



# NRCRI

DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



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## 365 DAYS

of Commitment to Excellence

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# NRCRI

DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



## NRCRI NATIONAL MANDATE

Research into the genetic improvement, production, storage, processing, utilization, and socio economics of root and tuber crops of economic importance (cassava, yam, cocoyam, giger, Irish potato, sweet potato, turmeric, sugar beet, etc.)

## ZONAL MANDATE

Conduct research into the farming systems of South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria.

Assist in agricultural extension and technology transfer activities



## NRCRI MISSION

To provide necessary improved technologies that would enhance total value chain development of root and tuber crops towards national food security, income generation, gainful employment and industrial development.

## VISION

To be recognized internationally as centre of excellence in root and tuber crops research in Nigeria





**H**ello beloved readers and lovers of National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike. It is exactly 365 days of the incumbent Executive Director/CEO of NRCRI Umudike, Prof. Chiedozie Egesi. He started his leadership journey on 13th October 2022 and this is October 2023. A child of one year has become established in the heart of his/her family. It has been a one year of Excellence.

I could not believe we had done so much in just 365 days. When I surveyed the achievements of NRCRI in just one year under Prof. Egesi's administration, despite the economic situation of the country and change of things. I see a brighter future for NRCRI, Umudike.

The Executive Director assured us in an exclusive interview that the federal government is willing to give more resources and fund, but all the same we should also work hard to actualize it. So what we need presently as staff of the institute are determination, diligence and self dedication to our duties to make NRCRI great.

We are happy to inform you that our news bulletin will get to your office door posts at least twice in each of the years because our information officers are working hard to ensure you are updated.

The daily news of National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike is accessible through our social media platforms

such as facebook (Nrcriumudike), twitter handle (@nrcrumudike), youtube and LinkedIn (NRCRI Umudike). You can also access NRCRI website [www.nrcrigov.ng](http://www.nrcrigov.ng). for any valid information. This edition is a special one just to recognize the 365 years of our Executive Director and the remarkable achievements so far.

Our Executive Director Prof Egesi is very digital, gender sensitive and environmental friendly. With these three areas of world interest and attention, I believe NRCRI Umudike is better placed globally.

I urge you to go through this publication to see his unique achievements and you will be amazed. Our research activities are going more digital with good attention given to gender mainstreaming, and our work becoming climate smart. The sky is our limit. The remaining four years will be unique.

Note; NRCRI is under Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security not Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

NRCRI, Umudike, celebrates her 100 years of peaceful research breakthrough.

Read and Digest.

**Dr. Mrs. F.N Nwakor**  
Head, Media and Publicity Unit



## THE MANAGEMENT STAFF OF NRCRI



**Prof. Chiedozie Egesi**

ED/CEO of NRCRI





**NRCRI**  
DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



## THE MANAGEMENT STAFF OF NRCRI



# NRCRI GETS NEW LOGO

The new logo of National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike was officially unveiled during the 2023 Annual Review and Planning Workshop held in April, 2023. The Director of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Dr Tessa Madu in her speech said that changing of the logo “is part of the institute’s rebranding efforts to keep in touch with current trends of sustainability and inclusivity”.

“The work of NRCRI is human-centric, so you see the man and woman interacting with the power of science and technology (double helix); a foundation of knowledge(book) using numerous tropical root and tuber crops.

We believe that there’s no food security in Africa without root and tuber crops. We also believe that our work will keep delivering the roots of prosperity to our farmers and end-users” she explained

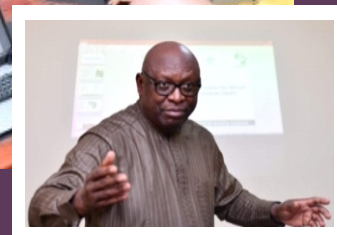


HERE COMES THE NEW AND OFFICIAL LOGO

## AFDB CONSULTANT LAUDS SCIENTISTS

**P**rof. Sule Ochai, a Senior Consultant with the African Development Bank Group (AFDB) has lauded NRCRI scientists for the innovative research work being carried out within the institute. He stated that a more enabling environment will help the institute to scale up its research activities. Four (4) Senior Scientists made presentations on demand-driven research: Sweet Potato Value Chain, Potato Value Chain, Semi-Autotrophic Hydroponics (SAH) Technology and Umudike Seeds Innovation. The Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi laid emphasis on the importance of root and tuber

Prof Sule Ochai Making His Presentation During The Meeting



crops in driving resilient economy and the need for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in cassava production in Nigeria. He highlighted the institute's positive impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers in Nigeria.

## ATASP-1 TRAINING ON CASSAVA POST-HARVEST MANAGEMENT, PROCESSING & VALUE ADDITION

**T**he Agricultural Transformation Agenda Support Program (ATASP-1) Bida Zone, kicked off a Two-Day Follow-Up Training for Facilitators, Farmers and Processors on Cassava Post-Harvest Management, Processing, Value Addition, Food Safety, and Standards on May 18, 2023 at the Zonal Headquarters, Bida, Niger State. Declaring the training open, ATASP-1 National Program Coordinator, Dr. Ibrahim M Arabi, represented by the National Agri-Business Specialist, Dr. Kunle Alege, stated that the follow-up training was organized as part of the commitment of the program to tackle the post-harvest management, processing and value-addition challenges faced by farmers. Dr. Alege urged the participants to take the practical training seriously to enable them translate the knowledge gathered into action.



Institute, Umudike, Abia State, led by Dr. Mrs. Helen Anyaegbunam, Assistant Director/Coordinator, Extension Research Programme., She trained participants on Farm Management and Record Keeping.

Dr. Benjamin C. Okoye, Assistant Director, Cassava Research Programme, trained participants on Business Plan Development for Garri, Starch and High-Quality Cassava Flour (HQCF) Production while Mrs Llewelyn Ode an Entrepreneur/processor at the Cassava processing centre NRCRI trained participants on Improved cassava processing of gari, starch and high quality. The training was also carried out in other states like Anambra, Jigawa and Kano states.

The training was conducted by a team of resource persons from the National Root Crops Research

# INSTITUTE TO PARTNER WITH MOUAU



**T**he Vice Chancellor of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture(MOUA) Umudike, Professor Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe and his Principal Officers paid a partnership visit to the Executive Director of National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike, Professor Chiedozie Egesi and his Management Committee(IMC).In his opening remarks, Prof Egesi emphasized on the need for the two organisations to work together: utilizing the synergies available between them as a Centre of Knowledge and as a Centre of Research for mutual benefit by converting them into one Centre of Excellence(CoE). He expressed happiness to re-open the linking gate between the sister institutions for free flow of ideas and a win-win interactions.He noted that NRCRI in collaboration with MOUAU hosted the Biotechnology Society of Nigeria South East regional conference which gave birth to the Umudike

Biotechnology Group(UBG), a power house for Biotechnology in the south east. "Another platform where the synergies are utilized is the Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD), an area we have seen that the power of two coming together is bigger than what we can achieve separately. " I am happy that we are starting again and we are starting with action", he said. On his part, Prof Iwe thank God for making the meeting possible and also appreciated the Executive Director for the warm reception. He requested for Collaborations in the areas of security and use of Laboratory equipments, Food and Agronomy Research. He also prayed for the continued mutual relationship between the two organisations.

## NRCRI Seeks Collaboration With CONTEC Global Agro Limited

The Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof. Chiedozie Egesi paid a visit to the Contec Global Agro Ltd at Abuja to discuss how a new relationship with NRCRI would work in terms of sustainable



agriculture, climate adaptation and improving productivity of root and tuber crops. During the visit, Prof. Egesi who was warmly received by Dr Praveen Kumar and Mr Abishaek Samuel toured round their commercial Tissue Culture Laboratory and Microbial Fertilizer Facility.

