



# FUTA NEWS

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## TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE FOR BETTER CROP YIELDS

The President of the International Soil Tillage Research Organization, Nigeria Branch [ISTRO-NG], Professor S. O. Ojeniyi has called on governments and individuals in the Agriculture business to tackle climate change to achieve better crop yields. He made this call while welcoming participants to the 2014 symposium held at the Hill Top Auditorium of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, recently. The President dwelt extensively on the theme of the symposium "Tillage for Sustained Agricultural Productivity and Environment" in his opening address.

Ojeniyi, a Soil Scientist said "If climate change dominates the tropics, crop yields are likely to be more affected by reduction of -9 to -22% and it is likely to increase disparities in cereal yields in developed and developing nations". According to Ojeniyi to improve crop yields, ISTRO-NG aims at stimulating research into tillage and management needs of tropical soils and evolve findings useful to local agriculture and soil type.

Addressing the gathering, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebisi Daramola represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Development, Professor Tolulope Akinbogun, called on members of ISTRO-NG to effectively disseminate agricultural knowledge and sensitization to governments and farmers with a view to enhancing agricultural productivity. Daramola decried increase in poverty in the land and identified hunger as a major menace facing the teeming populace. He said "One of the greatest challenges facing Africa today is hunger. Large populations do not have access to

food, thus engendering such dangerous phenomena as malnutrition, diseases and very low life expectancies compared to other continents. Daramola also warned against food importation saying “the implication is that we use our money to develop the economies of other countries and while the citizens of such countries keep making money by exporting food to us, our youths in their millions continue to wallow in joblessness, poverty and hunger”.

He further called on governments to encourage mechanized farming to achieve bumper harvest by making available and affordable modern farming tools. “One of the causes of our low agricultural productivity in the type of our agricultural practice, which is largely conservative, with very little mechanization. An average Nigerian farmer still uses cutlasses and hoes for cultivation where there are various machines that can do the same. The implication of this is that there is either no education on such or there is no access to such equipment,” Daramola noted.

One of the Participants, Engineer (Professor) C. I. Ijioma, a former ISTRO Board Member in his paper called on Engineers, Soil Scientists, Agronomist, Farmers and Researchers in Soil-Machine-Crop processes to collaborate. According to him, feedback from such collaboration will help engineers to effect changes in design and improve existing cultivation equipment to achieve increased production and enhance soil-water conservation status of the agricultural soil. Ijioma further said with good collaborations and team work, tears of zero tillage, minimum tillage and other expressions that tend to discourage soil cultivation activities which have adversely affected research funding in agriculture soil cultivation equipment will be reasonably controlled. Soil scientists, agricultural engineers and other critical stakeholders from Universities and related institutions across the country attended the symposium.