

## **Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) Campaign for 2019 Launched**



*Minister for Food and Agriculture, Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto delivery his statement*

The Minister for Food and Agriculture, Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto launched the 2019 - Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) season at the Information Resources Center of the Ministry on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

Dr. Akoto expressed satisfaction on the impressive participation and yields recorded for the 2018 PFJ Season. He noted that, the sector exceeded the set target of 5000,000 farmer participation in the 2018 PFJ Season and was optimistic that the 2019 season will be a better one.

Addressing the gathering of stakeholders, farmers, and input dealers, the Sector Minister urged all, to support the programme. He also call on all MMDCEs to own the flagship programme and ensure it receives the necessary attention to speed up the economic development of the country.

Dr. Akoto was certain that improving yields of priority crops will allow farmers to meet demand for feed, food and jobs (both rural and urban), while minimizing the pressure on the need to import food and chicken into the country. 'It is evident that Agric is the only way to poverty reduction and economic growth' he added.

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Below is the full press statement issued by the Agric sector Minister, Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto

**PLANTING FOR FOOD AND JOBS CAMPAIGN FOR 2019 - PRESS STATEMENT BY THE HON. MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE AT THE LAUNCH OF THE 2019 CAMPAIGN**

**Invited Guests,**

**Distinguished Members of the Media,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**1. Background**

It gives me pleasure to meet with you all stakeholders in the agriculture sector once again to launch the 2019 campaign Planting Food and Jobs (PFJ) and also assure our farmers that the government of Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo will continue to support them by reducing further the prices of seeds and fertilizers.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in PFJ, we have a dream to maximize food production in the country and I am happy to state that following successive successful campaigns in 2017 and 2018, the nation is benefitting from bumper a harvest which has enabled us to export excess foodstuffs such as maize, sorghum, cowpea, plantain and yam to Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. For instance, at Ejura Market in the Ejura Sekyeredumase Municipality in the Ashanti Region alone, about 2,008 tonnes of yellow maize and 2,174 tonnes of white maize were exported to Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso respectively, at the end of 2018. According to data at MoFA, the Ejura Sekyeredumase Municipal Department of Agriculture had recorded an addition as reported by the Daily Graphic newspaper on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2019.

Like Joseph in the Bible, we have not given up on our dream.

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## **2. Focus Crops and Campaign Target For 2019**

In 2017, the first year of the campaign, over 202,000 farmers participated. Last year, about 677,000 farmers benefitted and this year our target is 1,000,000 farmers.

The cereals and legumes crops being promoted under the campaign have also increased. In addition to maize, rice, sorghum, soyabean, groundnut and cassava that were promoted in 2017 and 2018, crops such as cowpea, orange flesh sweet potato, plantain and yam have been added under the 2019 Campaign. Vegetables crops such as cabbage, lettuce, carrot, cucumber, tomato, pepper and onion will still be promoted in 2019.

## **3. Jobs Creation**

In the process of increasing farm produce we created over, 790,000 jobs in 2018 as against 745,000 in the previous year.

## **4. Introduction of crop specific fertilizers.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, for over 4 decades, farmers in the country have been using blanket fertilizer recommendations. The use of blanket recommendation has been one of the major contributory factors of the low crop productivity among smallholder farmers. To address this challenge, the Soil Research Institute (SRI) of CSIR together of consortium of scientist was tasked to come up with crop specific fertilizer recommendations. The SRI as a lead institution in collaboration with the Ministry for Food and Agriculture with support from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) has been able to develop crop specific fertilizer recommendations for maize, sorghum, rice, soyabean, cassava and vegetables for the Guinea Savanna and Forest Transitional Agro-ecological zones of the country.

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I wish to commend AGRA for the support given to the scientist that enabled them achieve this feat. I wish to assure you that the Ministry for Food and Agriculture will vigorously promote the use of the crop specific fertilizer recommendations under the 2019 campaign. I wish to take this opportunity to solicit the support of other development partners to assist us develop recommendations for the other agro-ecological zones of the country.

## **5. Approved Selling Prices for Fertilizers for 2019**

Ladies and Gentlemen the Ministry of Food and Agriculture hereby announces the selling prices of the various types of inputs under the 2019 Campaign with effect from 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 as follows:

### **Fertilizers – (Inorganic)**

- NPK (All types) - GH¢75 per 50Kg bag
- Urea - GH¢70 per 50Kg bag

### **Fertilizer – (Organic)**

- Granular - GH¢ 45 per 25Kg bag
- Compost - GH¢ 20 per 50Kg bag
- Liquid - GH¢ 19 per liter

### **Seeds**

- Maize (OPV) - GH¢2 per kg
  - Maize (Hybrid) - GH¢3 per kg
  - Rice - GH¢2 per kg
  - Soya bean - GH¢3 per kg
  - Sorghum - GH¢2 per kg
  - Groundnut - GH¢2 per kg
  - Cowpea - GH¢3 per kg
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## **6. Operational Modalities**

To ensure efficiency and value for money and to minimize smuggling in the distribution of fertilizers to beneficiary farmers under the Planting of Food and Jobs Campaign, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) will roll out the following implementation modalities with the support of NABCO officials.

1. All fertilizers and seeds will be bagged with PFJ labels.
2. Fertilizer to be sold in the three northern regions will be bagged in only 25 Kg bags
3. Fertilizer to be sold in the southern sector will be bagged in 50 Kg bags
4. Copies of waybills on all fertilizers and seeds consignments must be submitted to the Regional Coordinating Councils through the Regional Directors of Agriculture.
5. At the district and community levels, copies of waybills of all consignments must be submitted to MMDCEs through the District Directors of Agriculture.
6. Fertilizer and seeds distributors and retailers in the three northern regions will liaise with recruited NABCO, officials under the supervision of MMDCEs, to distribute fertilizers to the sale outlets/retail points.
7. NABCO officials will be placed at all retail outlets in the three northern regions to supervise and record the quantities of fertilizers and seeds sold to farmers.
8. Sales records of the retailers will be reconciled with NABCO officials and invoices generated and submitted by the companies to the Ministry for payment.

## **7. Support for Institutions**

The Ministry will continue to support institutions such as universities, second cycle institutions, churches, prisons and Chiefs by providing them with subsidized fertilizers, seeds and tractors where necessary.

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## **8. Fall Arm Worm**

The Task Force that was put in place to tackle this problem has been successful in their mission. They will continue to stay alert to deal with the problem if it should reemerge.

## **9. Conclusion**

It is my expectation that our farmers, input distributors and all stakeholders will play their roles under the Campaign effectively to make sure that the farm inputs government is paying so much for are put to good use for the benefit of Ghanaians and not smuggled out to neighbouring countries.

Farmers and the general public are advised to report any dealer selling subsidized fertilizers above the announced prices to any Agricultural Official or to the nearest security agency.

The security agencies are to protect the tax payers' money by arresting and prosecuting any person or groups of persons smuggling subsidized fertilizers across our borders.

I therefore urge the Regional Ministers and all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives to give every support to their Agricultural Development Units to make the program successful.

Ladies and gentlemen I wish to declare the 2019 PFJ Campaign duly launched with immediate effect. Finally, with this launch, all participating fertilizer and seed companies are being requested to commence distribution to the Regions, Districts and farming communities.

Thank you all for coming and God bless you.

*By Bagbara Tanko*

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