



FUTA NEWS

HOW TO TURN WASTE TO WEALTH IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR --FUTA DON

A University Don has advised Nigeria to take advantage of the many benefits of agricultural by-products in its quest for wealth creation and sustainable development in all spheres of life. Professor Babatunde Ajayi of the Department of Forestry and Wood Technology of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, FUTA stated this while delivering the 77th Inaugural Lecture of the institution. He said adequate use of the byproducts will lead to the reduction in exploitation of forests biodiversity, increase efficiency in wood resources utilization, prevention of environmental degradation, alleviation of poverty or wealth creation, mitigation of climate change and increase raw material base for construction work. Speaking on the topic: ‘Adding Value to Biofiber wastes: A lesson from creation’, Ajayi said various manufacturing processes of new products open up a large vista of opportunities for job creation, new products development, healthier environment, commerce and sustainable chains of profitable activities. The Don described fibrous wastes as materials considered to be valueless, of no economic importance or value which are derived from the processing of fibrous materials such as wood, wood climbers, shrubs, bio composite panel products and any agricultural farm produce. and processing, among others.

Making a case for waste to wealth generation in the agricultural sector, the Don noted that wastes generated from the agricultural sector in Nigeria though enormous and considered valueless, can serve as raw materials capable of sustaining wealth creation. According to him the use of such raw materials derived from agricultural sectors for value-added products manufacturing will stimulate and increase the industrial and economic development of the nation and the world at large. Ajayi highlighted the benefits of the use of agricultural

residues to include: reduced pressure on forest resources bio diversities, increased innovations in products, manufacturing, processing and utilization, poverty alleviation and increase in farmers income, increase in raw materials supplies for construction industries to mention a few. The Professor of Wood Products and Biomaterials Technology lamented that the mismanagement of forest resources has given rise to enormous wood wastes generated in every forest and this is brought about through the factors of over exploitation of timber resources without skillful exploitation and harvest techniques, inadequate modern technology in wood wastes management, processing and utilization, use of obsolete equipment and machinery in wood harvesting, transportation

On the way forward, he emphasized the need for the government and all stakeholders to bridge the technological gap in intensive commercialization of research products particularly in tertiary institutions, adding that there is a viable technological nucleus to propagate the use of 80-90 percent of forest resources of Ondo State and Nigeria into numerous value added products. He therefore proposed that more advocacy and extension services should be established to motivate public awareness in the production of and the use of value-added products.

Summing up, the Don advocated that research products in Universities be harvested and properly funded through government private partnership in raw material sourcing, processing, manufacturing and products utilization for industrial growth. In his remarks, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebisi Daramola who was represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Tunde Arayela appreciated the excellent delivery of the lecture. He described the lecturer as an erudite Professor and a respected member of Senate who has contributed immensely to research and academic development in his field of specialization and has served the University assiduously in various capacities. Daramola said Professor Ajayi has attracted collaborations, funds and structures to the University and is at present the Chairman of Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTU) of FUTA. Dignitaries at the event include FUTA management, staff, student, the

academic, Heads of some Tertiary Institutions representation of the Executive Governor of Ondo State, traditional rulers and other stakeholders in the education sector.