## NRCRI AND SAHEL CONSULTING NUTRITION TRAIN CSEs

In its drive to establish a successful and sustainable cassava seed system in Nigeria, the Sahel Consulting Nutrition Limited in collaboration with NRCRI, Umudike, recently, trained over 50 Cassava Seed Entrepreneurs (CSE's) drawn from Abia, Imo and Akwa-Ibom States



Prof Chiedozie Egesi delivering his welcome address

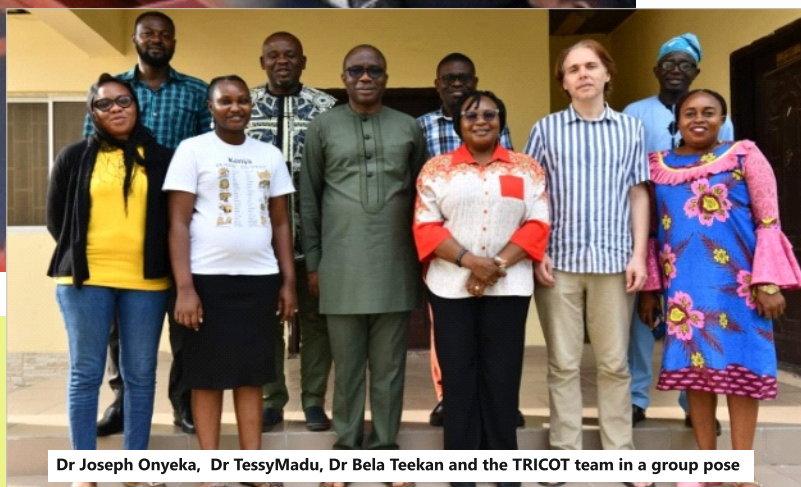
As part of her opening formalities for the one-day capacity building workshop, the BASICS II training team first paid a courtesy visit to the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi. The team comprised Dr Godwin Asumugha (NRCRI), Dr Mark Tokula (NRCRI) and Mr Temi Adegoroye (Sahel).

The opportunity of the visit was used to discuss the progress made so far by the Cassava Seed Entrepreneurs (CSE's) in building a successful and sustainable cassava seed system and the business plan mapped out for them.

Prof Egesi expressed his gratitude to Sahel Consulting for the strong support they have given to NRCRI, Umudike beyond the CSEs and also for the role they play towards the growth of Umudike Seeds Company. The interactive workshop focused on scaling up by the CSEs to enable them "build a successful and sustainable cassava seed business in Nigeria".

Speeches were presented by representatives from the office of the Director of Finance, Central Bank Of Nigeria on "Finance for Today and Beyond as a Seed Entrepreneur" and from NIAC official on "Managing Risks and Uncertainties as a Seed Entrepreneur"

# NEXTGEN TRICOT DATA WORKSHOP



Dr Joseph Onyeka, Dr TessaMadu, Dr Bela Teekan and the TRICOT team in a group pose

The Survey Division of the Nextgen Cassava Breeding Project organized a Triadic Comparison of Technologies (TRICOT) workshop to review her previous works and explore appropriate approaches

to facilitate variety release, recently at NRCRI Umudike. TRICOT is a methodology that empowers farmers to quickly identify those traits and clones that suit their local conditions as stakeholders in the cassava value chain.

In her welcome address, the TRICOT lead in the institute, Dr Tessa Madu said the workshop was organized by NRCRI, Umudike and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan to enable data validation, and harmonize study protocol in line with guidelines for variety release going forward. In attendance were the TRICOT teams from

## NRCRI SCIENTIST ATTRACTS BAYER'S GRANTS 4AG PROGRAM AWARDS

Bayer Grants4Ag program recently, awarded 21 research scientists drawn across 8 different countries for the 2023 cohort of Grants4Ag.

Speaking in an interview with Dr Ihuoma Okwuonu, the award recipient from Nigeria, in an interaction with the award recipient from Nigeria, Dr Ihuoma Okwuonu. She said that the work will focus on the gene editing of local varieties.

In her words "This work will research on producing cassava varieties that are resistant to Cassava Bacteria Blight



The awardee, Dr. Ihuoma Okwuonu



disease. This disease hardly presents as a problem but the unfortunate thing is that it causes colossal loss when it hits your farm. It greatly affects yield leading to loss of planting materials and whatever little materials that you are able to save, still dies back at the end of the day". Dr Okwuonu



disclosed that cassava bacteria blight motivated her research on how to develop resistant varieties using genome editing technology.

When asked how her project will help in enhancing food security in Nigeria, she said that "the release of CBB resistant cassava cultivars will go a long way in ensuring high resistance to CBB menace in our fields thereby leading to high yield at harvest.

"One thing is that we do not know what really triggers the incidence of this CBB as you might not see it this year but by the next year it becomes an epidemic affecting food availability. You will lose planting materials and the yield will not be enough to sustain food security".

"As a matter of fact, the introduction of resistant cultivars will give farmers the assurance and calmness not to bother about CBB incidence," she added.

This year's program addressed three innovation themes integral to Bayer's R&D efforts in its Crop Science division: sustainability traits, plant transformation technologies, and the gene editing potential of local plant varieties. It provides both financial and mentorship resources, with awards ranging from 5,000 to 15,000 Euro in addition to access to some of Bayer's leading Crop Science researchers as mentors for the duration of the program.



## NRCRI HOLDS HER Annual Review And Planning Workshop

The National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike, held a 2 day Annual Review and Planning workshop which attracted over 450 stakeholders in Agriculture from Nigeria and the global community.

The participants gathered to review the 2022 report and 2023 work proposals of NRCRI Scientists, identifying areas of successes and challenges, and devising methods of mitigating the challenges, consolidating the gains and

developing a road map for the future.

The workshop had the Hon. Minister of State for Science, Technology and Innovation, Chief Henry Ikechukwu Ikoh as the Special Guest of Honour, the Vice Chancellor of MOUAW Prof Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe as the Chairman, and Prof Sule Ochai from African Development Bank as the Keynote Speaker.

It featured welcome address by the Chief Host, Prof Chiedozi Egesi, goodwill messages from special guests, keynote address, technical sessions (which comprised



*Laying of foundation for the 1000 capacity International Conference Centre during the Workshop*

presentation of reports and proposals by research programme coordinators and Principal investigators of projects on demand-driven research covering Biotechnology, breeding, agronomy, agricultural economics, food science, panel discussions, ground breaking ceremony for the International Conference Centre and the unveiling of the new logo of the institute. Prof Egesi expressed his gratitude to all the participants

especially the Royal Highnesses/Majesties of our host communities and our prized partners, IITA Ibadan for their contributions toward the development of root crops sector in Nigeria. He also appreciated the support of the Federal Government of Nigeria, FMARD, CGIAR centres, development partners, and other stakeholders in making the workshop a huge success

During his speech, the Executive Director of NRCRI, Prof Chiedozie Egesi identified some key areas of interventions such as;

- building a befitting state-of-the-art 1,000 capacity International Conference and e-learning centre .
- building an ultra- modern office block, laboratories and screen houses.
- Establishing a spin-off company - Umudike Foods Limited to market our numerous value added products.
- strengthening of the out-stations to become Centres of Excellence(CoE) for cross cutting issues such as climate change, etc.
- completion of the perimeter fencing of the headquarter campus of the Institute.
- centennial celebration of the establishment of NRCRI on the 7th to 9th of November, 2023.

During the reporting period, some National Root Crops Research Institute(NRCRI), Umudike scientists made presentations on the following topics.

Dr Solo Afuape's presentation was on "Breeding Orange-fleshed sweet potato for high dry matter content and resistance to sweet potato virus disease"

Dr Rachel Omodamiro on "the Development and evaluation of orange-fleshed sweet potato based food drink extruded snack for vitamin A deficiency control"

Dr. OkezieChukwuemeka; Impact of global solar radiation on growth and yield of ginger plants.

Dr. Victoria Okafor ; Management and Utilization of Serials in Federal University Libraries in South East Nigeria

Dr. Chioma Harbor on" Harnessing the Health benefits of Hausa potato leaves in Diarrhea control".

