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Organic Agriculture in Nigeria

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Report Highlights:

Unlike other African countries, Nigeria is yet to develop its potential in terms of organic farming, even though it is an agrarian country with a track record of being world leading producer of some crops at one time or the other. Organic farming in an organized manner is still young in the country, with less than ten years of application. Nigeria only cultivated 3,154 ha and 11,979 ha in 2007 and 2010 respectively. The practitioners are mostly a few farmers and some NGO's. An Organic farm in Nigeria currently sells organic lemongrass tea, turmeric and other produce in the local market, a situation many regard as under-maximization of the premium benefits of organic farming.

Post: Lagos

General Information:

Historical Background of Organic Agriculture in Nigeria

Nigeria has over 170 million people making it the most populous country in Africa. The country's economic mainstay before the oil boom was agriculture. The country is blessed with both natural and human resources. Huge oil deposits in the Niger Delta region bring both economic benefits and adverse impacts to the environment and the nation as whole.

The practice of organic agriculture in an organized manner is still new to the country, with less than ten years of application. As of 2007, Nigeria had 3,154 ha under organic agriculture of which 59 ha were fully converted and managed by a few farmers and NGO's, with little government involvement. However, it was reported that in 2010, land under organic production increased to 11,979 ha with 517 producers. This is the last year of reliable figures.

In spite of the low level of activities in organic agriculture in Nigeria, the practice has great strengths that can be exploited to accelerate development. There are organizations and stakeholders that are involved in the development of organic agriculture in Nigeria. These main stakeholders are:

- Dara/Eurobridge Farm, which is known as the pioneer organic farm in Nigeria and produces lemongrass, turmeric, ginger, plantains and medicinal herbs;
- Organic Agriculture Project in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria (OAPTIN), which organized a pioneering network in 2004. Its activities focus on capacity building and networking of academics in organic agriculture;
- Olusegun Obasanjo Centre for Organic Agriculture Research and Development (OOCORD), which was established in 2007 and is the first of its kind in Nigeria. It focuses on research and development in organic agriculture;
- Nigerian Organic Agriculture Network (NOAN), which was formed as an initiative of OOCORD and designated to be an umbrella body for organic agriculture activities in Nigeria in August 2008. Its function is to network organic agriculture organizations in Nigeria;
- Organic Farmers Association of Nigeria, Organic Fertilizer Association of Nigeria, "Nigeria Go Organic", "Ibadan Go Organic", are other organic stakeholders in the country;

- World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)

WWOOF is a network of national organizations that help volunteers to live by and learn organic farming properties. WWOOF has a passionate team who believe in the potential of organic farming in Nigeria. They bring volunteers from around the globe to work on farms in Nigeria and also work to promote organic agriculture among the Nigerian population.

Conferences and seminars were also held to promote organic agricultural practices in Nigeria such as a National Conference of Organic Agriculture held in 2005 and the first West African Summit on Organic Agriculture which was held in University of Ibadan, Nigeria in 2012.

Similarly, Universities in Nigeria organized projects and summer programmes on organic agriculture in 2010 and 2011 to train farmers, researchers and other interested groups. These activities helped to rekindle hope for farmers who are interested in organic farming. The recent pronouncement by the African Union to assist in the development of organic agriculture in the continent, of which Nigeria is a front runner, will also help in boosting organic agriculture.

About 70 per cent of the Nigerian farmers think they practice organic agriculture by default because of the prohibitive costs of chemical fertilizers and other agrochemicals but true organics is a certified production method. "They are not touched by government policies on input supply and other incentives to optimize agricultural productivity," according to Prof Jiire Adeoye, Director of Research and Development at Olusegun Obasanjo Center for Organic Research and Development (OOCORD).

In collaboration with agronomists at the University of Ibadan, OOCORD has developed organic fertilizer from waste products generated in large quantities in urban centers and has also raised the awareness of the importance of organic produce for better health. With funding support from the MTN Foundation (a mobile telecommunications giant), Nigeria now has integrated organic fertilizer processing plants at strategic places in Oyo and Ondo states. With the intervention of the Nigeria Network for Awareness and Action for Environment (NINAFFE), a local non-governmental organization, the products are being distributed to small scale farmers to "create wealth from waste". The products are now in high demand among farmers in Ondo State, Nigeria's largest cocoa producing state.

Presently, certified agricultural products in Nigeria are: ginger, turmeric and lemon grass tea. In the case of livestock production, the standards for certification are being developed, while a few farms are transitioning to organic production.

