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GHANA TODAY

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AGRICULTURE'S

CLIMATE QUEST

NOVEMBER 2023





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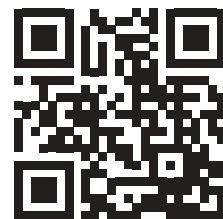
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Agriculture Technology is the Way to Go

By Prince Opoku Dogbey

In a world grappling with a rapidly growing population, climate change, resource depletion, and the need for sustainable practices, agriculture technology, or AgTech, has emerged as the key to overcoming these challenges. AgTech is transforming the way we grow, manage, and harvest food, and its significance cannot be overstated.

Traditional agriculture, once characterized by manual labor and rudimentary tools, is now evolving into a high-tech industry. The global food system faces numerous challenges, from increasing demands for food production to the depletion of natural resources. AgTech offers solutions to address these pressing issues.

Precision farming, enabled by sensors, drones, and satellite data, provides real-time information on soil conditions, weather patterns, and crop health. This data-driven approach allows farmers to make informed decisions about planting, irrigation, and harvesting, reducing waste and increasing yields.

Sustainable agriculture is crucial for environmental preservation. AgTech contributes by promoting resource-efficient farming, such as smart irrigation systems and autonomous machinery that minimize water and fuel consumption.

Genetic engineering, including genetically modified crops, enhances crop resistance to pests, diseases, and extreme weather. These advances increase food production while reducing the need for chemical pesticides.

Vertical farming, which involves growing crops in stacked layers, conserves space and resources and enables year-round cultivation in controlled environments.

Blockchain technology ensures transparency and traceability in the food supply chain, enhancing food safety and quality.

However, challenges exist, including the cost of technology adoption and data security concerns. Collaboration between governments, private companies, and research institutions is vital to ensure equitable access to AgTech and data protection measures.

In conclusion, agriculture technology is the way forward in addressing the challenges of modern agriculture. It enables sustainable food production, conserves resources, and promotes food security. Ensuring access for all and safeguarding data privacy will be essential as we embrace these innovations.



Mulberry

By Nana Ama Oforiwaa Antwi

Origin

Mulberries are native to temperate Asia and North America as they were traditionally grown mainly for their leaves to feed silkworms

Description

The Mulberry plant is a genus of about 10 species of small to medium-sized trees in the family Moraceae and they are sweet edible fruits. Mulberries are deciduous and have toothed, sometimes lobed leaves. The fruits somewhat resemble blackberries and ripen to white, pink, red, or purple and the fruits grow in clusters.

Health Benefits

Lowers Cholesterol levels

Studies have shown that, mulberries and its extracts can reduce excess fat and lower cholesterol levels. Also, some test-tube experiments suggest that they reduce the formation of fat in the liver thereby potentially helping in the prevention of fatty liver disease.

Improves Blood Sugar Control

Mulberries contain the compound 1-deoxynojirimycin (DNJ), which inhibits an enzyme in your gut that breaks down carbs making them beneficial against diabetes by slowing down the increase in blood sugar after meals.

Reduces Cancer risk

Studies indicate that antioxidants in mulberry juice can decrease oxidative stress —potentially reducing cancer risk. In China, mulberries, have been used in traditional medicines as a remedy for cancer for hundreds of years.

Note: If you are sensitive of pollens, then be careful of mulberries as some individuals have been reported to have allergic reactions to them.

Absa Bank and US Government Team Up to Boost Ghana's MSMEs

By Nana Ama Oforiwa Antwi



Absa Bank, in collaboration with the United States Government, has launched a \$20 million financing program designed to strengthen agricultural micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Ghana.

This partnership underscores Absa Bank's unwavering commitment to enhancing financial inclusion within Ghana's agricultural sector. It aligns with the bank's broader mission of nurturing the growth of MSMEs and empowering local farmers and agribusinesses.

Led by the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) in coordination with USAID, the program will see Absa Bank Ghana facilitating up to \$20 million in lending by reducing risk and expanding credit accessibility to underserved regions and borrowers, especially in northern Ghana.

The initiative is expected to create employment opportunities, enhance food security, and contribute to the overall economic development of the country.

During the partnership signing ceremony, Grace Anim-Yeboah, Business Banking Director at Absa Bank, expressed her enthusiasm, stating, "We are thrilled to collaborate with USAID and other partners on this vital initiative. Agriculture is a cornerstone of the Ghanaian economy, and supporting MSMEs in this sector is pivotal to driving economic growth and prosperity."

"We are confident that this initiative will not only improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers but also enhance the sustainability and resilience of Ghana's agricultural sector," added Grace Anim-Yeboah.

Scott Nathan, the CEO of U.S. International DFC, emphasized the U.S. government's commitment to supporting Ghana in fully harnessing its agricultural potential through the expansion of small businesses in the agriculture sector. He noted that these partnerships underscore their ongoing dedication to the success of Ghana's private sector and economic growth in the country.

