reshape industry's future

22 May 2025 | News

As Africa rapidly emerges as a hotspot for food and beverage innovation, the forum brought CEOs, policymakers, academics, and entrepreneurs together to discuss opportunities and challenges shaping the sector



As Africa rapidly emerges as a hotspot for food and beverage innovation, the forum brought CEOs, policymakers, academics, and entrepreneurs together to discuss opportunities and challenges shaping the sector

In a contribution towards transforming East Africa's food and beverage landscape, Kerry, a global leader in taste and nutrition, in collaboration with Strathmore Agri-Food Innovation Centre (SAFIC) at the Strathmore University Business School, convened over 100 influential leaders at the first CEO Forum.

Themed "Insights and Innovations in the Food and Beverage Industry," the event served as a platform for fostering innovation, strengthening academia-industry collaboration, and driving sustainable economic growth across the region.

As Africa rapidly emerges as a hotspot for food and beverage innovation, the forum brought CEOs, policymakers, academics, and entrepreneurs together to discuss opportunities and challenges shaping the sector. A highlight was a panel discussion addressing topics from evolving consumer preferences, sustainability as a competitive edge, to supply chain resilience, new models for academia-industry collaboration, and how businesses can adapt to changing market demands while building more agile operations.

Hosted at Strathmore University Business School, the event builds on Kerry's \$1 billion investment in emerging markets, evidenced by Kerry's rapid expansion in Africa, including Rwanda in March 2025, bringing Kerry's world-class quality closer to manufacturers on the continent.

"Bringing together diverse perspectives from industry leaders helps us identify innovative solutions that address the complex challenges facing businesses today," said Jad Neaime, General Manager, Kerry Africa. "The CEO Forum demonstrates our commitment to building collaborative leadership and advancing industry standards across Africa while contributing to economic growth and development. Our substantial investment reflects our confidence in Africa's potential

and our dedication to supporting its food ecosystem.â•

Maris Evelyn, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Ireland to Kenya, delivered a keynote address underscoring the role of Irish businesses in advancing sustainable development. â•Kerryâ•s expanding presence not only creates substantial economic opportunities but also facilitates knowledge exchange and innovation across borders. The Embassy of Ireland is proud to support such meaningful partnerships between our countries,â• she said.

Dr Caesar Mwangi, Executive Dean of Strathmore Business School, emphasised the power of academia-industry alignment. â•Our partnership with Kerry exemplifies our mission to bridge research and real-world impact. By convening leading experts and leaders, weâ•ve sparked a dialogue that will shape the regionâ•s innovation agenda and build a stronger, more inclusive food sector.â• Prof. Simon Nderitu, the Centre Director of SAFIC, also presented the centreâ•s vision to transform African food systems by leveraging private sector-driven, evidence-based strategies.Â