# NRCRI Seminar Series

Mr Chidi Akuchie (representative of PAL pension scheme) on "Harnessing the benefits of the new Pension Reform Act by employees"

Dr Joy Adiele's presentation was on "Climate-Smart Agriculture for food security and Environmental Sustainability."

Dr Okezie Chukwuemeka Harnessing the power of Root and Tuber crops for sustainable development (Cassava has the potential in the production of bioplastics, which are sustainable alternatives to traditional petroleum-based plastics)

Dr Ann Nkiruka kanu on "Anti Diabetic properties of Yam, Moringa Seed, meal on alloxan Monohydrate induced male albino rats"

Dr Chukwuemeka Nkere on " Early warning System in Plant Health Management"

## VISITORS TO THE INSTITUTE

OWSD PAYS A COURTESY VISIT The Executive Director of National Root Crop Research Institute ( NRCRI), Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi hosted the Executives of the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing Word(OWSD), Umudike Branch recently at the Institute Ultra modern library complex, NRCRI Umudike.



In her opening remarks, the Branch Coordinator, Dr Ifeoma Mabel Onwuka stated that their visit was to pay a courtesy call on the Executive Director, seek ways to partner with the institute, present some of the challenges facing the organization and the landmark achievements they have recorded so far.

In his response, Prof Chiedozie Egesi pledged to collaborate and support the organization whenever he is called upon and wished them well in their various engagements

## Executives Of Senior Staff Recreation Club Pay Courtesy Visit To ED

The Executives of the Senior Staff Recreation club, National Root Crops Research Institute Umudike, led by Mr Obioma Ogbonnaya paid a courtesy call on the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi. They used the opportunity of their visit to discuss issues concerning the club and also invite him for

their investiture.

Prof Egesi expressed his gratitude to them for nominating him as their grand patron and promised to pay closer attention to the growth and sustainability of the staff club.





Executive members of the Biotechnology Society of Nigeria, led by Dr Emmanuel Ekundayo paid a courtesy visit to the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi.

### VISIT BY EXECUTIVES OF ASN

The President of Agricultural Society of Nigeria, Prof Jude Mbanaso and some council members recently called on the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi. In his remarks, Prof Mbanaso said their visit was to present a Formal Invitation to the ED and support for the ASN Conference in Oct2023 .

### NIFST VISIT

The Chapter Executives of the Nigerian Institute of Food Science and Technology (NIFST) today paid a courtesy visit to the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof. Chiedozie Egesi.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure Nigerians are positively impacted. With these measures, we are confident of a brighter, prosperous future for all #Nigerians.

- OTHER VISITORS INCLUDED**
- Umuariaga Executives
  - Ikwuano Graduates
  - Nigerian Library Association
  - Olokoru Clan Youths
  - Lodu Ndume Development
  - Ed's Visit To Nyanya Out Station



## ED's VISIT TO NYANYA OUT STATION

The ED, Prof Chiedozi Egesi paid a working visit to Nyanya outstation. He took time to tour and inspect NRCRI facilities there.

While interacting with the staff, Prof Egesi restated his vision to remodel Nyanya out station into a Center for Climate Adaptation Research. On-hand to receive him were Dr. Justin Ewuziem (Head of station), Dr. Joy Adiele and other staff of the station.



## The Ed Visits Kuru Outstation: Commissions A Biotech Facility

The Executive Director of NRCRI, Umudike, Prof Chiedozi Egesi and some principal officers from the institute paid a 3-day work visit to the Potato Programme, Kuru, Jos, Plateau state. Prof Egesi and team, comprising Dr Charles Amadi, Dr Joseph Onyeka and Dr Ihuoma Okwuonu used the opportunity of the visit to inspect the Institute's facilities in the outstation, hold a town hall meeting with the staff and commission a foundation laying ceremony of the Biotechnology laboratory facility.

The Executive Director and his team were warmly received by the Chief Executive officer of the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI), Vom, Dr Maryam Muhammad along side her Internal Management Committee (IMC) during their courtesy visit to her office. Dr Muhammad's power point presentation was on the history, mandate and achievements of NVRI since its establishment in 1924. She highlighted some areas of common interest for research collaboration with NRCRI especially in the areas of drug production for animals using starch from cassava and amora and training of younger staff in molecular biology.

In his response, Prof Egesi intimated her on the mandate of NRCRI Umudike and emphasized that a strong collaboration can be formed in the area of drug production using starch gotten from cassava and amora crops.

Other visits were to the Provost of Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology (FCAHPT), Vom, Dr Jude Okpara, the Institute's partners in the Potato Value Chain (PVC) and to His Royal Highness Gwom Rwei of Kuru.



ED and Staff at Kuru Outstation Jos



# NRCRI

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## MINISTRY TO PARTNER WITH NRCRI ON CASSAVA BIOETHENOL

In a bid to maximise the potential of Cassava for Bio ethanol value chain, The Ministry of Finance, Budget and National planning has expressed interest in partnering with National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike to conduct research into Cassava Bioethanol Value Chain in Nigeria.

Prof Ken Ife from the Economic Development Department, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National planning Abuja stated this in an interactive meeting with the Executive Director, Prof Chiedozie

Egesi and other principal officers in the institute.

Prof Ife highlighted his expectations from NRCRI as follows:

- To work with NRCRI and IITA to develop and supply the required seeds to institutions and private sectors during the project:-to work towards the establishment of a biotechnology industrial park and ensure that there is research and production there, and to work in other collaborating areas starting with cassava and extending it to other root and tuber crops. Cassava Bio ethanol project is led by Dr Oluyemi Olojede.

## ED'S VISIT TO NASC, ABUJA.

The Executive Director of National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike, Prof Chiedozie Egesi paid a courtesy visit to the former Director General of National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC), Dr Philip Ojo, to partner with him to boost food security, enhance farmers income and

strengthen the Root and Tuber Crop Seed System in Nigeria

The Chief Executives had discussions on future collaborations in the area of development of seed regulatory guidelines & systems for ginger and other



root and tuber crops. Further discussions were on pragmatic approaches to implementing Licensed Seed Inspectors (LSIs) for Cassava Seed Entrepreneurs (CSEs) and on strengthening the NASC Regional office for South East which is being hosted by NRCRI at Umudike.

Prof Egesi used the opportunity of the visit to thank the DG of NASC for all his support to NRCRI and for his attendance during the institute's recent Annual Review and planning Workshop held in April, 2023

## PROF EGESI COMMENDS NRCRI CORP MEMBERS



**NYSC Members with NRCRI Staff**

The Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, Prof Chidozie Egesi has commended the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members serving in the institute for their patriotic and loyal services to the Nation. During the course of their interaction, the ED encouraged them to acquire the spirit of self reliance by learning more skills and improving themselves academically.

The Corp members praised the ED for his warm reception and promised to serve the Institute in all capacity they are needed. They were led by the Head of NYSC/Internship Unit in the institute, Dr. Ebisike Mary-Ann Mazza

## SSA NRCRI HOSTS A SECTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

The Senior Staff Association(SSA) of the National Root Crops Research Institute(NRCRI), Umudike played host to the Sectoral Council meeting of the Senior staff Association of the Universities, Teaching Hospitals, Research Institutes and Allied Institutions(SSAUTHRIAI). Dr Moses Okwusi who represented the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike assured the visitors of a conducive environment and wished them a fruitful deliberation.



The Sectoral Chairman, Comrade Baba Muhammad expressed his profound gratitude for the warm reception and prayed for God to keep taking the institute higher in its research activities.

On hand to receive the delegates were the Director of Administration in the institute, Mrs Maryrose Mbanaso, SSA Chairman, Comrade George Okogbue and other SSA members.

## WACCI GHANA CELEBRATES NRCRI SCIENTIST

One of National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike, Plant Breeder and Coordinator of Cassava Programme, Dr Damian Njoku was recently selected as an outstanding alumni of West Africa Centre

for Crop Improvement (WACCI), University of Ghana, Legon.