The U.S. Ambassador to Ghana, Virginia Palmer, who attended the signing ceremony, expressed her excitement at the successful establishment of this partnership to support the growth of agribusinesses

Ambassador Palmer highlighted the DFC's commitment to backing agriculture projects that promote small businesses, contribute to healthy populations, and enhance the livelihoods of communities in Ghana.

Kenyan Agriculture CS Emphasizes Tech for Food Security

By Prince Opoku Dogbey

Kenya's Agriculture Cabinet Secretary, Mithika Linturi, issued a resounding call for the adoption of agricultural technology (AgTech) as the foundation of global food security.

In his address at the African Conference on Agricultural Technology, Linturi emphasized the paramount importance of technology to address the intertwined challenges of feeding a surging world population and confronting the adverse impacts of climate change.

"We must accept the reality of life that the world is grappling with serious effects of climate change. In order to deal with these challenges and the growing population, we must be ready to adapt to investing in technologies," Linturi declared.

The global population is expanding, climate change is altering weather patterns, and resources are depleting. In this context, the adoption of AgTech is not merely advantageous but an urgent necessity.

Linturi emphasized the need to invest in technology to boost crop yields, minimize post-harvest losses, and develop drought-resistant crops capable of withstanding the effects of climate change. As climate-related disruptions become more frequent, these technological advancements are crucial to ensure food security.

The African Conference on Agricultural Technology, organized by the African Agricultural Technology Foundation, serves as a pivotal plat-

form for stakeholders across the agricultural spectrum, including researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, and innovators.

The event was themed "Agricultural Resilience Through Innovation" and underscores the centrality of science, technology, and innovation in transforming the agricultural landscape on the continent.

The conference aims to provide a platform for the exchange of ideas, sharing of best practices, and exploration of innovative solutions to enhance agricultural productivity across the African continent. It also serves as an opportunity to assess the progress made in achieving food and agriculture targets.

Dr. Kenton Dashiell, Deputy Director General of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, highlighted that Africa's food systems must transform to achieve food security and address environmental challenges. He outlined the importance of a convergence of science and technology, favorable policies, support institutions, access to finance, and market development in driving this transformation.



China and U.S. Foster Strong Agricultural Ties at CIIE

By Prince Opoku Dogbey

Jim Sutter, CEO of the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), has emphasized the robust and enduring agricultural partnership between China and the United States, with the China International Import Expo (CIIE) playing a pivotal role in cementing this long-term relationship.

Sutter highlighted the significance of the CIIE as a platform for showcasing U.S. soy and the collaborative efforts of American farmers and exporters. He noted that the USSEC has been collaborating with China since 1982, and the CIIE serves as a crucial occasion to engage with Chinese companies that are prominent buyers of U.S. soy.

Sutter expressed the strength of the relationship between China and the United States, particularly in the field of agriculture. He underlined the importance of this event to demonstrate support for Chinese customers of U.S. agricultural products and to build upon existing ties.

China's consistent appetite for U.S. agricultural products was acknowledged by Sutter, indicating that many USSEC member companies have enjoyed fruitful partnerships in the Chinese market over an extended period.

He emphasized the smooth trade relations between U.S. and Chinese companies, underlining the mutual



desire for continued business collaboration. The CEO stressed the importance of long-term thinking and building enduring relationships with China. He emphasized the potential for collaboration in the domain of climate-smart agriculture and sustainability, as China's increasing focus in these areas presents a "win-win" opportunity for both countries.

As China seeks to adopt climate-smart agriculture practices and sustainable products, Sutter sees an opportunity for U.S. farmers and exporters to provide stable raw materials. U.S. soy's strong sustainability track record and low carbon footprint position it as an appealing choice for Chinese firms seeking sustainable solutions.

Sutter also highlighted the potential for China-U.S. agricultural cooperation to expand further in the future, especially in the production of sustainable goods. The foundation for such cooperation is rooted in the long-term commitment of both nations, offering a promising outlook for the agricultural partnership between China and the United States.



The Doomsday Vault: Safeguarding Humanity's Food Future

By Nana Ama Oforiwaa Antwi

Remember how COVID-19 gave most of us the scare of our lives? How we lost several loved ones, and our source of livelihoods? Well it also exposed the weak spots in our systems and I bet most of us have since then taken certain new initiatives and decisions to protect ourselves should such a thing happen again.

Covid-19 exposed how unprepared most countries are for such situations. What preparations are we making to ensure food security should a doomsday befall us.

On that note, ever heard of the doomsday vault?

This article will tell you all about the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway, an organisation purposely created to save the world from starvation should we encounter a doomsday. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault is located on a remote Norwegian Island of Spitsbergen and owned by the government. It is designed to withstand all natural and human disasters that is why many refer to it as “the doomsday vault”.

The Svalbard Global Seed Vault is the largest collection of crop diversity in one single location.

It safeguards over 1.2 million seed samples and for 15 years, the Seed Vault has welcomed gene banks from across the world to conserve copies of their seed diversity. This diversity is needed to adapt agrifood systems to a rapidly changing climate and other environmental challenges.

