

FIRE SEASON

Growers require vigilance to keep out forest fires

By Dennis D. Kavuma

Even if Uganda over the last couple of days has received some showers of rain, we are still in the forest fire season. Forest fires are plantation forestry's most feared and detested hazard. Uncontrolled forest blazes are fueled by dry & hot weather, wind, and weeds. Forest fires can burn acres of land and consume everything in their paths in minutes.

A forest fire moves at speeds of up to 14 miles an hour (23 kilometers an hour), consuming everything including trees, brush, wild animals and even humans.

Using Fire to Manage Landscapes

Uncontrolled fires are a major problem because they pose a risk to life, property, and the environment. The expansion of human settlements across the countryside, into areas bordering fire-adapted lands and fire-vulnerable commercial agriculture, has put people increasingly at risk from wild fires. Over millions of years ago, early human beings used fire to hunt and manage their environment.



A UTGA grower lost part of his eucalyptus plantation to an accidental fire recently

Even today, fire is still used to manage land and forest, to control grazing and habitats, and to actually prevent uncontrolled fires. However sometimes, small fires frequently escalate into disastrous, uncontrolled forest fires.

UTGA has taken testimony from its growers who have suffered from damage caused by fires in their plantations. Most are caused by farmers burning to prepare farms to grow crops, grazers who burn to realise the sprouting of new, fresh and young grass for their animals, bee hunters while harvesting their hives and arsonists who are maliciously touching plantations owing to present or perceived land and other disputes. In 2015, UTGA recorded 2237ha of its Members farm acreage lost to forest fires.

Fire triangle

There are three conditions that need to be present in order for a forest fire to burn, which fire-fighters refer to as the fire triangle: fuel, oxygen, and a heat source. Fuel is any flammable material surrounding a fire, including trees, grasses and

FORESTRY FACTS

90%
of all forestry fires are caused by humans

2237 ha
of plantation acreage of UTGA growers lost to forest fires in 2015

How to fight Forest Fires

brush. The greater an area's fuel load, the more intense the fire. Air supplies the oxygen a fire needs to burn. Heat sources help spark the wild-fire and bring fuel to temperatures hot enough to ignite.

Although nine out of ten forest fires are started by people, nature is usually more than happy to help fan the flames. Dry weather and drought convert green vegetation into bone-dry, flammable fuel; strong winds spread fire quickly over land; and warm temperatures encourage combustion. When these factors come together all that's needed is a spark in the form of lightning, arson, a downed power line, or a burning campfire or cigarette to ignite a blaze that could consume tens of thousands of trees.

Fighting fires

Firefighters fight forest fires by depriving them of one or more of the fire triangle fundamentals. Traditional methods include water dousing and spraying fire retardants to extinguish existing fires. Growers are usually encouraged to clear vegetation to create firebreaks and fire lines to starve any fire of fuel and to help to slow or contain it. Firefighters also fight fires by deliberately starting fires in a process called controlled burning. These prescribed fires remove undergrowth, brush, and ground litter from a forest, depriving a forest fire of fuel.

Fire seasons

Uganda has two fire seasons that align with rainfall patterns at their lowest: the December-February dry spell is the most severe and menacing keeping plantation foresters awake for most of that time. Lately the second dry spell in the months of June-August has been less intensive.

How to guard against forest fires

1. **Keep your weeds low;**
2. **Promote good relations with your neighbours;**
3. **Employ members of the community on your farm;**
4. **Open up your fire breaks and clean your fire lines;**
5. **Remain vigilant during the dry fire season;**
6. **Form, join & support a fire patrol team in your area;**
7. **Have a fire management strategy;**
8. **Build a fire team to help during fire suppression**



Assessing the extent of damage



Forest Plantation after a fire went through it



Periphery of the gutted eucalyptus farm



KANGULUMIRA CLONAL NURSERY

'Grow rich,
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Environment'

SPGS/UTGA certified: 4 stars ★★★★★

Dealers in Clonal Eucalyptus, Teak & Pine

Quality seedlings of:

- Eucalyptus clones (GUs & GCs),
- Clonal Pine (Australia F2),
- Teak (Kilombero, Tanzania)
- Gmelina Arborea,
- Melia volkensii,
- Terminalia superba,
- Grevillia robusta,
- Measopsis eminii (Musizi) and other fruit trees.

Other services offered:

- Crates for transporting the seedlings are available at for hire at low rates.
- Expert and technical advice on Site and Species matching, assessment of what tree species is best recommended for particular soils
- Plantation establishment and maintenance,
- Tree disease control & management.

Information and bookings contact: Pastor Aboneka Michael on

0776593286 / 0785925266
Email: michaelaboneka@gmail.com

Location: 18km from Kayunga town, along Kayunga-Jinja road; branch off at Kangulumira town and proceed for 1km to reach the nursery. SEETA PLANT NURSERY; Located at Namyoya, 3km off Namugongo road.

Forestry tit bits

Signing of the Paris Climate Change Agreement slated for 22 April 2016

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has invited all world leaders to a signing ceremony on 22 April for the historic climate agreement that was reached in Paris in December last year. The signing event will take place at UN Headquarters in New York on the first day the agreement will be open for signature, which coincides with the observance of International Mother Earth Day, observed in many countries as simply Earth Day. The Secretary-General intends to use the occasion of the signing ceremony to further engage world leaders as well as those from business and civil society to put the new agreement into action quickly.

