



FUTA NEWS

FUTA DON ADVOCATES IMPROVEMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST ECONOMY

To further support the nation's economy, science and technological education must be re-positioned with adequate funding, well equipped laboratories and workshops that will allow engineering graduates to design and fabricate functional equipment for local food processing. This was the submission of Tayo Nathaniel Fagbemi a professor of Food Science and Technology, while delivering the 73rd Inaugural Lecture of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, at the Main Auditorium of the University. Professor Fagbemi called on the government to establish a Centre for Development of Nigerian Foods (CNDF) which will develop processing of underutilized crops into pilot plants from where Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) can take over. He also urged the government to make concerted efforts to ensure constant supply of electricity to facilitate profitability of the venture. Fagbemi also called on tertiary institutions like FUTA to partner with government in the fabrication of prototype food processing machinery to study and solve problems through adequate research.

The lecturer who spoke on the topic, 'Food Processing: Guaranteeing Food, Nutrition and Health Security', said the poor state of applied science and technology has led to the nose diving of the scientific efforts of the early sixties and seventies which allowed local talents to make meaningful and original contribution to technological growth. He added that the "Asian" tigers that looked at

Nigeria with envy in the sixties have left her behind and made substantial improvements to the design and fabrication of their traditional food processing equipment.

Professor Fagbemi stated that food processing is germane to food security and it varies from ordinary washing to the sophisticated processing techniques such as canning, spray drying and milling to enhance the utilization of the food product. He described food processing as a process of a combination of procedures or operation applied to food to enhance the quality storage and utilization of the food. According to him, food processing apart from making food available all year round can also help to eliminate toxic chemical constitution in food and pathogenic micro-organisms.

He advocated that a renewed interest in applied science and technology with adequate funding will enable cottage industries to design and fabricate equipment for food processing which he said will reduce dependence on importation of machinery and equipment thus facilitating the efficient processing, preservation and storage of food.

Concluding, Fagbemi proposed a pragmatic integration of food processing into food production policies capable of adding value to agricultural produce for wealth creation and sustained annual food production for the nation. This according to him will make food processing the wheel that will drive food nutrition and health security in the nation.

In his remarks, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebisi Daramola described the lecturer as an erudite professor who has contributed immensely to research and academic development in his field of specialization.

He said “Professor Fagbemi has really demonstrated his intellectual prowess in his field. He has been a consistently productive scholar. He has contributed significantly to knowledge in his chosen area of specialization in addition to providing leadership for his students and younger academics since he took up appointment in the University”.

The lecture which held on Tuesday December 8th, 2015 was graced by FUTA Principal Officers, Deans, Vice-Chancellor of neighboring Universities, staff, students, friends and family members of the lecturer and other stakeholders in the education sector.