



How Farmers can Link up to Industries, by Experts



Cross section of Farmers at a workshop organised by ARMTI in partnership with HarvestPlus for 100 farmers from Oyo and Ogun State held at IITA, Ibadan

Farmers have been urged to see their farms as business entities that are linked to expansive value chains, which feed agro-allied and other industries.

This charge was made recently, by agricultural development experts during a field trip organized by the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute of Nigeria (ARMTI), Ilorin, for 100 farmers in Ogun and Oyo States, to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan.

HarvestPlus Nigeria facilitated the training on strategies for packaging and marketing products to the final consumers and produce processing, which included a tour of the cassava processing facility in the IITA campus.

Consultant to ARMTI on value chain development, Prof. Emmanuel Lufadeju, said that the 2-day training was to intimate farmers on opportunities in the value chain of agricultural commodities, including maize, cassava, yam, poultry, and fisheries and

others.

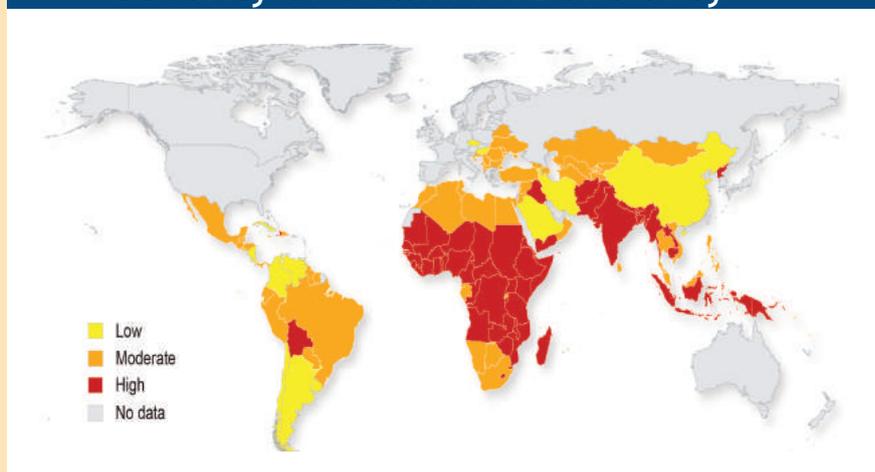
Noting that farmers stand a better chance at excelling in agriculture with the policies being adopted by the state and federal governments, he said, "Everybody is geared towards farming now. These people already have farms. What we are advising them to do is to organize themselves into cooperatives, put up a proposal and look for funding from industries and agencies that need and promote agriculture, respectively."

The Country Manager, HarvestPlus, Paul Ilona, said that farmers would start to make meaningful impact on Nigeria's GDP when they work as groups in cooperatives, so that they not only have better access to funds but also cultivate more land, a development, he noted, would help in improving food security and reducing the country's frightening food import bill.

Why Do We Need Vitamin A?

Vitamin A is essential for good vision, strong immune system, prevention diarrhea and healthy skin. Deficiency results in growth retardation, damage to mucous membrane tracts, reproductive disorders, eye damage—and ultimately blindness. Children with vitamin A deficiency are often deficient in multiple micro-nutrients and are likely to be anaemic. Pregnant women with vitamin A deficiency may be at increased risk of mortality

Severity of Vitamin A Deficiency



Source: Global Prevalence of Vitamin A Deficiency in Population at Risk 1995-2005: WHO Global Database on Vitamin A Deficiency (<http://www.who.int/vmnis/en/>)

Embrace Agribusiness, CATO Charges Youths



CEO CATO Foods, Pelumi Aribisala, educates worshippers at RCCG CAMP on Biofortified Crops & Foods

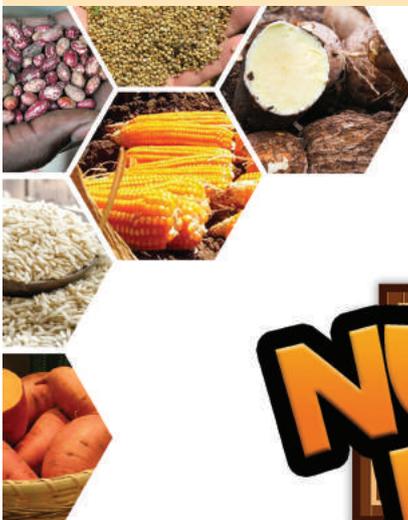
The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CATO Agro-allied Global Concepts, Pelumi Aribisala, has urged youths to turn to agriculture in the face of dire economic challenges facing Nigeria, saying even as many pray for divine intervention, it is important that young people explore opportunities in processing farm produce.

