



COLEACP Supports Nigerian Fresh Produce To Access EU Market

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Nigeria looks set to join the West African fresh producers by setting new domestic and internationally accepted export standards.

COLEACP, a Brussels-based inter-professional network promoting horticultural trade between Europe and the member countries in the Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, commenced work with the fresh producers in Nigeria about two years ago to support the work on horticultural production and trade, under the Federal Government's agricultural transformation agenda.

According to statement made available to The UNION Agribusiness by the Executive Secretary of Agricultural Fresh Produce Growers and Exporters Association of Nigeria (AFGEAN), Mr Akintunde Sawyerr.

Country Manager for Nigeria at COLEACP, Benedicte Werner, gave the indications in a recent disclosure.

"We reiterate our willingness to do more in Nigeria with additional funding, based on the action plan we submitted to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development in Nigeria, Werner said .

COLEACP, an organisation that is making its presence increasingly felt in Nigeria, has established a number of strategic relationships towards preparing Nigerian horticultural investors for export trade.

According to Werner, "COLEACP-PIP currently manages 22 memoranda of agreement (MoA) for individual support projects in the horticultural industry. The beneficiaries are three farmer cooperatives, five export companies, and 12 consultancy firms.

Similarly, COLEACP is establishing a MoA with the Agricultural Fresh Produce Growers & Exporters Association of Nigeria (AFGEAN), as well as with the Department of Horticulture of the Federal University of Agriculture of Abeokuta."

Two of AFGEAN leaders, Alhaji Tajuddeen Aminu Dantata (President) and Mr. Akintunde Sawyerr (Executive Secretary), have indicated that AFGEAN will continue to support its members, who are predominantly small sale farmers in the sector.

Specifically, Werner indicated, "COLEACP-PIP has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IFDC 2scale project and is currently discussing with DFID – GEMS 4 project. In addition, since the first COLEACP

mission to Nigeria in July 2013, applications for support have been received from other potential beneficiaries and are under evaluation; these include export companies, the Fresh Fruit Vegetable Dealers Association of Nigeria as well as from the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON).”

She pointed out that, April 2014, an awareness-raising workshop on food safety management and market requirements – co-organised with AFGEAN and Sence Agric (leading entity) – was planned for more than 30 participants from private sector organisations (farmers, future farmers, processors) as well as SON and NAFDAC. In a training of trainers’ session, planned for 28th of April to 10th of May at the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, in collaboration with the IFDC 2scale project, 12 service providers have been trained, after going through a selection process on the COLEACP-Learning platform. The trainers were from Kenya and Zambia.” More training has been planned for June 2014 in Abeokuta on “Crop Protection and Safe Use of Pesticides” as well as on “Food Safety Management.” According to Werner, “these activities are conducted under COLEACP current funding.” With these and more, COLEACP plans to give Nigeria a pre-eminence in the African-European trade in fresh produce.