At the request of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, UN-NGLS is going to find a speaker from civil society for the opening session of the signing ceremony, in recognition of the essential role played by civil society action in developing and implementing solutions to build a safer, greener and more livable world for all people. For this key speaking role, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General will get someone from a developing country who will share a compelling story of a new innovation or solution (from social entrepreneurship to engineering to community action) that has been put into practice that is delivering tangible results on climate change mitigation or adaptation. The speaker with public speaking experience will deliver a short, compelling speech in front of world leaders and the media.

STOP PRESS

NOTICE TO ALL PRIVATE TREE FARMERS IN CENTRAL FOREST RESERVES (CFRs)

National Forestry Authority (NFA) wishes to remind all Private Tree Farmers in Central Forest Reserves with outstanding dues to settle them in accordance with the terms of their offers/licenses. All payments should be made within one month effective 1st March 2016. A surcharge of 20% shall be levied on defaulters. All private Tree Farmers in CFRs are accordingly advised to take note of the revised Annual Land License fees against which all payments shall be applied as follows:

Offer/License category	Distance from town council, Municipality or city	Revised fees. [UGX]
Category A	Within 15 km	30,121
Category B	Within 16-49km	20,142
Category C	Within 50-150 km	13,400
Category D	Beyond 150 km	8900

NFA reminds all private tree farmers to comply with the terms of their offers/licenses and the following interventions will be applied where such terms have not been met.

- All Private Tree Farmers authorized to establish forest plantations and have not fulfilled all provisions in the agreements will have their offers withdrawn and offers/licenses cancelled.
- All Private Tree Farmers who have not met the annual planting schedules will have their respective offers/ Licenses revised to the planted area only.
- All Private Tree Farmers who are carrying out unauthorized activities in the CFRs should stop hence forth or risk having their offers/licenses cancelled and /or being prosecuted as provided in the National Forestry and Tree planting Act

UTGA will continue to engage and lobby NFA on those aspects that don't promote Members interests especially the profitability and efficiency of the industry

UTG SACCO reduces lending rates & increases loan amount

UTG-SACCO has reduced its lending rates from 5% per month to 3% per month. Members can now enjoy the new rates with increased loan amount.

- Are you facing any cash flow challenges?
- Do you want to buy a machine for processing?
- Do you want to transport your logs to the supplier?
- Or do you want to pay contractors for an activity on the farm?

Come to UTG-SACCO and we answer all those questions.

UTGA-SACCO offers quick solutions to your cash flow problems.

How to start or to become a UTG-SACCO member:

1. Pay membership of UGX 100,000
2. Buy 50 shares equivalent to UGX, 1000,000
3. Make monthly Savings of 50,000 for at least 3 months
4. Get two SACCO members to guarantee your loan.

Apply now and do not let the town shaker swallow you when UTG-SACCO can save your situation.

Contact us at:

UTGA Office

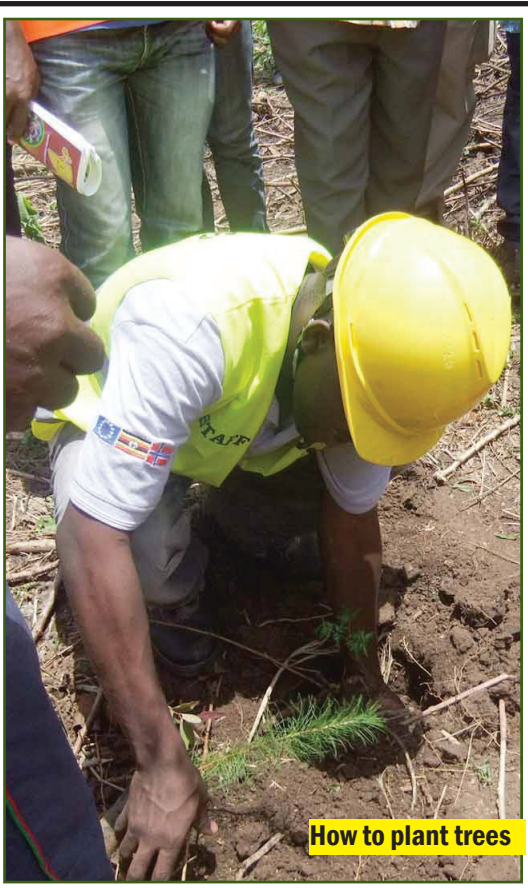
Tel: **0414660565**

Mob: **0776191414**

Email: utg_sacco@hotmail.com



Plantation owner Elvis Mulimba explains some important must-does



How to plant trees

UTGA/SPGS forest day for forestry whatsapp group

On Saturday 27/02/2016, UTGA and SPGS working with G6 Agribusiness Platform organised a forest excursion for a forestry whatsapp group of farmers engaging in commercial forestry. The group is a loose online forum of tree growers, many of them start-ups in the business but with interest and desire to grow trees. They were hosted by a UTGA Member, Elvis Mulimba at his plantation in Busukuma, Wakiso off Gayaza road. the training was carried out by UTGA and SPGS and the group was taken through important aspects along the commercial forestry value chain.



UTGA and SPGS illustrate to the growers

UTGA News is a digital newsletter for the Uganda Timber Growers Association. It is published semimonthly (twice a month) to briefly summarize recent forestry-related publications, projects, activities, and news. Do you have news, content, or ideas that you want to share in upcoming newsletters? Please send us your segments on articles and opinions on your organization, partnership, project, group, field stories, successes, challenges, fact sheets,

papers, books, guides, or other resources, upcoming or past events. UTGA News is a great way to reach a wide audience of foresters, natural resource persons, practitioners, scientists and the publics across the Uganda, East Africa and across the globe. If you have friends (*of forestry*) or anyone you think will benefit if they receive UTGA News, please send their email addresses to dennisk@utga.ug.

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