This took place during the alumni homecoming and 16th anniversary celebration of the Institution from 31st May to 2nd June, 2023. The three day event brought together more than 150 alumni of the centre from 15 countries in Africa to the

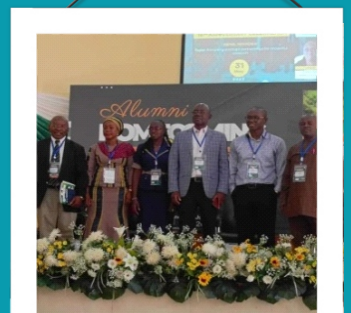


**Dr. Damian Njoku**

University of Ghana, Legon.

The primary objectives of the conference were to acknowledge the alumni's invaluable contributions to food security in Africa and to facilitate discussions on the future of food security in the continent.

Dr Damian was recognised alongside five others for his giant stride and invaluable contributions to enhancing food security in Africa.





## SAHEL CONSULTING, NRCRI TRAINS CSES IN IMO, ABIA AND AKWA-IBOM

Over 85 farmers drawn from South-South and South-East, that is Abia, Imo and Akwa-Ibom States have been trained by SAHEL CONSULTING as well as National Root Crops Research Institute Umudike under Building an Economically Sustainable Integrated Cassava Seed System in Nigeria (BASICSII) project, for cassava seed entrepreneurs (CSEs). The trainees were schooled in their different state capital before the grand finale in NRCRI, Umudike.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Executive Director NRCRI Umudike, Prof. Chiedozie Egesi stated that the training center should teach farmers on how to manage a successful and sustainable cassava seed business in Nigeria which the institute has the National mandate for Root and Tuber Crops, the Genetic Improvement, Agronomy, Extension, Storage, Processing and Marketing of root and tuber crops, which cassava is the principle crop.

Prof. Egesi acknowledged that such a great mandate before us, and that the institute is aware of the responsibilities placed on her as vocal centre for this great task. Prof. Egesi,

urged the trainees to run a profitable business so as to become successful men and women.

Giving an overview of the programme, the training Coordinator and Director, Dr. Godwin Asumugha thanked SAHEL CONSULTING for extending their larges to CSEs workshop which he counted as a great privilege given to the CSEs, and also encouraged them on the need to always conduct visual training in their locations.

The Managing Partner, SAHEL Consulting, Femi Adegoroye in his address thanked the Executive Director of the Institute and his Management staff for their commitment in championing several efforts focused on improving the Seed System for the tuber crops, as well as, the Agricultural Sector at large. Mr. Adegoroye said the workshop was organized to discuss the few challenges faced by (CSEs) cassava seed Entrepreneurs and hear from experts on how to improve and address those challenges.

The Interactive workshop which focused on scaling up by the CSEs to enable them "build a successful and sustainable Cassava Seed business in Nigeria" was conducted by Paschal Adikaibe. The vote of thanks was given by His Royal Majesty (HRM), Eze Pastor Philip Ajomiwe, Prof. Jude Njoku and Prince Ekanem.



## MAIDEN CAREER DAY OF NRCRI STAFF SCHOOL

**M**aiden Career Day of National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike, Staff School was held on July, 2023 at NRCRI Library Complex hall, Umudike.. Dr. Mrs Chinwe Ezeaputa, the School Administrator in her remarks thanked the Executive Director NRCRI and the Management for all their support as well as the teachers for bringing out the best in the children as the results are already showing on the children. Dr Ezeaputa also encouraged parents to provide adequately for the children while coming to school, so as to save them from danger and visiting of fruit trees.

In his address, the representative of the Executive Director, Dr. Ekwuruchi Mbanaso said the Executive Director is very much interested in the staff school and the pupils and is ready to bring the school to a good standard. He praised the children and encouraged them to put in their best in their studies as it will help them excel in future. Dr. Mbanaso encouraged the school teachers to do more and promised to inform the Executive Director on the major issues facing the school. He thanked the school Management as well as the PTA Chairman for job well done

The PTA Chairman, Mr. Festus Okon in his words of appreciation thanked the Executive Director and the Management team for their efforts towards the empowerment of the school. He thanked the Oschool administrator, Dr. Ezeaputa and urged her to keep up the good work she is doing. He also thanked the parents for coming in masse to support their children and school. Mr. Okon highlighted the major challenges facing the school and pleaded with the Executive Director to come to their aid.

Highlights of the occasion were the display of children of different profession and reasons for choice, also Akuko uwa by Chidinma Edede, a primary 5 pupil.



## NRCRI UMUDIKE AND PARTNERS RELEASE FOUR NEW CLIMATE SMART POTATO VARIETIES

Potato Seed Security Partnership (NPSSP), a project funded by GIZ Nigeria at the National Variety Release Committee (NVRC) on the 22 of June, 2023.



**F**our new late blight-resistant and climate-smart potato varieties were officially registered and released by the National Root Crops Research Institute in collaboration with the International Potato Center(ICP) and the Nigeria

Their release is remarkable as they are the first varieties to be introduced in Nigeria in over a decade, incorporating modernized breeding technologies."The potato varieties have distinctive traits that will endear them to Nigerian farmers and these include robust disease resistance, high yields and drought tolerance. They also offer excellent taste,

multipurpose uses, and nutrition, catering to the preferences of local consumer." says Prof Chiedozie Egesi, Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike.The four potato varieties: Unica (CIP392797.22), Juriya (CIP393371.157), Babban (CIP393371.58), and Kyau (CIP398190.200) will enhance local capacity within the public and private sectors to ensure an adequate supply of high-quality seed potato that meets market demands and is adapted to local conditions."Last year, the institute was invited by the Federal of Nigeria and State government of Plateau state, Nigeria to proffer solutions to the recurring outbreaks of Late Blight diseases and drought, says the lead breeder for the potato release and director at institute, Dr Charles Amadi. The release is actually the outcome of that meeting and in line with the institutes mandate to develop and release improved varieties of root and tuber crops while giving farmers alternatives to what they already had.



Prior to the release, continued Dr Amadi, the potato seed sector in Nigeria was in dire need of improved potato varieties that is drought tolerant and able to withstand recurrent outbreaks of late blight. All the released varieties are resistant to potato viruses X and Y, have robust yield and good for processing chips, flour etc and we hope that these unique characteristics will endear them to farmers, processors and stakeholders in the potato value chain.



## 21st ANNIVERSARY/ DELIVERANCE/ THANKSGIVING

It was an atmosphere of praise and worship as over 400 staff and Management of the institute gathered during the 21st Anniversary/Deliverance/Thanksgiving service held at the institute on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2023.

In his opening remark and reading from Amos 9 verses 11-

15, the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike Prof Chiedozie Egesi stated that God's restoration is certain to make everything right in NRCRI Umudike. He admonished all staff to desist from complaints and adopt the spirit of praise as God's tabernacle is being rebuilt in NRCRI. He reiterated that inadequate funding from the government will not hinder NRCRI from reaching God's ultimate plans for her but rather "heavens financial resources and gold will sustain the institute. Prof Egesi said that God's blessings and harvest upon NRCRI will be a back to back massive harvest. He encouraged all staff to work together to ensure that NRCRI moves forward and to also look unto God who is the author and finisher of our faith. He encouraged all to build their capacity in preparation for what God is about to do in

NRCRI: learn new things and be the best in all they do. The ED made out time to appreciate all staff for unusual and tremendous support since he became the ED.

