

NATIONAL SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION OF GHANA (NASTAG)
REPORT ON VISIT TO NASTAG MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY
JUNE TO JULY 2019

1.0 BACKGROUND

As part of the third quarter activities of the Association, the Executive Council (EC) Members together with the Secretariat Staff scheduled to conduct visit to all members of the Association across all the regions of Ghana. The objective of this visit was to:

- Know the location of each member company
- Assess the benefits of the Association to members
- Identify challenges peculiar to them that require attention and support of the EC and Secretariat in resolving them
- Collate the members' expectations based on services to be rendered to them and proposed recommendations

The visit was divided into sessions:

- The first trip was accomplished by the President, the Executive Secretary and the Programme Assistant
- The second was carried out by the President, the Middle Zone Rep and the Executive Secretary
- Third by the President and the Technical Advisor and
- the fourth and last session by the President and the Executive Secretary

The scheduled dates on which members were visited, during the Period, June – July 2019

1.	JAFEL AGRO INDUSTRIES LTD	1-Jun	24	YONIFAH SEEDS LTD	19-Jun
2.	WEKU FARMS LTD	2-Jun	25	HERITAGE SEEDS CO. LTD	26-Jun
3.	LEGACY CROPS IMPROVE. CENTRE	2-Jun	26	WUMPINI AGRO CHEM.	26-Jun
4.	AGRISEED LTD	3-Jun	27	ENEPA VENTURES	8- July
5.	BENZENE FARMS	5-Jun	28	K. ASEMPAH ENT.	9 July
6.	BLESS FARMS LTD	5-Jun	29	PREMIUM SEEDS	9- July
7.	M&B SEEDS AND AGRI. SERV. CO. LTD	4-Jun	30	PAG FARMS	10 - July
8.	WYNCA SUNSHINE	10-Jun	31	AGRI COMM. SERVICES	10- July
9.	CROPS RESERCH ISTITUTE	10-Jun	32	VICTORY LIFE FARMS	11-July
10.	ANTIKA COMPANY LTD	11-Jun	33	SEEDCO GHANA	29-July
11.	ORISON FARMS	11-Jun	34	RMG CONCEPT GHANA	9 - Aug
12.	BIG AJAR FARMS	11-Jun	35	SEEDPAG	
13.	DORI FARMS	12-Jun	36	SARI	17-Jun
14.	ARIKU COMPANY LTD	13-Jun	37	UVEC	No visit
15.	SIMPLE PRINCE CO. LTD	13-Jun	38	INNOVATIONS VILLAGE	No Visit
16.	IWAD GHANA LTD	14-Jun	39	PFAG	No Visit
17.	SAVANNA SEEDS CO. LTD	17-Jun	40	THE SEEDSHOP LTD	No Visit
18.	RURAL INNOVATIONS CONSULT	17-Jun	41	SIMCO FARMS	No Visit
19.	GREEN TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS	17-Jun	42	AGRISOLVE	No Visit
20.	LEXBOK INVESTEMENTS	18-Jun	43	CROPLIFE GHANA	No visit
21.	TALIM VENTURES	18-Jun	44	EMTRADE CO. LTD	No visit
22.	MAYIYA INVESTMENTS LTD	19-Jun	45	UDS FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE	No visit
23.	GANORMA CO. LTD	19-Jun	46	QUALISEED GHANA	No visit

2.0 OUTCOMES

A total of 34 Association members were visited out of the 45 members and four regional SeedPAG offices (Volta, Northern, Upper West and Northern Regions) across the 10 (now 16) regions of Ghana. General outcomes from the interactions with the members are outlined as follows:

- On the question of if members' purpose of joining the Association from the start had been met, and also if the purpose as at the time of visit had changed after getting to know fully what the Association seeks to achieve, about 90% of the members visited in one way or the other indicated that their purpose for joining the Association have been met to a large extent.
- They alluded to the fact that, there were several challenges they faced but as the years progressed, the Association to some extent strived to resolve some of the issues. However, other issues required further attention in addition to those emerging, especially in the government policy initiative for Agriculture in the past few years.

Some of the benefits derived from NASTAG members outlined are summarized as follows:

1. There have been opportunities to increase sales of seeds comparatively through the market linkages created per the establishment of the Association.
2. They have had the opportunity to enhance their knowledge on seed and seed related issues through sensitization sessions and ordinary meetings of which members got the opportunity to participate in.
3. Some members said they received some trainings by virtue of being a member of the Association, especially on hybrid seed, which are helping in enhancing their businesses in seed production
4. Few members mentioned that they also got the opportunity as members to acquire production and processing equipment in a collective manner, which would have been difficult as an individual company.
5. Being part of the Association, the information dissemination to members afforded them the opportunity to periodically receive updates on issues happening in the seed sector from the Secretariat.
6. Enhanced participation in some key events like National Seed Forum and Pre-season events, which has contributed to enhancing partnerships and linkages in doing business.
7. Specific business-related issues that posed challenges to a large extent, were addressed through the intervention of the Secretariat and the EC, and these were some of the support expected as members of the Association



Mr Innocent Atsutse said, "Since I became member, I have been exposed to many opportunities. I joined in 2018 March, I supplied seeds to government in 2018 and still doing that this year, I participated in hybrid seed training free of charge, I established linkage there with SeedCO and I am now doing a one acre hybrid trial with them through a contract agreement, I participated in an AGM where members shared ideas thus enhancing my business operations, I am getting a better understanding of the seed sector in general, It was good you advised me to join the

