<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Blackberry Germplasm Collection, Characterisation and Breeding for Commercial Production in Kenya</th>
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| Purpose | The proposed project aims at increasing blackberry adoption productions and yields in Kenya. |
Blackberry is a wild fruit in many parts of Africa; it is well adapted to many environments and has very few disease and pest problems. The fruit contains vitamin A, C, B₁₂, carotinoids, riboflavins and antioxidants. This fruit has not been improved for commercial production as has been done in USA. To address this problem, this research intends to collect, characterise local and foreign germplasm with the aim of improving it for local use. The project will also conduct propagation and plant nutrition experiments to establish the simplest methods of multiplying the fruit as well as the plants nutritional requirements. Two post graduate students will be actively involved in the activities of collecting, characterising, evaluating propagation methods as well as establishing their nutritional requirements. The students will in the process benefit immensely from the already established laboratory/field capacity that is appropriate for this study. Results of this study are expected to provide useful information on the diversity of blackberry germplasm available and the possibilities of improving this fruit in the East African region.

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<tr>
<th>Country and Specific Location(s)</th>
<th>Egerton University and communities to be identified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participating Institutions</td>
<td>Egerton University, Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start Date</td>
<td>Jan, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>End date</td>
<td>Dec 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of Funding</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
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Dr. Morwani Robert Gesimba is a Kenyan national whose academic career has spanned over a period of 20 years since he joined university service. He has grown through the ranks from a field demonstrator in the 1990s to a senior lecturer at present. He holds a PhD in Horticulture and Crop Science from The Ohio State University, Msc. Crop Science, BSc. Horticulture, and Diploma in Horticulture all from Egerton University. Robert has expertise in fruit fly control, product development and soil nutrient management in horticultural production systems as well as in conservation and utilisation of germplasm. He has received several project awards including the RUFORUM Graduate Research Grants.

**Selected publications**


