

Del Monte Kenya has invested Ksh580 million (US\$5.6 million) in a new fresh fruit packing facility in the East African country as part of its plan to expand production and distribution, [Capital Business](#) reports.

The new facility will have a processing capacity of 60 metric tons (MT) of fresh fruits per year, it added. These fruits will include pineapples, avocados, mangos and passion fruit.

The company says the new plant will create 200 new jobs, boosting the economies of Murang'a and Kiambu counties.

Del Monte's managing director Stergios Gkaliasoutsas believes this move will help the company increase its reach.

"Del Monte Kenya plans to source fruit from local and regional growers in Murang'a and Kiambu counties," he says. "We will prepare and package the products from the new Del Monte facility for both local and international markets."

Workers are now constructing the plant within Del Monte Kenya's plantation in Murang'a. The company reportedly expects to begin operations there in August 2019.

## **Del Monte Kenya's relationship with the country**

Currently, Del Monte Kenya employs over 6,500 employees and creates additional 28,000 jobs indirectly through its activities.

"Over the past several decades we have turned vacant, unoccupied, unused land into thriving plantations with irrigation and water infrastructure, roads, clinics, and schools that benefit the entire community.

"We're now looking forward to taking these accomplishments further alongside the Kenyan government and its people," Gkaliasoutsas emphasized.

Still, the company has faced its fair share of resistance in the country.

In April, it [lost a land lease suit](#) in the nation just as it began the process of renewing its 99-year lease, which comes to an end in 2022.

Locals James Mwangi and Ephantus Githae petitioned to halt the corporation's land renewal process. They argued it should not commence again until public bidding was finished.