The president of NRCRI staff fellowship, Dr Samuel Onwuka thanked the ED for his unflinching support towards the NRCRI Staff Fellowship and for funding the event. He also thank the fellowship members for being faithful partners in servicing the Lord's altar in NRCRI and standing in the gap to pray for the



institute. He highlighted several achievements recorded by Prof. Chiedozie led administration within the period under review as follows; the recent job replacement exercise which favoured a good number of our project and contract staff, planning, and execution of an Annual Review and Planning Workshop of international repute which attracted over 400 experts in the agricultural sector globally. This workshop also led to a comprehensive renovation of the Library complex of the Institute. Sponsoring of over twenty Research Scientists to the ISTRC Symposium in Kenya in November 2022: Recent commissioning of a new Biotechnology facility in Kuru Jos. Renovation and Reopening of

boundary gate connecting NRCRI and MOUAU to ease movements to and fro the two sister Institutions.

Dr Onwuka concluded by saying that I want to reckon that "thus far", God has been with us and if we continue to keep this covenant with Him, he will surely make National Root Crops Research Institute Umudike, a PRAISE among the league of Research Institutes in Nigeria and a voice in the Agricultural sector Worldwide. Let us remain steadfast, focused and motivated as we carry out our duties for the **shout of the king is with us.**

The centennial sermon was from Pharm. Iheanyi Uzoma and the theme for the Thanksgiving was "**Divine restoration**" (Joel 2: 25-28). God has taken away the northern army and He says "**I will restore unto NRCRI, both the former and the later rain**". Therefore, arise people of God, let us take our place for the shout of the King is with us. The time to showcase God's glory and excellence in all that we do as staff of NRCRI has come. Let's rise and activate this Jubilee through thanksgiving for God has remembered NRCRI.

Therefore, arise people of God, let us take our place for the shout of the King is with us. The time to showcase God's glory and excellence in all that we do as staff of NRCRI has come. Let's rise and activate this Jubilee through thanksgiving for God has remembered NRCRI.

# The World Environment Day In NRCRI



E D, Prof. Egesi plants a tree



Dr. G.N Asumugha plants a tree,

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2023, the National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike scientists join the entire world to celebrate the Environmental Day. Research has shown that root and tuber crops have potentials for Biodegradable plastics. This was made known by the Executive Director/ CEO of the Institute, Prof. Chiedozie Egesi in his opening remarks on the World Environmental Day. Prof. Egesi established that plastic pollution has affected the productivity of Agricultural research, the effect is recognized and should be tackled to avert the menace. He recalled that two notable scientists of NRCRI, will address the issue in their respective presentations.

In her presentation, Dr. Joy Adiele remarked the challenges every research scientist is facing in ensuring food security in the growing population of Sub-sahara Africa coupled with increasing temperature and climate change which has affected productivity. She also noted that Agriculture generate 30% of green house emission which has resulted in shifting Agro-eco system boundaries thereby reducing yields, lowering nutritional value of plants and livestock. She emphasized that ways of averting effects of climate change is embarking on carbon farming, Agro forestry, which are embodiments of smart Agriculture.

Speaking also was another scientist, Dr. Chukwuemeka Okerie. He opined that plastic pollution is the accumulation of plastic objects and particles in the earth environment that adversely affects human, wildlife and their habitat. Dr. Okezie noted that plastic pollution causes chemical degradation that consumes fertile soils with implication for global food security, human health, and hampers the achievement of development goals. He said that current plastic management are insufficient to address the scale of the problem and recycling of plastic is expensive faced with the danger of emission of more pollution hence solutions are necessary to reduce plastic pollution and its environmental impact.

In his closing remarks, Prof. Egesi said that plastic pollution is real and the in-thing is finding solution to the prevailing problem. He advised scientists of NRCRI to research and make proposals to assist in solving this world challenge.

Highlights of the occasion included planting of trees around the Institute by the Executive Director, Prof. Egesi, Directors and Staff.

## Public Health Worker Sensitizes NRCRI Nursing Mothers.

Dr. Uloaku Emma-Ukaegbu, a public health physician and field epidemiologist with an inclination for reproductive health and HIV/AIDS Control has opined that with proper sensitization, organizations can set up interventions in work places for nursing mothers in order to protect, promote and support breastfeeding among working mothers



Dr. Uloaku Emma-Ukaegbu as she delivered a seminar

She made this known in a lecture titled " The Productive Woman: Breastfeeding in the Workplace" which she delivered during a maiden seminar by the Gender Implementation Unit ( GIU ) at the National Root Crops Research Institute ( NRCRI ) Umudike, Abia state, to commemorate the World Breastfeeding week.

Dr Emma-Ukaegbu posited that though women make up 25 million out of the 46 million workforce in Nigeria, only about 9 percent of organizations have a workplace breastfeeding policy: with only 1.5 percent in the public sector and almost non-existent in the private sector. she also noted that only 7 out of the 36 states in Nigeria provide six months fully paid maternity leave and only about 34% of children below the age of 6 were exclusively breastfed as against the 70% targeted by the World Health Assembly (WHA) by 2030.

She described exclusive breastfeeding as the practice of giving an infant only breast-milk for the first 6 ( six ) months of life stating that it as a win-win setup for all involved (family, nursing mother, employee and baby) as employees who feel supported in their breastfeeding are more likely to be loyal and productive.

There is evidence today that every N1,000 invested in supporting breastfeeding can yield an estimated N35,000 in economic returns for Nigeria says Dr Emma Ukaegbu as available data shows that improved breastfeeding could save over 100,000 children's lives and 22 million dollars in healthcare treatment costs that are related to inadequate breastfeeding".

In her remark, the Director in-charge of the GIU in the institute, Dr Tessy Madu reiterated that the seminar was organized to create awareness and impart necessary knowledge on optimal breastfeeding practices and support for pregnant and nursing mothers for productivity in a conducive environment. Declaring the one day seminar open, the Executive Director and Chief Executive officer in the institute, Professor Chiedozie Egesi said that his administration is a gender responsive administration and as such committed to sustaining an enabling environment for nursing mothers. He promised to establish a baby friendly breastfeeding centre in the institute to cater for

babies while giving their mothers room to work and also nurture them. He however encouraged them to remain focused and productive and not to be deterred by pregnancy and breastfeeding phases.



Across Section of participants at the occasion

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH ED

Exclusive interview with the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, **PROF. CHIEDOZIE EGESI**, on his One year in office with Special attention to the

### ACHIEVEMENTS RECORDED

between 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 - 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Media crew:** Can we meet you sir.

**ED:** My name is Professor Chiedozie Egesi, the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike, Nigeria.

**Media Crew:** In line with your numerous vision of achievements for the institute, how far have you gone within this one year?

**ED:** within the past 1 year of my appointment/administration as the Executive Director of NRCRI Umudike, we have been able to recruit over 100 new staff. It is well known that the last recruitment was in 2014, so the new recruitment is targeted towards renewing the workforce and bringing in new scientists that will carry the hope of Research, forward.

We have been able to develop and release 4 new varieties of potato with our international partner; the International

Potato Centre(CIP). These potato varieties will change the potato Industry in Nigeria and West Africa as their rapid multiplication is ongoing, We have also released 2 new varieties of yam that have excellent eating qualities and very high productivity rate.

We have been able to attract more than 7 new grants from international donors with our scientists grant winning proposals and that is a feat achieved within the first 6 months of my administration.

When you come inwards, staff relations are now better, before i assumed office, there were lots of conflicts between the staff unions and the management of the institute, but right now everyone is happy and working. The unions are very excited with the new leadership and have been given 350% support.

Attached to that is a Peaceful coexistence that is restored

between the institute and the host communities. The traditional rulers are always ready and willing to lend helping hands and listening ears to the institute.

For staff training, we have 5 new Ph,D graduates in agricultural sciences in the last few months

Another milestone achieved in my administration is the renewal of the institute's outstations in the various geo-political zones. The institute is 100 years old so it laden with lots of decaying infrastructures. We have been able to rehabilitate the tractors and hilux trucks that were not

functional so that activities can really start in those places and for the host communities to feel the impact of NRCRI.

My administration has refurbished the institute's library complex where we use currently as our conference centre, by remodelling it before we had our 2023 annual review and planning workshop.