The Seed Vault safeguards duplicates of 1,214,827 seed samples from almost every country in the world, with room for millions more. This is because, as its name connotes, the vault serves as a backup to secure the foundation of our future food supply.

These encompass a wide spectrum, including distinctive varieties of essential African and Asian food staples such as maize, rice, wheat, cowpea, and sorghum, as well as European and South American versions of crops like eggplant, lettuce, barley, and potato. In essence, the Seed Vault stands as the repository for the most diverse collection of food crop seeds worldwide.

Ghana in October became the 100th depositor of the vault. The Plant Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research deposited 4 boxes of key crops like rice, maize, eggplant, and different beans varieties to the vault.

This initiative follows 15 other institutions, including one other first-time depositor – the Bonn University Botanic Gardens (Germany) – in safeguarding duplicates of their seed collections inside the Vault.



Farming Goes Mobile: The App Revolution

By Prince Opoku Dogbey

In an era where technology is driving transformation across industries, agriculture has not remained untouched. One of the most remarkable advancements in recent years is the proliferation of mobile apps designed to empower and assist farmers.

These applications are playing a pivotal role in reshaping traditional farming practices and addressing some of the age-old challenges faced by farmers.

Mobile apps for farmers offer a wide range of features and functionalities tailored to the specific needs of agriculture. From crop management to weather forecasting, market information, and financial planning, these apps provide a comprehensive toolkit for modern farmers.

Farmers can use these apps to access real-time weather data, helping them make informed decisions about planting and harvesting. This is particularly valuable in a world grappling with the unpredictable effects of climate change. In addition, mobile apps enable farmers to monitor crop health,

detect diseases early, and optimize irrigation, ultimately leading to increased yields.

Market information apps allow farmers to stay updated on commodity prices and market trends, empowering them to make timely and profitable sales. Furthermore, financial planning apps help in budgeting and managing expenses, enhancing the overall financial stability of farming operations.

The convenience and accessibility of mobile apps are transforming agriculture into a more efficient, data-driven, and sustainable industry. By harnessing the power of technology, these apps are empowering farmers to navigate the complexities of modern agriculture with greater ease and efficiency, ultimately contributing to food security and the well-being of farming communities.

“Market information apps allow farmers to stay updated on commodity prices and market trends, empowering them to make timely and profitable sales.

What's so special about organic farming?

By Prince Opoku Dogbey

Have you ever wondered what's so special about organic agriculture? Well, besides the delicious taste of those organic tomatoes you pick up at your local market, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye.

Organic farming is all about sustainability and harmony with nature. It's like a dance where farmers and the environment are the perfect partners. When you choose organic, you're supporting a farming approach that avoids synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Instead, it relies on natural methods, like beneficial insects and compost, to nurture crops.

And guess what? Organic farms often prioritize soil health, which leads to better-tasting, more nutritious produce. Plus, they tend to use less water and reduce pollution. So, not only are you getting healthier, tastier food, but you're also helping to protect the planet.

The next time you savor those juicy, organic strawberries or crunch on an organic carrot, remember that you're not just eating; you're part of a beautiful, sustainable farming story. Cheers to healthy, delicious food and a greener planet!



A man in a green sweater is kneeling in a field, working with a young tree. The field is filled with many other young trees, some with white protective sleeves. The background shows a clear blue sky.

AFRICA'S CLIMATE CRISIS: INNOVATING FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

By Nana Ama Oforiwaah Antwi

Africa is significantly affected by global warming despite its limited contribution to the problem. Recent findings reveal a stark reality where 17 out of the 20 countries most vulnerable to climate change are located in Africa.

This alarming trend is taking a toll on the continent, with climate change already affecting 2 to 9 percent of national budgets.

The most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) underscores that North Africa and West Africa are particularly susceptible to climate change, with anticipated temperature increases ranging from 1.5°C to 3°C.

The gravity of this situation was brought to the forefront during a meeting held as part of the second joint Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts (ICSOE) for North and West Africa. The participants, including experts, researchers, development practitioners, and representatives from 22 North and West African countries, gathered to assess the impact of climate change in these sub-regions.

The event, organized by the ECA Offices for North and West Africa, featured an expert group meeting with the theme "Transition to Renewable Resources for Energy and Food Security in North and West Africa." This meeting underscored three critical issues of paramount importance.

First, it emphasized the impact of climate change on economic and social development strategies. The increasing vulnerability to climate change poses a direct challenge to the sustainable growth of these regions, making it imperative to find innovative solutions to mitigate its impacts.

The third critical point was the role of intra-African trade in facilitating and accelerating the energy and agricultural transition. By promoting regional trade and cooperation, African countries can strengthen their energy security and bolster the agricultural sector, contributing to food security and the development of sub-regional value chains.

Zuzana Brixiova Schwidrowski, Director of the ECA office for North Africa, emphasized the urgency of addressing water scarcity in North Africa, which could affect a significant portion of GDP and the population. She further highlighted the potential of renewable resources to not only overcome these challenges but also drive sustainable economic development, reduce poverty, create jobs, and promote social equity in the region.

