



FUTA NEWS

FUTA TRAINS FARMERS ON INTEGRATED SOIL FERTILITY MANAGEMENT

There is a need to update knowledge on sustainable and effective soil management and conservation techniques hitherto employed by small scale crop farmers in Nigeria. This need was emphasized at a workshop organized for farmers and other stakeholders by the Capacity for Food project in collaboration with the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, (SAAT) Federal University of Technology, Akure. Flagging the Workshop open, the Dean, School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, (SAAT) Professor Shadrack Akindele said the Workshop was designed to improve Agricultural practice and to expose students and participants to new trends and allied opportunities in the Agriculture Sector. He added that the School is currently coordinating different projects under the Capacity for Food Project and the West African Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP).

On his part, the Coordinator of Capacity for Food, Professor Mathew Oyun said Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) is to maximize the interaction and the result from the combination of fertilizer organic input and output to improve productivity in the Agricultural sector in Nigeria. He stressed the need for creating of soil institution that will formulate and implement policies of soil fertility management. In his words. “We can improve on the ISFM mandate through advocacy, using the instrument of the University and government to formulate national policy that will support ISFM’.

Earlier, the guest lecturer from the University of Dschang, Cameroon, Dr. Fritz Oben spoke on the topic: Improving Farmers capacity to diagnose and sustainably manage soil fertility’. He applauded the organizers of the workshop for creating a platform for students and farmers to know the importance of soil fertility.

In a paper on Access to Farm Input and Commodity market by smallholders’ farmers, the challenges and prospect delivered by Dr. T.E Mafimisebi . of the department of Agriculture and Resource Economics, SAAT he said priority should be given to the small scale farmers since their input in the development of the nation cannot be over looked. He mentioned illiteracy and ignorance as some factors that negate the small scale farmer’s productivity and called for constant empowerment financially to enhance productivity.

Speaking on the topic: Trends in Soil Fertility Management in Africa. Professor S. O. Ojeniyi of the Department of Crop Soil & Pest Management, FUTA made a strong case for Integrated Soil Fertility Management as a means of boosting crop production and enhancing the sustainability of the soil because it involves combining organic wastes and reducing the rate of chemical fertilizer application. Professor Taye Amos who spoke on the topic: Biophysical and socio economic analysis of farmers and livelihood said that it was germane to understand the environment of the farmers in order to apply appropriate technology that will enhance soil productivity. The don noted that soil sustainability requires a holistic approach that will address social, economic and technical issues as it pertains to the farmer to maximize profits and enhance the sustainability of the soil.

The Federal University of Technology, Akure is the coordinating Centre for the Capacity for Food project in Nigeria. Other partner Universities include: University of Gambia, College of Agriculture and Consumer Science, Ghana, University of Dschang, Cameroon and Njalla University, Sierra Leone.