My administration has been able to start a new biotechnology laboratory complex in Kuru, outstation,

Plateau state and its expected to be commissioned within the next few months for genetic modification, diagnostics and molecular breeding.

Scientists are happier coming to work as they have been given funds to kick-start their research activities. They are busy and they are happier going to the fields and Laboratories to carry out their research work. Many have also attended international conferences and meetings.

Here in Umudike, we have laid a foundation for the 1000 capacity multi-purpose and ultra modern conference centre and we hope it will serve as a reference point where international conferences and location of choice for

hosting agricultural conferences and symposium.

We are also happy to say that in line with all of that, we have been able to rebrand the image and perception of the institute and we are very intentional about that, by using our social media handles effectively and engagingly. We have been able to secure a grant and interest just because of our engaging social media messages. And that's very impressive.

We have been able to change our logo as the former was already looking like it was a hundred years old so we

were able to renew it to look very modern.

Finally, the institute is a 100 years old this year and we also have a centenary logo. The centenary celebration will be happening between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2023.

Media crew: What is your score card for staff cooperation and welfare?

**ED:** We know that a happy staff and a well motivated workforce is the key for any organisation to operate at an optimal level. So we came in

with an understanding that intentionally, we need to engage the staff to understand what their issues are and be able to discuss and address them. So when i came in, we had town hall meeting sessions with the staff and an additional meetings with the executive committees of the various unions where the unions promised to give a 350% support having listened to me. I must tell you it has been a lovely journey with the unions. We may not agree on everything but we discuss and reach agreements. So the institute is better off, we don't chase people anymore to come to work, and they also do not come to work late.



**Prof. Chiedozie Egesi, The Executive/ CEO,  
National Root Crops Research Institute  
Umudike.**

Early in the mornings, you see people either in the farms, laboratories and offices working. We have been able to fix staff coaster buses and they are ready for use by staff despite our meagre resources. Without a motivated staff we cannot make any progress.

**Media crew:** Any challenges so far?

**ED:** Some of the challenges we face are basically, the meagre resources to do the work. so its a big task for resource mobilization and i mean financial resources and other material resources. We are not nearly funded to the level to make a very good change. So we are doing our best to make sure that what the government cannot supply and provide for, we look else where to development partners, donor agencies, both national and international, to do what we have to do. To really impart the lives of farmers like we do, you need to be supported financially and that has been our major challenge. The staff are ready to work but we need to be financially supported by the government. We hope that the government of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will support us with bigger envelopes to be able to carryout our work. We hope to provide adequate stewardship and accountability to make sure every money is adequately spent.

In terms of capacity development, we still have a long way to go in bringing scientists to be at par with cutting-edged technologies. For NRCRI to be the hub for innovation, we need to be on top of the game by training people and making sure they are exposed to modern technologies, understand the modern practices, be able to make comparism and adapt them to local conditions.

Again, the institute is a hundred years old and that means we have a hundred year old facilities and we need to make deliberate efforts to renew or change them to be able to serve the needs of todays world-bio-informatics. Though we are already doing things there but we cannot claim to have arrived yet.

We have been able to form new units like the Gender Implementation Unit, was just recently, launched to ensure that all our technologies are gender inclusive or

gender responsive and we are pushing against the head weight and making sure we are on top of our game to be able to deliver to Nigerians and farmers what they expect of us with the best of technologies, varieties, agronomic packages, processing and value addition to root and tuber crops, and also, best of advice for new enterprising agro entrepreneurs.

I implore all to support us, not just the government, but the oil companies and private sectors, we are here to partner with you. so we are calling on you to come on board and make this more impactful and successful.

**Media crew:** Special appreciation

**ED:** *I want to use this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported our work and ensures we have a conducive environment to work.*

- ▶ ***Our parent ministry, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, (FMAFS)***
- ▶ ***the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria,(ARCN)***
- ▶ ***The Directors and staff of NRCRI,***
- ▶ ***Our donors; the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, USAID, IFAD***
- ▶ ***Niger Delta Development (NDDC)***
- ▶ ***International Institute of tropical agriculture(IITA)***
- ▶ ***Our One CGIAR partners***
- ▶ ***Cornel University,***
- ▶ ***Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike***
- ▶ ***Abia State Government***
- ▶ ***All our project partners***
- ▶ ***The Eze's in our host communities both in Umudike and Out stations.***

*We thank you for being supportive, kind and willing to make this administration succeed. We are very grateful.*

# MORE ACHIEVEMENT BY PROF EGESI NRCRI ATTRACTS 11 NEW INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

**1. PROSSIVA** – Program for Seed System Innovation of Vegetatively-propagated crops (VPCs) in Africa is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Gates Foundation). The project aims to strengthen the seed systems of VPCs such as banana, plantain, cassava, sweet-potato and yam by a wide diversity of public and private sector partners in five implementing countries namely: Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. They will work together to address technical bottlenecks, poor coordination and weak commercialization that particularly affect VPC seed systems. The project will tap into the great potential for cross-learning between crops, as most constraints are common to many or all of them. The project will also benefit from building on the legacy of single crop seed system investments being funded by the Gates Foundation. PROSSIVA will target the five impact areas, namely: nutrition, health, food security; poverty reduction, livelihoods, jobs; gender equality, youth and social inclusion; climate adaptation and mitigation; environmental health and biodiversity. NRCRI Umudike's focus is on PROSSIVA yam, cassava and cross-cutting. The project is led by Dr Ihuoma Okwuonu.

**2. RTB BREEDING.** Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB) Breeding project is a multi continent project launched in Uganda on 6-8 Sep. 2023. RTB Breeding crops ( banana, cassava, potato sweet potato and yam) play a major role in alleviating poverty, improving food security and climate resilience and providing better livelihoods to farmers. RTB Breeding, a BMGF investment project focused in serving African farmers. It aims to: progressively streamline and mainstream modern breeding approaches in RTB Crops, aiming to increase genetic gains delivered on farmer's fields. Achieve progress towards developing effective and efficient CGIAR-NARS breeding networks in RTB crops. Quickly transition from a "one crop" mindset towards a shared one, fostering and incentivizing cross-crops, cross-center and cross-national programs collaborations to better serve farmers. RTB Breeding is led by Prof Chiedozie Egesi.

## **3. GENDER INCLUSIVE CONSUMER STUDIES WITHIN THE CASSAVA VALUE CHAIN AND TRAIT PRIORITIZATION FOR TARGETED BREEDING IN NIGERIA "**

**Project Lead...Dr Tessy Madu**

It's about elaboration of case study integrating gender into breeding objectives and decisions for the experiences. Funded by

the CGIAR Platform: Gender equity, youth and social inclusion (Gender Impact Platform)

## **4. PRIORITIZATION OF PREFERRED TRAITS WITHIN THE YAM VALUE CHAIN IN NIGERIA: A GENDER SITUATION ANALYSIS**

**Project Lead...Dr Benjamin Okoye**

It's about elaboration of case study integrating gender into breeding objectives and decisions for the experiences. Funded by the CGIAR Platform: Gender equity, youth and social inclusion (Gender Impact Platform).

## **5. LAUNCHING OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURE GROWTH SCHEME-(NAGS-AP)-FOR CASSAVA PROJECT WITH NRCRI AS IMPLEMENTATION AGENCY- anchored by Prof Chiedozie Egesi**

NAGS-AP project has been established to address the major problems of rural population as initiatives must be targeted at poverty alleviation programmes. NAGS- cassava component will build the resilience of small holder farmers through increased access to inputs, finance and training as well as increase food and nutrition security in the country. This project aims to upgrade casava crop by focusing on the entire value chain and how to fully explore the potential of the multi purpose crop as cassava is the basis for a number of products such as flour, animal feed, alcohol, starch, sweeteners, biodegradable products etc.

## **KEY FOCUS / PRIORITY AREAS**

To urgently increase small holder farmers' cassava productivity and treat cassava as a food security crop  
Initiate, scale and rally investment support for cassava processing into industrial product and extensive research networks  
Expand cassava products options, market opportunities and prospects.