Ngone Diop, Director of the ECA office for West Africa, noted the persistent challenge of food insecurity in Africa, affecting a substantial 20 percent of the continent's population, well above the global rate of 9.8 percent.

Bee Pollination

Did you know that bees are essential to agriculture? They play a vital role in pollinating many crops, including fruits, vegetables, and nuts. It's estimated that one-third of the world's food supply depends on bee pollination.



Goat's Milk

Goat's milk is not only nutritious but is also easier to digest for some individuals compared to cow's milk



A Call to Action from a Ghanaian Climate Change Fellow

By Prince Opoku Dogbey



As the global climate crisis continues to escalate, it is increasingly clear that one of the most vulnerable sectors is agriculture.

In a recent interview with a climate change fellow at the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability Studies at the University of Ghana, we delved into the profound impact of climate change on agriculture and the urgent need to take action. With his expertise and passion for environmental conservation, the fellow provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Climate change is casting a dark shadow over agriculture, which is the backbone of many economies, especially in developing countries like Ghana. The fellow highlighted how rising temperatures, erratic rainfall patterns, and extreme weather events are affecting agricultural productivity and food security in the region. Traditional farming practices are becoming increasingly inadequate in the face of such unpredictable conditions, leading to reduced crop yields and livestock losses.

One of the major concerns expressed during the interview was the effect of climate change on smallholder farmers, who make up a significant portion of the agricultural workforce in Ghana. These farmers often lack the resources and access to technology needed to adapt to climate change. As a result, they bear the brunt of its impact, facing increased hardships and economic instability.

The fellow emphasized that the time to act is now. Delaying action on climate change will only exacerbate the challenges faced by farmers and communities. Immediate measures need to be taken to build resilience in the agricultural sector and safeguard livelihoods. He stressed the importance of promoting climate-smart agriculture, which involves integrating climate adaptation and mitigation strategies into farming practices.

Adopting climate-smart agricultural practices can include:

Diversification of Crops: Encouraging farmers to grow a variety of crops can help mitigate risks associated with changing climate conditions. Crop diversification enhances resilience, as certain crops may be more resistant to specific weather extremes.



Water Management: Implementing efficient irrigation systems and rainwater harvesting techniques can help conserve water and ensure its availability during dry spells or prolonged droughts.

Agroforestry: Incorporating trees into agricultural landscapes can provide shade, prevent soil erosion, and improve soil health, creating a more resilient farming environment.

Soil Conservation: Practicing no-till or conservation tillage methods can help retain moisture in the soil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Capacity Building and Education: Equipping farmers with knowledge and skills related to climate change adaptation and sustainable agricultural practices can empower them to make informed decisions.

The climate change fellow stressed the significance of collaborative efforts among governments, research institutions, NGOs, and local communities. He highlighted the need for policy support and investment in research and development to scale up climate-smart agricultural practices.

Dr. Yaw Agyeman Boafo

Climate Change Fellow, University Of Ghana

Furthermore, public awareness and education on climate change are crucial to fostering a sense of responsibility among individuals and communities. The fellow encouraged the dissemination of accurate information about climate change and its impacts to inspire collective action.

In conclusion, the interview with the climate change fellow shed light on the critical intersection between climate change and agriculture in Ghana. The urgency to address this pressing issue is evident as smallholder farmers and vulnerable communities face mounting challenges. Embracing climate-smart agricultural practices and implementing proactive policies can pave the way for a more resilient and sustainable future. The call to action is clear: the time to act on climate change is now, and through collective efforts, we can create a more secure and prosperous path for agriculture in Ghana and beyond.

Mulberry Sorbet

By Nana Ama Oforiwaa Antwi

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- 4 cups mulberries (I didn't bother to remove the green stems, since I strained the pureed berries later)
- 2 tablespoons raspberry liqueur

Instructions

- In a small saucepan, bring sugar, water and ginger to a boil over medium-high heat.
- Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 3 minutes. Remove from heat and let syrup stand 10 minutes.
- Place berries in blender and pour syrup over berries. Blend until smooth.
- Strain mixture through fine-mesh strainer set over medium bowl, keeping only the liquid. Discard all solids. Stir liqueur into liquid; refrigerate at least 2 hours.
- Pour liquid into ice cream maker and churn till it thickens.
- Refrigerate for 4 hours.

Then voilaa!, your mulberry sorbet is ready to be enjoyed.

The need for farmers implementing risk reduction measures

By Jessica Meledi



Agriculture is the backbone of our global food system, providing sustenance for billions of people. However, farmers face a multitude of risks that can threaten their livelihoods and food security for the world. These risks include climate change, pest infestations, market fluctuations, and more. In response, farmers are increasingly turning to risk reduction measures to safeguard their crops, income, and the environment.