Organic farming in Nigeria is beginning to emerge; from a cursory review of the sector in 2014, we have very few farmers adopting the practices under the tutelage of some institutions like universities, research institutes, or some private organizations

Supporting institutions on Organic farming in Nigeria are:

1. Organic Agriculture Projects in Tertiary Institutions (OAPTIN):

The Organic Agriculture Project in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria (OAPTIN) was founded in June 2004 in response to the global quest for the development of holistic and sustainable agricultural production system. Its focus is capacity building, skill and technology development in organic agriculture. In 2009 OAPTIN through the Work Earn and Learn Programme (WELP) trained 23 (out of the 70 applicants that applied) fresh Nigerian graduates in a 7-week intensive training. Later in 2010 an advanced programme was mounted for higher level personnel in Ministry of Agriculture and University Lecturers in a summer school programme. To sustain this the second in the series of summer school programme is designed to give further opportunity for sound training in organic agriculture for interested scientists, farmers, businessmen, policy makers etc., in basic organic agriculture with emphasis in composting, organic fruits, vegetable and arable crop production, organic livestock production, organic fish, snail & grasscutter production, as well as business development and trade in organic agriculture including certification and packaging issues.

2. Nigerian Organic Agriculture Network (NOAN):

Nigerian Organic Agriculture Network (NOAN) is a non-governmental organization created to serve as an umbrella body for all stakeholders involved in organic agriculture in Nigeria.

The secretariat of NOAN is presently located at the Department of Agronomy, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Membership is drawn from scientists, farmers, processors, exporters, individuals, Institutions, NGOs and organizations that are key players in the organic agriculture sector in Nigeria. NOAN also serves as a link body between organic agriculture stakeholders in Nigeria and international bodies interested in organic agriculture. The activities of NOAN are hinged on these four key thematic areas:

- Advocacy
- Capacity building
- Standards and Certification
- Marketing

These areas are managed by committee members who are well experienced in such matters.

Mission

The mission of NOAN is to coordinate and facilitate the development of sustainable organic agriculture related activities in Nigeria.

Vision

The vision of NOAN is to improve the quality of urban and rural livelihoods through the adoption of organic agriculture in Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES:

- To vigorously create and increase awareness of organic agriculture in Nigeria
- To enhance capacity building of all stakeholders involved in organic agriculture in Nigeria
- To assist local producers who desire to convert to organic agriculture
- To facilitate the process of setting standards for and certifying local organic production in Nigeria
- To link farmers to local and international organic produce markets
- To assist all stakeholders in developing viable organic agriculture industry in Nigeria
- To interact with international bodies on organic agriculture related issues.

ACTIVITIES

- Holding of meetings and conferences periodically in all parts of Nigeria

- Training of all categories of stakeholders in modern organic farming techniques
- Certification of organic farms and produce
- Identification of local and international markets for organic produce
- Proffering practical solutions to identified challenges facing the organic agriculture sector
- Coordinating all stakeholders' activities in organic agriculture nation-wide
- Maintaining an updated database on stakeholders involved in organic agriculture in Nigeria
- Interact with international bodies on organic agriculture related issues.
- Activities of NOAN shall be rotated among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria

3. Olusegun Obasanjo Center for Organic Research and Development (OOCORD)

The center is named after Obasanjo "for his exemplary contributions to food security and agricultural development in Nigeria and Africa as a whole," said Mosobolaje Davis, the driver of the initiative and vice president of the new body's governing council.

OOCORD's mission is to develop research and knowledge exchange on sustainable, organic agricultural systems to address the dual needs of food security and incomes in Africa. Collaborating in the initiative are Nigeria's National Institute for Horticultural Research (NIHORT); the Henry Doubleday Research Association and Coventry University, both in the UK, and the African Leadership and Development Center, also based in the UK.

OOCORD is based in the city of Ibadan, the location of many other agricultural institutions including NIHORT and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). Collaboration and information exchange with these and other institutions is expected to strengthen OOCORD's functions.

Scattered research in organics has been taking place in several of Nigeria's many universities and agricultural institutions, but the setting up of a dedicated organics institution is expected to give the development of organic agriculture in the country an added boost. The interest in formal organic agriculture is fairly recent, and faces both big challenges as well as huge opportunities. The country's relatively late entry into organics gives it the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other African countries where it is more established. Nigeria's vast landmass, conducive climate and large population of over 170 million also make potentially possible production economies of scale that few other countries could match. It also means that apart from competing for the export market, it has a large potential local market that can be developed.

4. Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho (LAUTECH) Organic Farm.

The Director, Centre for Agro ecology and food security, Coventry University, United Kingdom, Professor John Charles Harris, has advocated international concerted efforts towards successful application of organic agriculture for sustainable development, especially in the developing countries.

The acting Vice- Chancellor of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomosho, Prof. Adeniyi Gbadegesin, disclosed that "LAUTECH is the first tertiary institution in Africa that has an organic farm with the European Union Certification, by the Institute of Market Ecology (IMO), Switzerland, for the Organic Production of Ginger, Turmeric, Lemon grass and Cashew. This, according to him, opens an opportunity for international trade with Europe and other countries.

The duo spoke at a public lecture on organic agriculture, organized by LAUTECH.

Prof Harris stated that long-term world food security can only rely on sustainable production through

sustainable intensification and leap-flogging technologies, adding that worldwide, over 130 countries produce certified organic products in commercial quantities, while over 16 million hectares of land globally is certified organic.

The organic farm, under the Agricultural Services Limited of Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, was adjudged the farm with the best organic agricultural practices in Nigeria.

Problems of Organic Farming in Nigeria

1. Lack of Awareness

It is a fact that many farmers in the country have only vague ideas about organic farming and its advantages as compared to conventional farming methods. Use of bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides requires awareness and willingness on the part of the farming community. Knowledge about the availability and usefulness of supplementary nutrients to enrich the soil is also vital to increase productivity.

2. Output Marketing Problems

Organic farmers are of the opinion that marketing and distribution of organic produce is challenging, unlike in the developed countries. It is found that before the beginning of the cultivation of organic crops, their marketability and distribution at a premium over the conventional produce has to be assured.

One has to get certification before his good is sold. Inability to obtain a premium price, at least during the period required to achieve the productivity levels of the conventional crop will be a setback. More emphasis is usually placed, by government on policies to increase food production with little or no consideration on how to distribute the food produced efficiently and in a manner that will enhance increased productivity.

In other words, food marketing by farmers and their families, mostly in the immediate post-harvest period usually involves a lot of costs and in Nigeria these costs are so high that lowering the costs through efficient marketing system may be as important as increasing agricultural production.

3. Shortage of Bio-mass

Many experts and well informed farmers are not sure if all the nutrients with the required quantities can be made available by the organic materials. They are also of the view that the available organic matter is not simply enough to meet the requirements. The crop residues useful to prepare a high grade natural, organic fertilizer are removed after harvest from the farms. And they are used as fodder and fuel. Even if some are left out on the farms termites and other insects destroy them. The small and marginal cultivators have difficulties in getting the organic manures compared to the chemical fertilizers, which can be bought easily, if they have the financial ability to procure them. However, they have to either produce the organic manures by utilizing the bio-mass they have or they have to be collected from the locality with a minimum effort and cost. Increasing pressure of population and the disappearance of the common lands including the wastes and government lands make the task difficult (WWOOF NEWS, 2012).

4. Inadequate Supporting Infrastructure

In spite of the recent pronouncement by the African Union to assist in the development of organic

agriculture in the continent, the Federal and state governments are yet to formulate policies and a credible mechanism to implement them. NOAN is sensitizing the Nigerian Government to produce policy on Organic Agriculture, accreditation and certification for organic produce. No Certifying agency yet to regulate and ensure compliance with international organic production system. The trade channels are yet to be formed and the infrastructure facilities for verification leading to certification of the farms are inadequate.

5. High Input Costs

The small and marginal farmers in Nigeria have been practicing a sort of pre organic farming in the form of the traditional farming system. They use local or own farm renewable resources and carry on the agricultural practices in an ecologically friendly environment. However, the costs of the organic inputs are now higher than those of industrially produced chemical fertilizers and pesticides including other inputs used in the conventional farming system. According to an industry source, groundnut cake, neem seed and cake, organic fertilizer, silt, cow dung, other manures, etc. applied as organic manure are increasingly becoming costly making them unaffordable to the small cultivators.

6. Non-availability of farm Inputs

Bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides are yet to become popular in the country. There is a lack of marketing and distribution network for them because the retailers are not interested to deal in these products, as the demand is low. Biofertilizers are not marketed by retailers in most parts of Nigeria. The erratic supplies and the low level of awareness of the cultivators also add to the problem. Higher margins of profit for chemical fertilizers and pesticides for retailing, heavy advertisement campaigns by the manufacturers and dealers are other major problems affecting the markets for organic inputs in Nigeria.