Enhance access to agricultural information and extension services on cassava production

Create awareness on cassava products, usage for industrial purposes

Review, update and secure approval for the national policy on cassava industry and develop standards and quality assurance guidelines for cassava products

Provide training and open up investment opportunities in the various cassava value chains

Information and knowledge sharing

Build resilience to external shocks and safeguard livelihoods.

## TARGET GROUPS

- *Smallholder farmers and farmers' groups associations*
- *Processing groups and end-user industries*
- *Private sectors*
- *Research and development institutes*
- *Product developers and exporters*
- *Financial institutions.*

## 6. OCP-AFRICA CASSAVA PROJECT

### Background and objectives:

The project, titled "**Demonstrating productivity of OCP fertilizers and differentiated nutrient application on cassava production**," aims to demonstrate nutrient use efficiency of OCP recommended fertilizer rates, towards increased productivity of cassava in Nigeria. The project was designed to address the following objectives;

Examine the growth, development, and yield of cassava as affected by the direct application of OCP-formulated NPK fertilizer and differentiated nutrient application.

Demonstrate the effect of the rate and timing of fertilizer application on the growth and yield of cassava.

### PI OCP-Africa Cassava Project

Joy G. Adiele

Chief Research Officer

NRCRI, Nigeria

## 7. ENABLING NUTRIENT SYMBIOSIS IN AGRICULTURE-ENSA 2

Scientists from internationally-renowned institutions around the world are collaborating on the ENSA project to help make global agriculture more sustainable and equitable. The ENSA project focuses on improving and expanding the use of beneficial microorganisms for the delivery of nutrients essential for crop production. The aims of the programme are to replace the need for inorganic fertilizers by using beneficial microorganisms, providing a more easily accessible form of nutrient acquisition for small-holder farmers. Currently ENSA is field trialing new technologies towards this aim. Achieving this will be a major scientific breakthrough that would help the move towards the United Nations Sustainability Development Goal (SDGs) to end hunger.

### ENSA's innovation will:

1. increase crop yields
2. decrease farming costs

3. contribute to making sustainable productivity a reality for low-income regions. ENSA is led in the institute by Prof. Chiedozie Egesi

8: **BAYER GRANT.** Bayer Grants4Ag program recently awarded 21 research scientists drawn across 8 different countries for the 2023 cohort of Grants 4Ag.

Speaking in an interview with Dr Ihuoma Okwuonu, the award recipient from NRCRI, She said that the work will focus on the gene editing of local varieties.

This year's program addressed three innovation themes integral to Bayer's R&D efforts in its Crop Science division: sustainability traits, plant transformation technologies, and the gene editing potential of local plant varieties. It provides both financial and mentorship resources, with awards ranging from 5,000 to 15,000 Euro in addition to access to some of Bayer's leading Crop Science researchers as mentors for the duration of the program.

## 9. CASSAVA FOR BIOETHANOL PROJECT

### BY: Dr. Oluyemi Olojede

The Bioeconomy Policy in Nigeria aims to promote sustainable economic growth and development by creating a bio-based economy that will contribute to the creation of jobs, poverty reduction, and increased access to food and energy.

### The Bioethanol Plot

The Bioethanol Project is aimed at deriving bioethanol fuel from cassava for national Industrial use and Exports as well creating a new window for processing of varied products and bye-products from the Bio-Ethanol Production processes. The project targets mass production of cassava as a major bio-feedstock for the project and other bio-fuel crops such as Maize, Sugar Cane.

The key goal of this Bioethanol Value Chain Pilot is to demonstrate the efficacy of a private sector led approach in promoting investment in renewable biomass and create wealth, provide jobs, reduce poverty, improve food security & nutrition, provide renewable energy and reduce carbon footprint.

### Specific Goals and Objectives of the Programme

The goal will be realized by achieving the following specific objectives: Goal 1: To greatly enhance youth employment through building the capacity of Bio entrepreneurs in tertiary institutions, MSMEs, R&D communities, with support from our MDAs and Development Partners to fight food insecurity challenges and produce adequate cassava based industrial raw materials. Objective 1: To reduce the incidence of multi-dimensional poverty through expanding local employment in rural neighbourhoods. Objective 2: Develop Bio-fuel (Bio-ethanol & Bio-diesel) Feedstock Production

Objective 3: Develop Appropriate Funding Mechanism, Business and Investment Models for the Implementation and Propagation of the Bio-Ethanol and Bio-fuel feed stocks in Nigeria.

### 10.. GREATER TECHNOLOGY AND AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS IN FOOD PRODUCTIVITY AND CLIMATE SHOCK MANAGEMENT (GTA-FCM) SPONSORED BY CHARITY AID FOUNDATION AMERICA

—Mr Paul Ekeledo

### 11. RURAL PARTNERSHIP IN AGROFORESTRY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (RPACD) SPONSORED BY PAN AFRICAN CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE

- Mr paul Ekeledo

### RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCH SCIENTISTS

Part of the achievements in office is the recruitment of young scientific/research officers. It's noteworthy that the institute has not recruited since the last 8 years and this administration ensured that it's given high priority.

### HOSTING OF PAGS CONFERENCE

Prof Chiedozie Egesi hosted a Cassava Genomics workshop at the Plant & Animal Genomics Conference 30 at San Diego, California where cassava researchers from all over the world participated and discussed new frontiers in science and technology of cassava improvement.



## NEW YAM VARIETIES RELEASED BY NRCRI

Three New Yam Varieties, UMUDr – 33 (Blessing), UMUDr – 34 (sunshine) and UMUDa – 35 (Delight) have been registered and released by the National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI) Umudike in collaboration with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Ibadan and Ebonyi State University on the 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

The Yam Breeder/Coordinator of yam programme Dr. J.E. Obidiegwu revealed that the approval for registration and release of the varieties has been granted by the National Committee on crops seeds and Animal Release in Nigeria after presented the nominated varieties due to the exceptional merits

**TDa1100374**



Younger leaves: Dark green. Petiole: Dark green.  
Anticlockwise vine



Older leaves: Pale green



Tuber: Creamy white flesh



Tuber: Dark brown skin, hairy and spiny skin  
Cylindrical shape

# OPINION POLL

The Executive Director, Professor Chiedozi Egesi has been doing well in the out station. He is very passionate about Nyanya out station. The station has recorded many achievements since he came. The tractors that had gone more bound are now operational. Every available land has been cultivated and our root and tuber crops such as Yam, Sweet potato, Cassava and ginger planted and electricity restored, In fact life has returned to the station. ED has upgraded the station to a Climate Adaptation in Agricultural Research Centre and promised to make it a centre of Excellence/



**Dr Justin Ewuziem.**  
The Head, NRCRI, Nyanya Out station,

In terms of staff welfare, there is now maximum satisfaction and corporation among the staff due to improved staff motivation, advancement & promotion. He is pushing towards showcasing root and tuber crops to the world. He however being checkmated by funding. I think he has done well so far, my words to him is to continue and I pray that all agencies and factors that will help him succeed will be made

“ Professor Egesi is very legitimate and works hard to make things happen, ”



**Dr. Ikoro Anyim Ikoro .**  
The Head, NRCRI, Igbariam, Out station

Our digital Executive Director, Prof Chiedozi Egesi, has been very supportive to the sub station, since his assumption of office, in October, 2022, despite the economic crisis being faced by the Institute and Nigeria at large. The staff welfare has been paramount to him.. some salary arrears have been paid, courtesy of him, and conscious efforts are being made by him to offset the rest. The staff cooperation here in Igbariam has been marvellously unsurpassed in this administration. On a score card, I scored the ED, very high as he has achieved a great fit within a short period of time.

“ I scored the ED, very high as he has achieved a great fit within a short period of time. ”

The notable achievements of my digital Executive Director of the National Root Crops Research Institute Umudike(NRCRI). Prof Chiedozi Egesi. In the first place he released fund for research activities at the right time in this 2023. He has added more staff to the station to strengthen our works and make the station more productive. My ED is trying his best in my station and i scored him excellent within a very short period of his administration. From the only female Head of station.