Farmers are no strangers to uncertainties. Climate change has led to unpredictable weather patterns, pest pressures are increasing, and global markets are subject to fluctuations. These challenges make it essential for farmers to adopt risk reduction measures. These measures are not only vital for their own financial stability but also for ensuring a stable food supply for our growing population.

Crop diversification is a crucial risk reduction strategy, involving planting diverse crops with varying growing seasons and resilience to different conditions, to mitigate the impact of unfavorable weather or pests.

Sustainable farming practices are gaining popularity as they promote both environmental conservation and risk reduction. These practices include no-till farming, crop rotation, and integrated pest management. By implementing sustainable techniques, farmers reduce their reliance on chemical inputs and promote long-term soil health, which, in turn, helps in mitigating the risks associated with soil degradation.

Farmers are increasingly turning to insurance and risk management tools to protect their investments. Crop insurance policies, for instance, offer a safety net in case of crop failure due to natural disasters or market fluctuations. Additionally, risk management tools and agricultural extension services provide farmers with valuable information and resources to make informed decisions.

Farmers are investing in infrastructure like irrigation systems, greenhouses, and protective structures to mitigate climate-related risks, ensuring their crops are protected from extreme weather events.

Farmers are implementing innovative risk reduction measures to protect their livelihoods and ensure sustainable food supply. These include crop diversification, sustainable farming practices, insurance, technology, cooperative networks, infrastructure investment, and education. As consumers and policymakers, we must support these resilient individuals.

Cradle of Hope

*In the shallow ground
A treasure was found
It was not gold
Nor silver
But it made joy abound
It made me quiver
Yes, it made me shiver
In the shallow ground
Lay a precious jewel
A seedling
So small and pure
In the earth's lore
Lay a fragile seedling
Ready to bear its fruits
For all to loot
In the shallow ground*

— Poem by Nana Ama Oforiwaa Antwi





Why the Youth is the future of Agriculture

By Jessica Meledi

Agriculture has been the backbone of human civilization for millennia, providing sustenance, economic stability, and a sense of community. As we stand on the brink of a new era, with growing populations and evolving global challenges, the youth are poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of agriculture.

Youth are often at the forefront of technological advancements. In agriculture, this is no different. With the rapid development of smart farming technologies, precision agriculture, and data-driven solutions, the younger generation has a natural affinity for innovation. They bring fresh perspectives to age-old farming practices, making agriculture more efficient and sustainable.

Encouraging youth to embrace technology can lead to significant leaps in productivity and sustainability. The youth are increasingly concerned about the environment and sustainability. This generation understands the pressing need to reduce the carbon footprint of agriculture and adopt eco-friendly practices. They are more likely to embrace organic farming, regenerative agriculture, and sustainable land management which is vital in addressing climate change and ensuring food security.

With the internet, the youth have access to a wealth of information about agriculture, including market trends, farming techniques, and agricultural policies. This information empowers them to make informed decisions



and adapt to the evolving demands of the industry. Again, Agriculture provides numerous opportunities for young people to start their businesses, from organic food production to agri-tourism ventures. Encouraging entrepreneurship among the youth can revitalize rural areas, create jobs, and boost local economies.

Looking at all these prospects that the youth bring to the field of Agriculture, its imperative that the youth are encouraged to explore Agriculture. They can be encouraged through ways like educating and training them with knowledge and skills on Agriculture in their school courses or online courses available, very importantly also, governments will have to provide a means to invest financially to young farmers and the few successful young farmers should be highlighted and recognized for the upcoming ones to gain interest and know its possible.

The youth are the future of agriculture, and their involvement is essential for the sector's growth and sustainability. By embracing innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship, young people can breathe new life into agriculture.

The sustainable Practice of Polyculture Farming

By Jessica Meledi

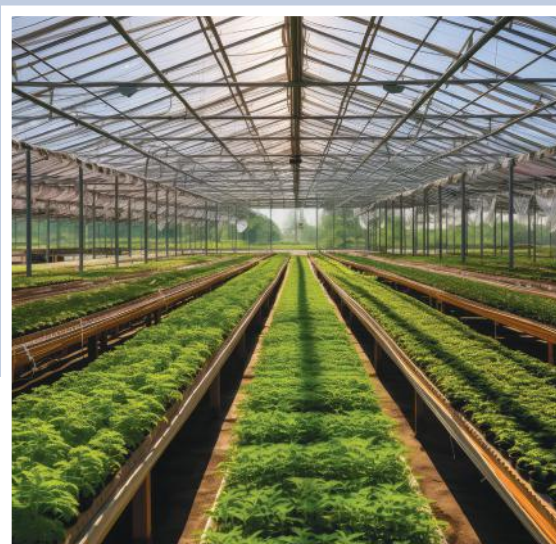
Polyculture farming is a sustainable agricultural practice that involves cultivating multiple crop species or varieties within the same field. This approach stands in contrast to monoculture, where a single crop dominates a vast area. Polyculture farming offers a range of benefits and is gaining popularity for its positive impact on the environment, biodiversity, and food security.

