

SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

TOPIC: PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

WEEK: WEEK FOUR (4)

TERM: 1ST TERM

CLASS: SS1

PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURE

Developing countries, especially the West African countries and Nigeria in particular are faced with numerous problems which militate against the development of agriculture. Among the problems faced by early crop producers were weather, pest, storage, soil preparation crop processing, and maintenance of crop quality etc. These problems account for almost 90% of Nigeria under development and once they are tackled with appropriate solution. The problems causing low productivity in Nigeria include the following:

LAND TENURE SYSTEM

Land is one the most important factors of agricultural production. Land tenure simply means the ways of acquiring land in the society. The prevailing land tenure system in Nigeria often discourages agricultural land utilization as most land is owned through inheritance which leads to land fragmentation.

INADEQUATE CAPITAL FOR FARMERS

This is another major problem facing agricultural development in Nigeria. Farmers do not have enough capital to acquire land, improved breeds of plant, animals' equipment and so on. This forces them to practice agriculture in a subsistence manner with low productivity and low profits. Inadequate credit facilities aggravated the problem.

INADEQUACY OF BASIC AMENITIES

Basic amenities include motor able road, good drinking water, electricity, educational institution, health facilities and market. The major reason why young people don't take interest in farming is due to inadequacy of basic/social amenities in the rural areas.

INADEQUATE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Education plays a vital role in agricultural practice and most farmers in the developing countries are not well educated in the technicalities relating to agricultural practice. Also, illiterate farmers are not ready to adopt new technologies majorly because they have strong belief in their old methods of agricultural practice.

POOR FARM TOOLS AND MACHINES

Most farmers still practice agriculture with primitive implements like hoes, cutlasses, rakes etc. instead of using mechanized tools like ridgers, plough, cultivator etc. all these mechanized tools are very important for large production but they are not readily and sufficiently available. Some are very expensive and even out of the reach of farmers. Maintenance costs for mechanized machines are high and the spare parts are scarce.

POOR STORAGE AND PROCESSING FACILITIES

In Nigeria, a larger percentage of agricultural produce spoil after harvest. The market values of the products fall too low immediately after harvest due to improper storage system. Since these products are perishable and the farmers have no preserved them, the whole products are taken to the market immediately so as to reduce loss.

PROBLEM OF PESTS AND DISEASES

In Nigeria, pests and diseases destroy crops and animals. There are pests and diseases in the soil and in the farm environment. These pests and diseases attack and destroy crops. Storage pests are also very common on our farms. Rural farmers are however objected helpless in this ugly situation because they neither know how to control them nor can afford the chemical to be used.

INADEQUATE AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

Agricultural inputs such as fungicides, insecticides, pesticides, herbicides and improved seedlings are expensive to acquire. Also, improved livestock materials are not readily available while available ones are substandard. This leads to low output during harvest period.

INADEQUATE EXTENSION WORKERS

Agricultural extension is the dissemination of recent innovation about new farming practices to a large number of farmers within a very short period of time.

POOR MARKETING SYSTEM

The activities of some middlemen i.e. wholesalers and retailers are very bad. These middle men buy farm produce from the farmers during the on season when the price is very low. They hoard the produce and later sell to the public at exorbitant prices during the period of scarcity.