“ My ED is trying his best in my station and I scored him excellent within a very short period of his administration. ”



**Dr Mrs Akimbo, O.**  
The Head, NRCRI, Iresi Out station,

## Commissioning of the Newly Built Office Complex



Picture highlight on the work visit by the Executive Secretary, Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria, Prof. Garba H. Sharubutu to the National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike.



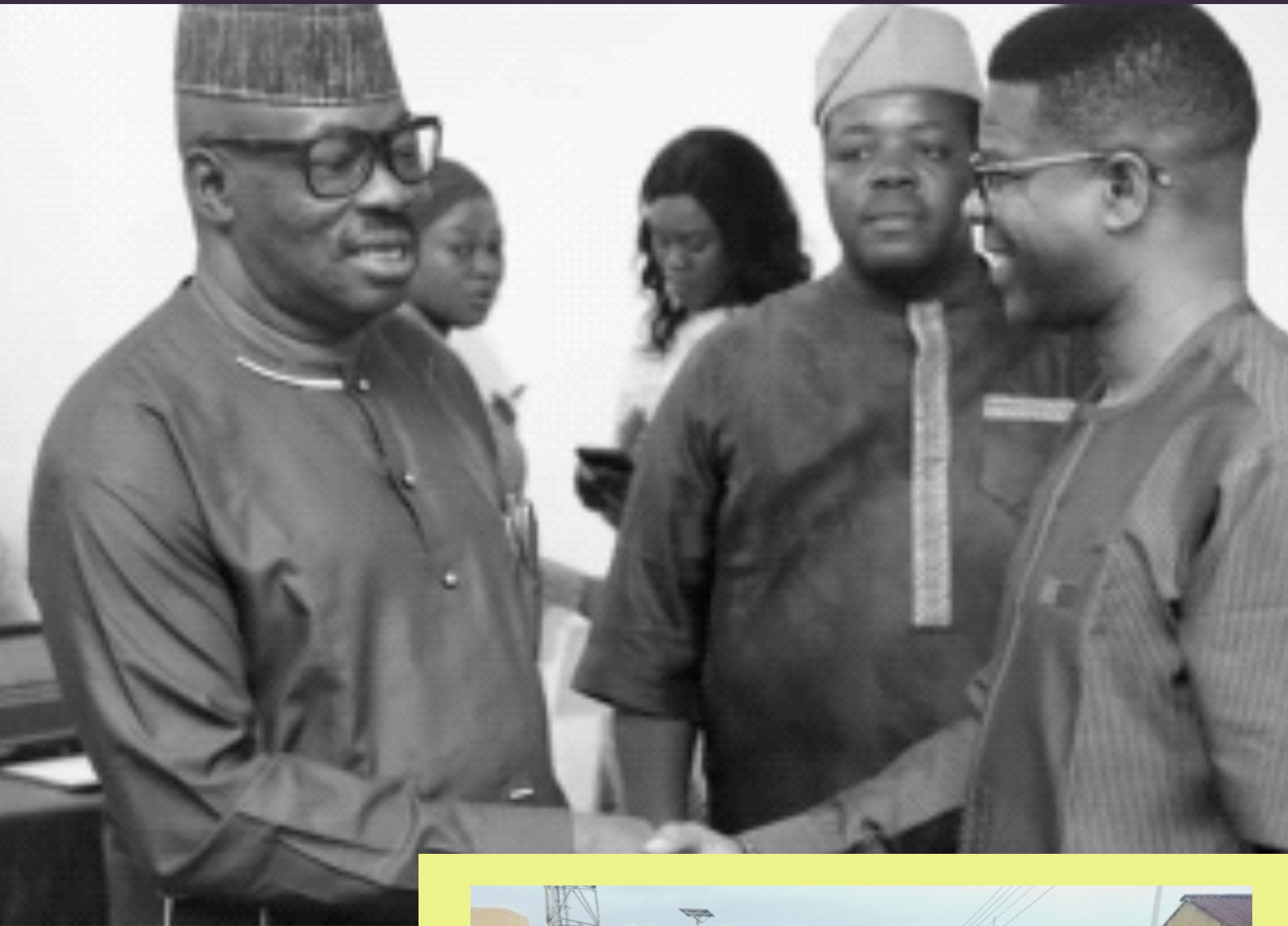
Office Complex inner







**NRCRI**  
DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



# NRCRI, MOUAU LINKAGE GATE





## NRCRI BIO CHEMISTRY LABORATORY ACTIVITIES



## PASSAGE OF NRCRI LIBRARY COMPLEX





# NRCRI

DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



**INSIDE NRCRI LIBRARY COMPLEX**



**OUTSIDE OF THE LIBRARY COMPLEX**



# NRCRI

DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



**MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECH LAYS FOUNDATION OF 1000 CAPACITY CONFERENCE HALL**

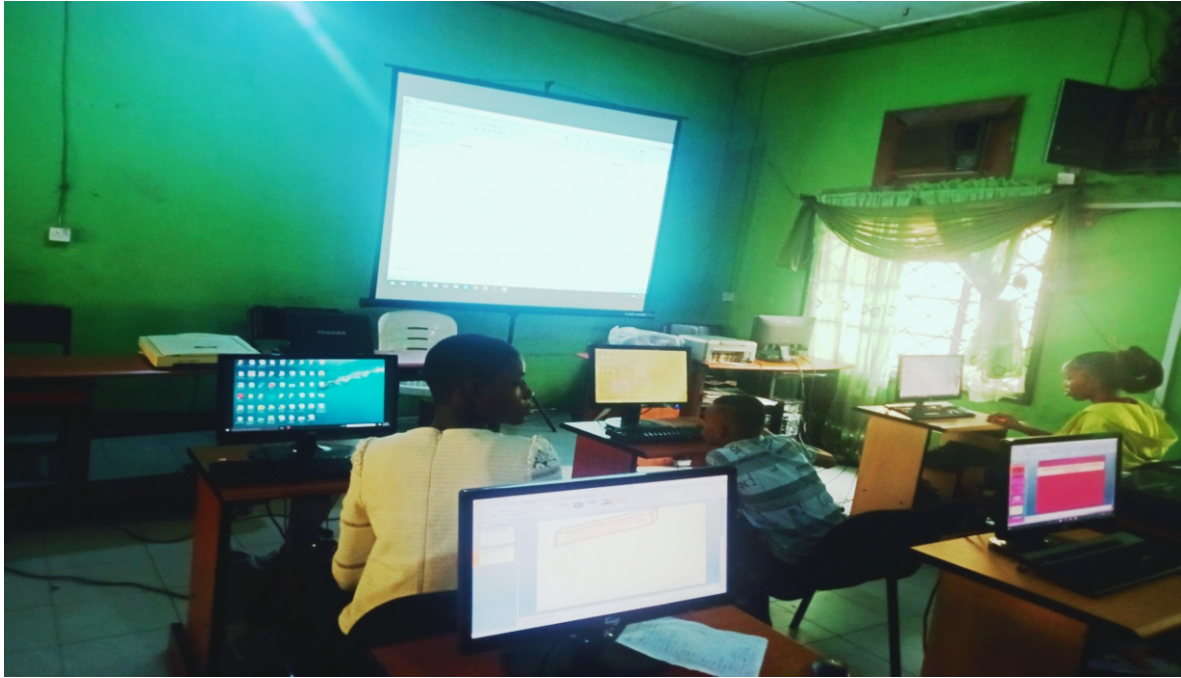


**NRCRI AND MOUAU COLLABORATES**



# NRCRI

DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



**NRCRI ICT/COMPUTER CENTRE**



# NRCRI

DELIVERING THE ROOTS OF PROSPERITY



## BIOTECHNOLOGY OFFICE IN JOS