Aribisala said this on the sideline of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) camp-ground, during the church's 64th Annual Holy Ghost Convention tagged 'Amen.' The firm took the message of biofortification and opportunities in the mandate crops' value chain to the convention, which held from August 1 to 7 and attracted more than 2 million worshippers from around the world.

A youth-driven agro-allied company, CATO Foods, is engaged in the biofortified crops value chain and works closely with HarvestPlus Nigeria as a

non-contractual partner in commercializing some of HarvestPlus innovative products.

Aribisala said that the 64th edition of the annual convention provided a good platform to spread the word on HarvestPlus mandate, which is to ensure that people grow bio-fortified crops and consume its nutritious value-added products, adding, "What many young people see as challenges are actually opportunities, especially when it comes to farming. There is no challenge that we cannot overcome. Rather than sit back and complain about jobs and money and all that, this is a good opportunity for them to come up with innovative products by processing farm produce."



Register to attend at - www.nutritiousfoodfair.org

NUTRITIOUS FOOD FAIR

Calabar

Powered by HarvestPlus

...You Are What You Eat

Theme: Multisectoral Partnership to Promote more Nutritious Crops and Foods

100 EXHIBITORS | 5,000 ATTENDEES | 10 SPEAKERS | 10 COUNTRIES

Date: 9 - 11 November, 2016 Venue: Calabar International Convention Centre / TINAPA



Join the Conversation... @harvestplus_ng

For Enquiries Contact: p.ilona@cgiar.org - 08034576085 i.okonkwo@cgiar.org - 07039390279 fidelisduker@yahoo.com - 08023188813

HarvestPlus Strengthens Ties with ECOWAS Farmers

Farmers under the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) cooperative in 22 local government areas in Oyo State have committed to increasing the production of biofortified crops in the state.

This was the submission at a farmers meeting held on September 1, at Sango, in Ibadan. The coordinators from the local government areas assured on the resolve of the cooperative to get its members to plant vitamin A cassava and maize before the end of the planting season.

The Marketing Officer, HarvestPlus Nigeria, Joseph Odamas said the meeting was called to mainstream biofortified crops —cassava and maize — into the ECOWAS farmers' cooperative scheme. Noting there

was a need to engage more farmers in Oyo state in planting Vitamin A cassava and maize, he said it was only appropriate to identify farmers, who have planted the crops, encourage them to get more of their colleagues on board and enlighten them on the health benefits of the crops.

Another key objective of the meeting, according to him, was to inform the farmers that meals made from biofortified crops have been adopted for the Home Grown School Feeding Program in the state, assuring them that the market for their produce has grown.

The coordinators, through the facilitator, Comrade Agunbiade, thanked HarvestPlus for its efforts in ensuring that farmers

make the best of their endeavour, stressing that more of such initiative was welcome.

He said the farmers have agreed to hold a state-wide meeting so as to communicate the deliberations to more members of the cooperative.



Prince Oyerogba Olalekan from Iddo Local Government Area with a vitamin A cassava stem pack at the ECOWAS farmers meeting

Premier Seeds Exceeds Sales Projections For Vitamin A Maize, Sells 15t

Premier Seeds has sold about 15 tonnes of vitamin A maize to farmers in South West, Nigeria, as at August 2016, exceeding its projection for the period.

The Marketing Officer of the company in South West, Nigeria, Mr. Seye Kalejaiye, who disclosed this at the company's zonal office in Ibadan, said that the feat was as a result of growing interest in and adoption of vitamin A maize by farmers in the region, especially as those who grew the crops in the last planting season recorded improved yields and sales.

