



FUTA NEWS

ADULTERATED SEEDS BANE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY D G NASC

The Director General of the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC), Dr Philip Ojo has disclosed that adulterated or substandard seeds have become rampant in the agricultural subsector and this trend is affecting national agricultural productivity. The Director General gave the disclosure while delivering the keynote address at the 4th Annual Conference of the Association of Seed Scientists of Nigeria (ASSN) at the Federal University of Technology, Akure with the theme: Enhancing Nigeria's Agricultural Potentials through quality seed. Dr. Ojo who was represented by Mr. Michael Adeseko, Regional Head, South West Zone, NASC said fake or adulterated seeds do not possess the requisite quality responsible for evident vigour and vitality for sustaining the plant from germination through all the developmental stages till its maturity thus it does not give the optimum output as expected of such crops when every factor of good agricultural practises have been employed. Ojo said quality seeds are seemingly the cheapest agricultural input but the most critical to productivity because they carry the genetic potentials of the crop, contributing about 60% to their productivity index, enhancing the efficiency of other agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, agrochemicals, irrigation and capital. He added that planting of poor seeds is a recipe of failure irrespective of the quantity of other inputs employed during the farming process.

Dr. Ojo highlighted that the reasons for rampant seed adulteration to include; the profit potential of selling fake seeds, difficulty in identifying poor quality seeds by small holder farmers, poor package integrity across distribution chain which gives seed vendors' easy access to acquire packaging materials and limited

packaging integrity among others. The Director General said NASC in the pursuit of its mandate of ensuring the availability and enforcement of the use of marketing of good quality seeds has established the Seed Inspectorate Department which is charged with the sensitization, surveillance and enforcement of compliance to the seed laws among stakeholders. He said the agency has also stepped up stakeholder education with regular conduct of advocacy visits and adopted the community seed policing approach. Dr. Ojo said achieving food security in Nigeria requires a significant improvement in the nation's agricultural productivity which in turn is greatly dependent on the ability of the nation's seed sector to provide high quality seeds of improved and adapted crop varieties for the farmers. In a welcome address, President, Association of Seed Scientists of Nigeria, Professor Dupe Akintobi said seed is the source of life and the pivot of successful agriculture as seed determines the bench mark or upper limit of the effectiveness of other agricultural inputs hence it plays a vital role in enhancing agriculture anywhere in the world.

Professor Akintobi said in Nigeria, agriculture can grow and develop to feed the teeming population and to generate revenue by the use of good quality seeds as quality seeds result in quality crops when other factors are in place. The Vice-Chancellor, Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Professor Joseph Fuwape who was the Chairman of the occasion said the quality of seeds and seedlings for self-sufficiency in food production in Nigeria cannot be over emphasised. He said it is the main input that determines the quality and yield of harvest at the end of the farming season.

He said that there is a nexus between quality of seeds, food security and increase in agricultural production. Professor Fuwape called on the ASSN to network with International Seed Associations for latest ideas in the field of seed development and hybridization to keep abreast with the contemporary advancement in the seed production sector.