Highlights of some of the issues that came up, during interactions with visited members, for consideration as a way of enhancing the performance of the Association to the benefit of members and developing the seed sector, are presented as follows:

1. Some members are of the view that some Basic Seeds of hybrid maize and Rice are impure and pose a lot of challenges in turning out premium seeds for the market
2. Members expect the EC to negotiate with government on their behalf to allow the use of their own packaging materials for easy traceability and business promotion. An example was given that, currently seeds imported in respective companies' packaging materials are accepted and distributed as such, while NASTAG members do not have that opportunity to promote their brands, which consequently affects local seed businesses.
3. Members called for the need to relook at the criteria for becoming a new member. This is to ensure that the Association grows to be identified with its own brand as the Association that development partners would want to reckon with. This could contribute to curb faking and adulteration of seeds.
4. Some members expressed the need to psyche themselves up towards partnership, linkages, mergers and collaborations; providing inter-membership services for cohesion and growth.
5. Members should be allowed to take full responsibility in carrying out their own businesses. For example, even if members desire to supply seeds under a programme, printing and use of waybills should be the responsibilities of members and not the Association/Secretariat.
6. Need for more education/sensitization on the seed sector, seed business, benefits to the farmer and the whole country and challenges associated with it, in the media especially on radio.
7. Need to arrange and work to intensify field demonstrations to promote use of improved seeds.
8. Update members on the rules and regulations governing the seed industry at various stages/intervals.
9. The need to develop a comprehensive seed demand forecast to benefit all value chain actors should be a priority activity for the Association. This informs the activities of the research institutes to make it meet the demands of the seed producers and Ghana agriculture.
10. Need to advocate for mechanization centres at the district levels to serve seed producers/farmers.
11. Need to consciously work at bringing all other planting material producers into the Association to forge for the development of standards for such planting materials in partnership with all relevant parties.
12. Need to do more on capacity building especially of hybrid seed production.
13. Holding events to enhance members' visibility and publicity should be considered crucial as part of service provision to members.
14. Some members are of the view that, it was possible to lobby government for financial support and that must be pursued to help seed businesses, where applicable, to grow the seed sector
15. The Association should develop a basic training material to build the capacity of any enterprise or individual that seeks to do seed production as out-growers for members of the Association.

16. Some members also proposed that the Association develops training manual in Basic Seed production to use to train existing and new entrants into seed production.
17. Issues such as in-fighting, lack of trust for each other, lack of collaboration and understanding amongst members should be dealt with.
18. There is a need to further enhance the collaboration with government to enable the Association leverage on opportunities to the benefit of the members.
19. Importation of seed was identified as a major challenge to the seed sector business in Ghana. Thus, it is important that the Association have a stronger discussion with the government to seriously consider the decisions going forward to ensure that seeds produced in the system (without compromise on quality) are exhaustively considered based on which extras seeds required can be considered for importation.
20. Generally, there is sub-standard and limited quantities of Foundation Seed at the time it is required. This to a large extent affects production. On quality issues NASTAG should sit with the research institutes to find solutions to the issue.
21. Some members called for regional representation of NASTAG. This is to ensure that NASTAG is represented in most meetings to be abreast with ongoing issues and also make its voice heard on issues especially related to seeds.
22. Businesses in seed production are growing and some companies are attempting dry season production, however, availability of seed inspectors at some crucial times and especially during the minor season (which also due to lack of prior information from growers) is a major challenge. It was recommended that companies put a comprehensive plan in place and ahead of time with GSID-PPRSD staff notified ahead to fine to also help them plan their inspection schedules for mutual benefit.
23. The challenge of wrong correlation between Foundation Seeds purchased and corresponding Certified Seeds produced, was of great concern to some members, confirming allegations that there is increased faking and adulteration of seed, thus the need for the Association to work with the PPRSD-GSID, Research Institutes and the other private Foundation Seed producing companies to collaborate effectively to guarantee quality of seeds on the market for sale.

The above represents the views of members during the visit in a consolidated manner.

3.0 CONCLUSION & WAY FORWARD

- ✓ Generally, the visit gave the EC and Secretariat some priority areas for members to consider going forward.
- ✓ It is expected that, the EC and Secretariat and as part of its report for the 2020 AGM would provide updates on actions taken in respect of the issues raised during the tour.
- ✓ This notwithstanding, the specific issues that are addressed in the process either at the Secretariat level or through the Ministry or the relevant directorates would be communicated to the members accordingly.

SOME PICTURES FROM THE FIELD VISIT



FIGURE 1: MONITORING TEAM WITH M&B SEEDS: MR BEN KEMETSE



FIGURE 2: MONITORING TEAM WITH IWAD: MR DAVID KONLAN



FIGURE 4: MONITORING TEAM WITH BLESS FARMS: MR. INNOCENT ATSUTSE



FIGURE 6: MONITORING TEAM WITH ARIKU COMPANY LTD: MR MARTIN ARIKU



FIGURE 3: PRESENT DURING THE TRIP WITH ANTIKA COMPANY: ALHAJI ANTIKU ABDULAI



FIGURE 5: MONITORING TEAM WITH PREMIUM SEEDS TEAM: MR PRINCE ANDO AND DR ANTWI



FIGURE 7: THE PRESIDENT WITH LCIC: MR AMOS AZINU



FIGURE 8: MONITORING TEAM WITH RURAL INNOVATIONS CONSULTS: MR JOE BAPULE



FIGURE 9: MONITORING TEAM WITH TALIM VENTURES: MR CHARLES ADAMA