Online African Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Juncao Technology and its Support to Achieve Sustainable Agriculture and the SDGs

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Benefits of Introduction the Juncao Technology in South Sudan

John Ogoto Kanisio Okeleng Lefuk
UnderSecretary for Food Security
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
Republic of South Sudan

Introduction

The Republic of South Sudan is a land-locked East African country with surface area of 648,000 Km^2 and population estimated at 13 million. Though very rich in natural resources including abundant arable land, water, forests, livestock, fisheries, mineral resources and oil, South Sudan still remains among the poorest and most food insecure nations of the world.

To improve its socio-economic indicators, the country highly welcomes and works with willing Development Partners to make impactful interventions particularly in the area of agriculture and livelihoods improvement. The current policy environment is conducive to initiatives supporting development and transformation of the agriculture sector to reduce poverty, end hunger and achieve food security and improved nutrition in line with Vision 2040 of the country already in place.

Benefits of introduction of JUNCAO Technology

- South Sudan has a rich culture, traditional knowledge and practices in the hunting, identification and processing of wild edible fungi. They are collected mostly for subsistence consumption, valued and considered a valuable addition to diets of both rural and urban households;

- Although the rural people collect diverse types of the wild mushrooms across the country, there is no record of any significant attempt to farm the mushrooms or subject them to scientific studies;

- South Sudan submitted a project proposal to the Government of the People's Republic of China on establishment of a JUNCAO Technology Technical Cooperation Centre in the country;

- The main items of the project include: Juncao grass planting; Juncao forage processing; livestock feeding with Juncao grass; Juncao edible and medicinal mushrooms production; Juncao organic fertilizer production; and, soil erosion control;
- The benefits expected of the project in South Sudan are:
    1. JUNCAO edible mushroom production will provide people particularly in the rural area with a reliable access to safe and nutritious food badly needed especially for malnourished children;
    2. In the urban areas consumers obtain fresh or processed mushrooms including canned products imported from neighbouring countries or further abroad. These are offered through a few retail shops or outlets at prices most people, particularly the majority low-income tier, can hardly afford. Local production will be a game changer by providing affordable access to fresh and processed mushrooms;
    3. Promotion of edible and medicinal JUNCAO mushroom farming technologies is good for empowering the poor, rural smallholder farmers and local businesses. It can provide them with an additional source of cash income that pays for children to go to school thus helping to reduce poverty and build up a more resilient community;
    4. Use of JUNCAO as feed for livestock can improve quantity and quality of animal production and reduce overgrazing particularly during seasonal scarcity of grazing resources;
    5. JUNCAO technology helps to transform biomass considered by many as waste into food, and the waste of this food to a great feed for animals, thus cascading nutrition, matter and energy. It allows us to address fundamental social and ecological issues as our economies grow without expecting more from the natural resource base;
    6. Promote sharing of knowledge and experiences, and strengthen the South-South Cooperation as well as the Triangular Cooperation to help achieve the SDGs.

Conclusion

There is a high need for introduction of the JUNCAO technology and development of mushroom production in South Sudan not only to meet the market demand but also to supplement the diet particularly of the majority rural people who disproportionately experience some of the worst indicators of food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty in the world. Furthermore, the technology has the capacity to help the farmers transform available resources considered by many as waste, cascading food and nutrition and addressing fundamental social and ecological issues.