In polyculture farming, farmers intentionally mix different crops, such as grains, vegetables, legumes, and fruits, in a single plot. This diversity serves several purposes listed below:

Natural Pest Control: The presence of various plant species can confuse pests, making it more difficult for them to find their preferred host plants. This reduces the need for chemical pesticides and promotes a healthier ecosystem.

Improved Soil Health: Different plants have different nutrient requirements and root structures. Polyculture can improve soil fertility by enhancing nutrient cycling and reducing soil erosion.

Biodiversity: Polyculture farming creates habitats for a variety of beneficial insects and microorganisms,



further enhancing the overall ecosystem's health. It can also help preserve and protect native plant species.

Resilience: In the face of changing weather conditions and disease outbreaks, polyculture systems tend to be more resilient compared to monoculture. The diversity of crops can help ensure a stable yield.

Enhanced Nutrition: Polyculture farming often leads to a more balanced diet as it provides a wide array of crops, enhancing the diversity of nutrients in one's diet.

Sustainability: By reducing the environmental impact of farming, such as soil degradation and water pollution, polyculture contributes to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly food production system.

Polyculture farming is a sustainable practice that not only benefits the environment but also improves food security and nutrition. As we face the challenges of climate change and a growing global population, embracing polyculture farming can help create a more resilient and sustainable agricultural system for the future.

Palm fruit production, a key player in Africa's global palm oil market

By Jessica Meledi

Africa is a continent of immense natural wealth and untapped potential. Among its many resources, palm fruit stands out as a golden opportunity for economic growth and agricultural development. Palm oil, derived from the palm fruit, is a versatile and highly sought-after commodity used in various industries worldwide.

With the right strategies and sustainable practices, several African countries can capitalise on palm fruit production to yield economic benefits and contribute to global palm oil production.

Africa's abundant palm fruit resources are well-positioned to meet the increasing global demand for palm oil, a versatile commodity used in various products.

Several African countries have the potential to become major players in the palm oil industry. To start with, Nigeria is already a significant player in the African palm oil industry. With its vast arable land and suitable climate, the country can significantly increase its palm oil production and potentially become a major global exporter. Côte d'Ivoire also has a long history of palm oil production, and its government is actively encouraging investment in the sector. Ghana also has great potential for palm oil production, as the government has tried to put small-scale village oil palm farming and palm oil production into more commercial and sustainable cultivation and production. Cameroon is among the listed countries to become a major player in the palm oil industry.

To capitalise on palm oil production, it is essential for African countries to adopt sustainable practices like deforestation, and training smallholder farmers involved in oil palm production is essential for the success of the sector, including encouraging certification in palm oil production to ensure responsible practices, which in turn can attract ethical buyers and investors.

African countries listed can create jobs, boost their economies, and contribute to global palm oil production while preserving their natural landscapes and biodiversity. It is crucial that Africa make the most of this golden opportunity to ensure a prosperous and sustainable future for their people and the planet.



ONU soutient le projet d'appui maraîchère

Par Yosua Domedjui



Depuis 2016, le gouvernement bénéficie du soutien du Projet d'appui au développement des cultures maraîchères (PADMAR) du Fonds international de développement agricole (FIDA).

Les agences onusiennes se consacrent à la promotion d'une croissance économique inclusive robuste et soutenue en partenariat avec le gouvernement.

Pour ce faire, la coopération multisectorielle entre le FIDA, l'Organisation des Nations unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO) et le Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM), en appui au gouvernement, a permis la mise en place d'un secteur maraîcher organisé au Bénin.

Renforcer les capacités, créer des espaces maraîchers, entretenir les pistes rurales, faciliter l'accès à l'eau et aux équipements de production, aider à l'acquisition de la propriété foncière et permettre l'accès au marché ne sont que quelques-uns des services fournis par le PADMAR.

Une augmentation significative des rendements, une mobilité économique accrue pour un nombre important de producteurs, une meilleure résilience climatique, des milliers de maraîchers qui concluent des contrats de partenariat pour vendre leurs produits et l'adoption d'habitudes alimentaires saines par des centaines de ménages maraîchers ne sont que quelques-uns des résultats obtenus par le PADMAR.

La coopérative de services Agro-Eco, spécialisée dans la production et la vente d'engrais organiques et de compost générés à partir de larves de mouches afin d'augmenter le rendement des cultures tout en préservant l'environnement, est promue par Noël Obognon.

" Ma coopérative a réduit la durée de production des engrais organiques de trois mois à douze jours, ce qui a permis d'augmenter la production de 20 tonnes en 2019 à 240 tonnes en 2023 ". Il a ajouté : "Avec l'aide du FIDA à travers le PADMAR, le chiffre d'affaires est passé de 200 000 francs CFA en 2019 à 20 000 000 francs CFA en 2023.

Ainsi, Pauline Meto, présidente de la coopérative FIFONSI de Ouidah, affirme que " le PADMAR nous a dotés de motopompes, de pulvérisateurs, de brouettes, de petits outils de maraîchage, de bandes d'arrosage perforées " en termes d'augmentation de la capacité d'équipement de la coopérative.