7. Lack of appropriate Agriculture Policy

Promotion of organic agriculture both for export and domestic consumption, the requirements of food security for millions of the poor, national self-sufficiency in food production, product and input supplies, etc. are vital issues which will have to be dealt with in an appropriate agricultural policy in Nigeria. These are serious issues that need to be resolved with consistent efforts. Formulation of an appropriate agricultural policy that will take care of these complexities is essential to promote organic agriculture in a big way.

8. Lack of Financial Support

The developing countries like Nigeria need to design a plethora of national and regional standards in tune with those of the developed countries. The adoption and maintenance of such regulatory framework and its implementation will be costly. The cost of certification, a major component of which is the periodical inspections carried out by the certifying agencies, which have freedom to fix the timing, type and number of such inspections appears to be burdensome for the small and marginal farmers. Despite contributing 45 per cent to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product, agriculture, which before the discovery of oil was the country's highest revenue earner, is still plagued by funding issues. Supports from the States and the Federal government for the marketing of the organic products are not forthcoming.

9. Low production

Conventional agriculture has shown to produce more yield than organic agriculture. A 2006 study suggested that converted organic farms have lower pre-harvest yields than their conventional

counterparts in developed countries (92%) and those organic farms have higher pre-harvest yields than their low-intensity counterparts in developing countries (132%) (Stanhil,1990). In many cases the farmers experience some loss in yields on discarding synthetic inputs during conversion of their farming methods from conventional to organic. Restoration of full biological activity in terms of growth of beneficial insect populations, nitrogen fixation from legumes, pest suppression and fertility problems will take some time and the reduction in the yield rates is the result during the changeover period. It may also be possible that it will take years to make organic production possible on the Nigerian farms. Small and marginal farmers cannot take the risk of low yields for the initial 2-3 years during the conversion to organic farming. There are no schemes to compensate them during the adjustment period.

10. Inability to Meet the Export Demand

The demand for organic products is high in the advanced countries like United States of America (US), the European Union (EU) and Japan. It is reported that US consumers are ready to pay a premium price of 60 to 100 per cent for organic products. The upper classes in Nigeria are beginning to follow this trend.

11. Lack of Quality Standards for Bio-manures

The need for fixing standards and quality parameters for bio-fertilizers and bio-manures has arisen with the increasing popularity of organic farming in the country. There are a very large number of brands of organic manures, claiming high levels of natural nutrients and essential elements. But most farmers are not aware of the pitfalls of using the commercially available bio-manure products. While the concept of organic farming itself lays great stress on the manures produced on the farm and the farmers' household, many of the branded products available in the market may not be really organic. Elements of chemicals slipping into the manures through faulty production methods could make the product not certifiable as organic.

Most farmers are still unaware of the difference between bio-manure and bio-fertilizer. While bio-manure contains organic matter, which improves the soil quality, biofertilizers are nutritional additives separated from the organic material, which could be added to the soil, much like taking vitamin pills. Bio-fertilizers do nothing to enhance soil quality while the loss of soil quality has been the major problem faced by farmers these days.

12. Political and Social Factors

Agriculture in Nigeria is subject to political interventions with the objectives of dispensing favors for electoral benefits. Subsidies and other supports from both the Federal and state governments, government controlled prices of inputs like chemical fertilizers, the public sector units' dominant role in the production of fertilizers, government support/floor prices for many agricultural products. Similarly, supply of inputs like power and water either without cost or at a subsidized rate, etc. are the tools often used to achieve political objectives. Any movement for the promotion of organic farming in Nigeria will have to counter opposition from the sections who benefit from such policies in the conventional farming system.

Future Prospects of Organic Farming

Organic farming not only results in an economic benefit to the small- scale farmer but it also reduces

pollution due to reduced nutrient run-off especially excess nitrogen. Increasing soil organic matter by organic farming has the added benefit of improving soil quality and thereby enhancing the long-term sustainability of agriculture. Organic agriculture also helps to conserve and improve a precious resource-the topsoil compaction, nutrient loss and erosion are common problems faced by farmers. Organic farmers use trees, shrubs, leguminous plants to stabilize and feed the soil, dung and compost to provide essential nutrients, and terracing to help prevent erosion and conserve ground water.

