



By applying farming as business mind-set and adopting intensive production technologies, Tomato field plot established by the farmers at Vakpo provides amazing results. Whereas national tomato yield is estimated at 2.5tons/acre in the open field, farmers' demonstration plot is yielding 65tons/acre, more than 20 times national average. The quality of tomato is also better with shelf life of more than 14 days under room temperature



More than 200 vegetable producers in the Vakpo-Kpandu enclave of the Volta Region of Ghana have been trained in ***Intensive Production Technologies and Farming as Business***. The training is aimed at increasing farmers' productivity through technologies and change of mind-set.



The training was made possible with support from the Skills Development Fund and infrastructure available at the Vakpo Centre of Excellence built by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture with funding from the African Development Bank.



Typical of most Ghanaian farmers, the farmers in the catchment area cultivate vegetables on subsistence basis with average yields not more than 30% of optimal yields. Initial interaction clearly demonstrates poor production technologies, use of low yielding seeds and weak marketing strategies.

Asked why they engage in farming, all the 200 farmers responded-“ to enable me take care of my family”. However when asked why traders engage in business, the farmers spontaneously responded-“to make money and profit”.

Farming as a business was never part of the mind-set and consideration of the farmers. Through interactive discussions, practical



Mr Abioni increased his yield by 100% after the training. He said I have been planting garden eggs since I was young. My yield has always been 65bags on a 3.5acre farm. I adopted what I was thought and changed my practices. Today I am harvesting 75bags from a 2acre field. Madam Ahadzi, a mother of 6 could not hide her happiness. She never gets profit from any of her farming activities. She decided not farm on size basis but on productivity. Just 25 plants of green pepper planted near her house gave her a net profit of GHC150.00, a profit that she has never gotten from her 1 acre maize farm.

demonstrations and cases studies, the farmers were trained in:

- Business and enterprises definitions
- Business principles
- Key success factors of businesses
- Entrepreneurship
- Market-first approach/requirements
- Production scheduling
- Crop budgeting, Profitability scenarios/cost reduction measures

After this session, the farmers retorted “ I now understand why I continue to be poor and cannot pay the fees of my kids; so this is why I never make profit from my sweat; I wish I knew this 10 years ago; so it is not an issue of the size of my farm but what I get per unit area. This subject motivated the farmers to change their attitude and mind-set towards farming and provided an excellent opportunity to engage them to adopt technologies and practices that will increase their productivity and profitability.

This training concluded: “what has been missing over the years in farmer adoption to technologies and improved practices is the fact that farming was NOT CONSIDERED AS A BUSINESS”

Through practical and field participations, the farmers were trained in intensive production technologies including topics such as soil sterilization, mulching, integrated pest management, staking, trellising, fertigation, irrigation, pruning, disease and pest identification, prevention and treatment, the rationale for the choice and use of specific improved planting materials, etc.

Agri-Impact and ASNAPP will continue to provide distinctive agribusiness services and innovative solutions to increase productivity and profitability of agricultural value chains actors while attracting African youth into the agribusiness sector



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