Marc Fanyossè Kpadé, jeune maraîcher et membre de la coopérative, abonde dans le même sens en déclarant que le FIDA, via le PADMAR, a considérablement amélioré le statut socio-économique de son ménage en plus d'augmenter sa production. "L'augmentation de ma production agricole m'a permis d'avoir une maison, d'envoyer mes enfants à l'école et de vivre mieux qu'avant", selon lui.

C'est aussi ce qu'affirme Johanne Hounmènou. Les possibilités de culture maraîchère se sont considérablement accrues dans la communauté lacustre des Aguégoués (sud-est du Bénin) grâce à l'appui du projet pour l'installation de plates-bandes surélevées, selon ce membre d'une coopérative bénéficiaire du PADMAR.

Bénin : Produits d'assurance dans le secteur agricole

Par Yosua Domedjui

L'introduction de produits d'assurance pour le secteur agricole est prévue par le gouvernement du Bénin.

L'objectif est d'aider les producteurs et promoteurs agricoles à gérer les risques agricoles.

Le directeur du Fonds national de développement agricole (FNDA), Nicolas Ahouissoussi, affirme que les producteurs et promoteurs agricoles du Bénin ont longtemps été privés de l'accès à un instrument crucial : la couverture des risques dans le secteur agricole.

"Les institutions financières sont souvent réticentes à soutenir ce secteur agricole", a-t-il déclaré.

Selon le ministère béninois de l'agriculture, de l'élevage et du développement rural, l'agriculture est la principale source de richesse du Bénin, représentant 36 % du PIB du pays, 88 % des recettes d'exportation et 15 % du revenu national total.

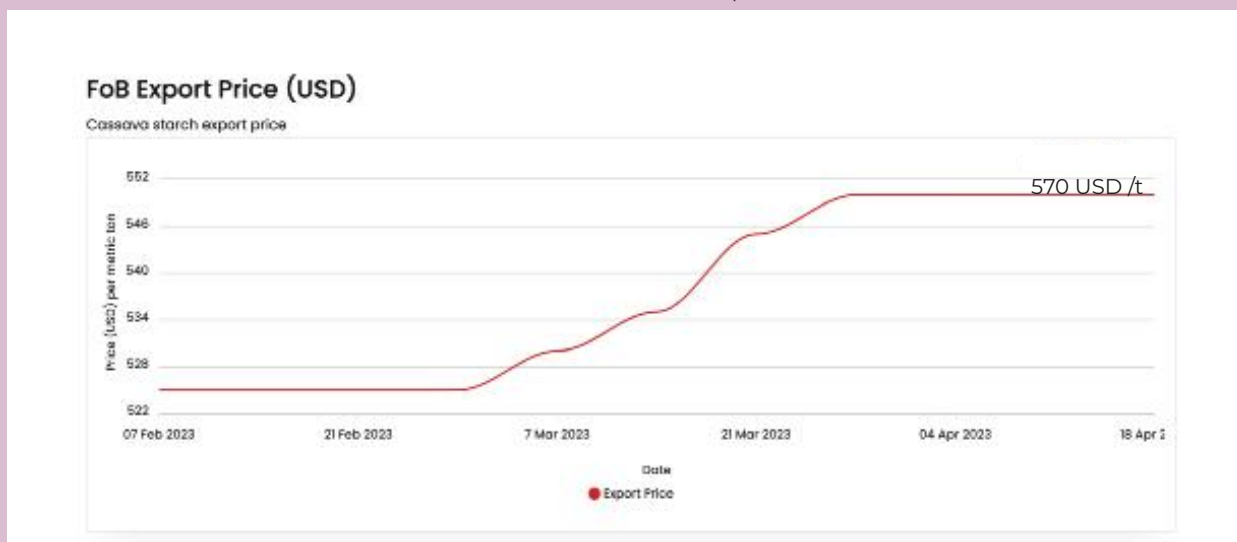
Avec 70 % des emplois, l'agriculture est le premier employeur des personnes en âge de travailler.



Market Analysis of Cassava Starch In Thailand

The market prices of cassava starch have reduced slightly over the last month. The price ranges from 500-550 US dollars/ton (3,627.80 yuan /ton). This week, the market price of cassava starch in Thailand's tapioca starch quotation is FOB (Bangkok) 495 US dollars/ton (3,788.46 yuan/ton). The starch prices in the domestic cassava starch market are stable. In Thailand, the raw material supply of fresh cassava is stable. The average starch leavening of cassava starch is between 24-28 percent. Thailand is relatively stable, the open factories remain high, and the starch output continues to increase. The speed of cassava starch clearance is still low, and the quotations of traders are slightly confused.

● Thailand Cassava Starch price



Price Factors

Quality of cassava root: Factory owners demand cassava with high starch content for production. Higher starch content would receive a higher price than the lower one. The price WWW offered by the collector is dependent on the quality of the cassava root, specifically, the starch content.