Some notable benefits are listed below:

Employment opportunity

In a survey of 1144 organic farms in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland, researchers found that organic farms employed more workers than conventional ones (EJF, 2007). This difference persisted when factors such as the size of each farm (organic farms are typically larger) are taken into account. The researchers concluded that there would be 19% more farming jobs in the UK, and 6% more in Ireland, if 20% of all farms became organic. When properly adopted in Nigeria therefore organic farming could increase the number of farming jobs by more than 20 % considering that the population of the farmers in the country could expand as opportunities grow in organic farms.

Environmental and Human Health

Unlike conventional farms, most organic farms largely avoid pesticides. Some pesticides can damage the environment if overused with direct exposure, human health as well. Children may be more at risk than adults from direct exposure, as the toxicity of pesticides is frequently different in children and adults. Reduction and elimination of chemical pesticide use is technically challenging. Organic pesticides often complement other pest control strategies. Ecological concerns primarily focus on pesticide use: for example, cotton growing areas are particularly impacted as 16% of the world's pesticides are used in the production of cotton. Run off is one of the most damaging effects of pesticide use.

Farmers' markets and food quality

The markets for organically produced crops are strongest in North America, Europe, and Japan. Price premiums are important for the profitability of small organic farmers. Farmers selling directly to consumers at farmers' markets have continued to achieve these higher returns. Organic food is widely believed by the lay public to be healthier than conventional food.

Potentials for organic agriculture in Nigeria

Nigeria, as any other developing country in Africa that is interested in advancing in organic agriculture, has multiples natural and human resources that can be harnessed to produce agricultural crops to meet organic standards.

Higher yields in low input systems are mainly achieved by the application of manure from integrated

livestock production, composting and diversification. In humid areas where traditionally less livestock is integrated into the farming systems and little or no manure is available, organic yields depends on the availability of other organic nitrogen source. Nigeria being a developing country which has arid, semi-arid and humid climate could double its yield organically due to the favorable conditions existing in all the agro-ecological zones. Also the geographical location of the country is the best blessing from nature which provides the potentials for exploring virgin and untapped natural environment suitable for organic agriculture. The climate in the mountainous and plateau provide comparative advantage for the production of temperate crops which can be harnessed organically to increase yield of crops. The abundant natural resource in the country is another potential at the disposal of Nigeria to explore to develop organic agriculture apart from climate. Water, land and natural forest and grassland play a functional role in any agricultural production. Even though the soil in the northern part of the country are low in nutrients and/or organic matter, the adoption of the principle of recycling and crop rotation in organic agriculture could help in restoring the nutrient to enhance production.

Total cultivable land in Nigeria is estimated at 61 million ha, which is 66% of the total area of the country. In 2002, the cultivated area was 33 million ha, of which arable covers 30.2 million ha. This shows that the country has untapped land resources of about 28 million ha which can be harnessed for sustainable organic agriculture.

About 60- 70% of Nigerian farmers are traditional rural farmers who by their nature of subsistence agriculture produce uncertified organic foods using localized and natural resources due to inability to secure synthetic inputs. Even though what they produce is considered non certified organic foods, their practices provide a good opportunity for easy conversion to organic practice.

In Nigeria, these groups of farmers exist in every community and their number is a substantial one that can be used in improving organic agriculture.

Optimizing Opportunities For Sustainable Development Through Organic Agriculture in Nigeria.

In developing countries, the development of organic agriculture is mostly through conversion from conventional agriculture and this can be applicable to Nigeria context. The existing plantations, orchards and vegetable gardens in the country provide a good source of annual and perennial crops and can also withstand conversion to organic agriculture. The hydro agriculture practiced in the valleys along the river network under the River Basin Development Authority is another enormous potential that could be fully developed to achieve sustainable development through organic agriculture. The forest and the grassland in Nigeria are home for wildlife which includes animals and plants that provide alternative sources of food for both human and animals. These wild products are found in large quantities and because they occur naturally, they can be harnessed, processed and consumes as organic foods. These wild produce that can be used organically are Shea butter, gum Arabic, berries, nut, honey, snails, and mushrooms among others. The introduction of organic agriculture into the curriculum of Nigerian universities, evolution of national organic agriculture network and the recent African Union's decision to support organic farming and their subsequent leadership in promoting and further developing framework/strategies for organic policies such as the Africa Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative and the IFOAM-Africa Union conference that took place in Nairobi in 2011 is a good move by the government in promoting organic farming . In spite of the several opportunities that abound in the country, Nigeria is yet to make its mark in organic agriculture in the region, continent and globally.