On his company's collaboration with HarvestPlus Nigeria, he said, "The collaboration started last year when HarvestPlus wanted us to make vitamin A maize available for farms to grow, which we did. HarvestPlus thereafter organised programmes and we followed their lead and made the seeds available. The collab-



Marketing Officer, Premier Seeds, Seye Kalejaiye

oration so far has been successful. In fact, for Premier seeds, it has been a success story. It has brought about increase in sales."

Noting that improved awareness contributed to the success story, he said, "Before now, people rarely talked about vitamin A maize. But it has actually been there for a while. HarvestPlus has helped us in creating awareness

through its radio programme and other platforms. Now, people are aware of the benefits of vitamin A maize and they are buying it. In fact, this year, we have exceeded our target for Ibadan and it's not even the end of the year, yet. Sales have increased, and people are still calling to buy more."

Asked about the response of farmers to the product, he said, "They love it. The yield and the quality of the grains are wonderful. We have been able to speak with some of the farmers and have even gotten the grains to see for ourselves. The farmers keep coming back, asking for more. It is nice, really. We have information from one of our customers, who said when he took it to the market and compared it with other varieties being sold by other farmers, his was commanding good market price."

JDPM Trains Processors on Quality Vitamin A Garri Production

Justice, Development and Peace Movement (JDPM), a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in partnership with HarvestPlus Nigeria, on August 24, trained over 30 processors in Otu, Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State on best practices in producing high quality vitamin A garri.

HarvestPlus partnership with JDPM, which is a development arm of the Catholic Diocese of Oyo, began in 2011 with the multiplication of one hectare of vitamin A cassava stems in JDPM's coverage area. Till date, over 100 hectares of the product have been cultivated, with more than 50 farmers and not less



Rev. Fr. Clement Ishola welcoming the participants to the programme

than 8,000 households reached with the stems.

Garri is a major product from the 'yellow' cassava in South Western Nigeria. To ensure farmers make the best of their produce, JDPM ensured that farmers in its target areas engage in processing vitamin A cassava roots into garri and other finished products. So far, about

70 women have been trained on how to process Vitamin A garri. The need to upgrade the skills of processes led to the recent training of trainers (ToT) in Otu town.

The Nutrition Officer, HarvestPlus Nigeria, Mrs. Olatundun Kalejaye and Post-Harvest Specialist, Mrs. Mary Okocha, served as key

resource persons for the training. They took the processors through the standards in garri processing, advising them on how best to store vitamin A garri to ensure that the micro-nutrients are not lost.

The training session was graced by Assistant Coordinator of JDPM, Rev. Fr. Paul Oshin and the coordinator of the Divine Mercy Gari Processing Centre, Rev. Fr. Clement Ishola.

Members of the JDPM team that facilitated the training are the JDPM Programme Manager, Awoyinka Kolawole, and the project officers, Mr. Nathaniel Ajayi and Mr. Sola Oyekan.

FECA Students To Explore Opportunities In Biofortified Crops Value Chains



Cross section of students of Federal College of Agriculture Akure (FECA) during a visit to HarvestPlus Nigeria, Country Office

To get exposed to the business prospects in the vitamin A cassava and maize value chains, final year students of the Federal College of Agriculture, Akure (FECA), recently, paid a courtesy visit to HarvestPlus Country Office.

The students, numbering about 30 and of the Crop Production Technology Department at the in-

stitution, learnt of HarvestPlus efforts in tackling malnutrition and improving public health.

HarvestPlus Events and Partnership Officer, Ifeoma Okonkwo, who made the presentation during the visit, said there are ample opportunities for the students to explore the vitamin A cassava and maize value chains, especially as

they were about to leave school and go into the labour market.

"With your diplomas and knowledge of the immense benefits of vitamin A cassava and maize, you are better positioned to not just get become self-employed, but to create jobs for others," she said.

The students were conducted on a tour of the processing facility, as well as HarvestPlus' farms inside the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) campus.

The students lauded HarvestPlus for its efforts in delivering vitamin A cassava and maize in Nigeria, noting that the support provided by the organization would ensure that the students, who are hoping to be investors in the value chain, would get good value for their efforts.