Cost of Labour: Total labour cost including farm labour for the cultivation and harvesting of cassava. The cost of labour during the harvesting period is high as compared to cultivation therefore the cost of harvesting directly affects pricing.

Harvest Yield: There is a high correlation between harvest yield and the price of cassava. The price of cassava is lower when there is a low yield. The lowest prices in June and July can be explained in a similar way but the opposite end. It is noted that the abundance of cassava roots drives the prices down.

Handling and Logistics: The storage and shipping costs from producing areas to importing countries are great determinants of cassava prices. When the shipping and transportation cost of cassava to consumers and industries are high, it affects the retail price of cassava. Cassava farmers bring their harvest to the collectors, where they are responsible for absorbing the cost of transportation from farm to collecting fields.

Harvesting time: The harvesting period is a great determinant for the price of cassava. The abundance and scarcity of cassava affect the price. The prices of fresh cassava roots often rise in November and December of every year as cassava is easily harvested during the rainy season. During the harvesting season, the prices are relatively high due to the limited supply.



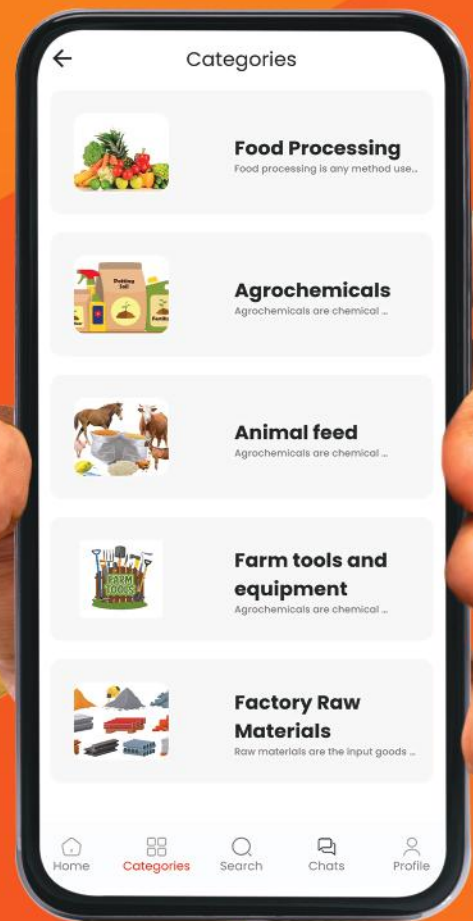
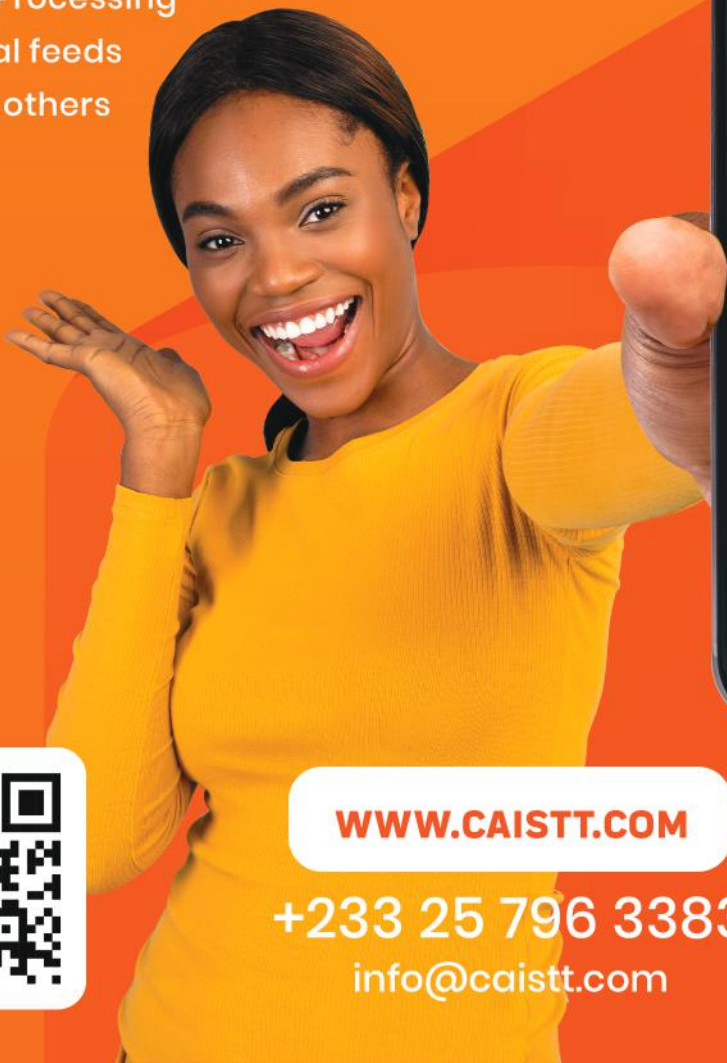
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