Way forward for the development of organic agriculture in Nigeria

Challenges of organic agriculture in Nigeria are never permanent but rather stumbling block for the attainment of food security, rural development and environmental sustainability. Addressing these challenges require new institutional approach to development such as sustainable development and deployment of agricultural knowledge, science and technology which will draw on agro ecology, the science of applying ecological concepts and principles to the design and management of sustainable agro ecosystems.

In Nigeria, the following interventions are needed from government, NGO's, private organization and international organization for proper growth and development of organic agriculture so as to achieve the MDG goal 1 (eradicate extreme hunger and poverty), goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability) and goal 8 (develop a global partnership for development).

Education.

In other to create awareness on organic agriculture in Nigeria, there is need to inculcate organic agriculture education in our school curriculum which will give foundation knowledge to young ones on the practice of organic agriculture and its benefits. Its inclusion in the universities should be boosted by research and government funding to sustain the programme. On the level of rural farmers, extension services should be enhanced and equipped to well inform farmers about organic agriculture and be encouraged to continue with their traditional way of farming and/or improve on it using organic principles and practices. Capacity building and training by government, research institutions, national and international organization for farmers should be encouraged.

Administration and policies.

The recent endorsement of support for organic agriculture by African Union and subsequent developing framework/strategies for organic farming should be implemented on national and local level in each country of the continent and also backed by friendly and favorable policies. In line with this, government should provide or encourage the production of organic inputs such as bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides to the farmers in subsidized rates provide or approved certification agency that would promote certification of farms and marketing of organic foods internally and externally.

Marketing.

The Nigeria market is a priced market which does not support premium price for organic produces as such farmers income cannot appreciate to compensate for the much labor required in organic farming. There should be organized standard sales outlets for organic products to bring producers closer to potential buyers and consumers should be well informed on the health values of organic through advertisement and other means. Regulations and quality control measures should be developed and strictly followed to conform to international standards to attract foreign trade.

Funding.

Organic agriculture is labor intensive especially in the conversion period from conventional agriculture to organic agriculture. This will require farmers to pay for labor. To encourage the farmer, government should provide funds in form of loans and/or provide guarantee to farmers in commercial banks to obtain loans to increase their production. National and international organizations that encourage the development of organic agriculture for sustainable development should also provide funds to

developing countries like Nigeria so that it can achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Cooperation.

The East African countries were able to increase their organic agricultural activities through cooperation among organic practitioners and this leads to export of organic produces which contributed to the domestic product of the countries involved.

Cooperation and integration brings about sharing of ideas, technology and strategy to develop individual countries involved in it. Nigeria, as a front runner in regional, continental and international affairs should integrate with those countries that are developed in organic agriculture so that the nascent organic agriculture can develop to full capacity for sustainable development.

Policy- Little or no policies to safeguard organic agriculture activities

Nigerian Government has no policies in place to safeguard organic agriculture practices. They could have some plans, but these are yet to be translated into working documents that organic agriculture producers could refer to for sustainable and confident investment in the organic agriculture sector of the country. Indiscriminate use of agrochemicals and other synthetic inputs is not yet adequately recognized as a serious problem in the Country. This is one of the limitations of the development of organic agriculture in Nigeria.

Organic agriculture might not seem to be the answer to poverty but it is a feasible option for sustainable agriculture, rural development, provides fair return from labor and employment, develops the economy and sustains the environment for future production, hence leads to sustainable development in a nation.

Government Regulations

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture is in the process of providing accreditation that authorizes private or government certifying agents.

Certification and Control

There is no government approved certifying body yet to regulate and ensure compliance with Organic Production system. Though NOAN is sensitizing the Nigerian Government to produce policy on Organic Agriculture and Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) to facilitate establishment of National Organic Standards.

Attachment 1:

Useful sources of information about organic agriculture in Nigeria:

NOAN NGO (Nigerian Organic Agriculture Network)

www.noannigeria.net/about.html

<http://www.bioselena.com/public/files/news/86/files/26.pdf>

<http://first.gorichka.bg/index.php?p=2&l=1>

<http://cepajournal.com/index.php> - The need for organic farming extension in Nigeria

<http://www.woof.net/news/post-> Organic farming activities in Nigeria

<http://www.ecologyandfarming.com> - Organic agriculture in Africa and Nigeria
<http://www.iosrjournals.org> - Optimizing Opportunities for Sustainable Development through Organic Agriculture in Nigeria.
www.organicworld.net/revision.int

Adeoye, G.O. (2011), "Organic Agriculture: a review and possible adoption for food security, in Nigeria". Keynote address at the 1st Organic Agriculture Conference, UNAAB, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

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