



Ummu Musa(Center), a representative of Dogara Ga Allah women Farmer association Kudan, LGA, Kaduna State receiving cash prize during the Women Empowerment Event.

## Women Empowerment Event

In December 2023, HortiNigeria orchestrated a penultimate event in Kano State, Nigeria, under the inspiring theme “Women Empowerment Event.” This event was launched in March 2023 during the International Women’s Day to spotlight the advantages and opportunities of women in horticulture—Her HortiVantage. Specific objectives focused on enabling women through a ‘one-size-fit-one’ empowerment approach introducing commercial seedling production and neem oil production.

During the event, women’s groups in Kano and Kaduna were recognized by awarding them solar irrigation pumps and cash prizes, a strategic move to augment their productivity and income. This gesture shows HortiNigeria’s commitment to empowering women in agriculture, enhancing their capabilities, social and financial resources.

A particularly notable aspect of the event was the inclusion of women entrepreneurial farmers and business champions from Oyo and Ogun states. The stories of their farming journeys served as a powerful source of inspiration for young women farmers in the north, improving their decision-making and power-to-achieve through inclusive profitable agribusinesses.

This event drew over 2,000 participants, represented by a diverse array of attendees, including delegates from the Kano State Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Kano State Ministry of Women Affairs, Boosting Agricultural Gains and Services (BAGS-Kaduna), Such a turnout attests to the event’s significance. Private sector partners, financial institutions, smallholder farmers, and other key local and international actors in the agricultural value chain enriched the event, creating opportunities for exchanging ideas and networking. ■

Click to explore Kubura Hassan’s journey of change, empowered by our solar irrigation pump at the women’s empowerment event: <https://rb.gy/3rr83z>

## Newsletter Highlights

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Some Participants actively engaged in a group exercise during the D&D workshop in Kaduna State.

## Fostering Growth and Collaboration: HortiNigeria's D&D Workshop Unveiled

In HortiNigeria's ongoing quest for transformation within the horticulture sector, we proudly presented a groundbreaking event in December 2023 – the Diagnosis and Design (D&D) Workshop, which took place in Kaduna and Kano states. This initiative was meticulously crafted to promote the development of Agribusiness Clusters (ABCs) and lay the groundwork for improved horticultural practices and enhanced market connectivity.

The workshops were thoughtfully split into two sessions. The first session occurred from November 16th to 18th at the Emerald Hotel in GRA Zaria, while the second took place from November 27th to 29th at the ICRISAT Conference Hall in Kano. These venues served as ideal hubs for the exchange of knowledge and collaborative brainstorming.

Our workshops brought together a dynamic group of participants, representing various value chain actors deeply involved in the cultivation and distribution of four major horticultural crops: tomato, onion, pepper, and okra. These dedicated individuals hailed from thirteen distinct

Local Government Areas across Kaduna and Kano States in Nigeria. Their collective experience and insights played a pivotal role in shaping the rich discussions.

While the primary focus of the workshops was the development of ABC partnerships, it's essential to recognize that this initiative extended beyond collaboration alone. The ultimate goal was to empower local ABC actors, enhancing their competitiveness within the market. By achieving this, both individuals and collectives could cultivate mutually beneficial relationships throughout the entire value chain.

As stated by the Agribusiness Coordinator, Danjuma Makama, "The HortiNigeria D&D Workshop signifies a pivotal step towards realizing these ambitious objectives. It was more than just a workshop; it served as a catalyst for transformative change. By uniting stakeholders and establishing a roadmap, we are charting the course for a more prosperous future within the Nigerian horticultural landscape." ■



Some participants, including the convener, Ekundayo OluMayowa (second from the right) at SAFE Summit 4.0 in Ekiti State

## HortiNigeria attends the SAFE Summit 4.0

HortiNigeria participated in the Speak Agriculture for the Future Economy (SAFE) Summit 4.0, a landmark event held on November 14, 2023, in Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. This engagement marks a strategic milestone in HortiNigeria's efforts to scale innovations and broaden its impact across the southwest states, aligning seamlessly with our Combi Track goals to elevate the horticulture sector's profile through enhanced branding and communication.

The SAFE Summit has emerged as an essential platform for engaging with the agriculture sector's key players. This gathering was not merely about attendance; it represented an excellent opportunity for HortiNigeria to exchange insights, learn from industry leaders, and forge essential networks. Such discourses are vital for the continued growth and evolution of the Nigerian horticulture sector. ■

To know more about the SAFE summit visit: <https://safesummit.info/>

## BAGS Project's Journey with HortiNigeria

Since inception HortiNigeria established a dynamic partnership between HortiNigeria and the Kaduna Ministry of Agriculture, embodied in the innovative Boosting Agricultural Gains and Services (BAGS) project. The BAGS project is a model for successful collaborative ventures in agribusiness, coordinating seven(7) Agric value chains (including Tomatoes), going beyond the pursuit of specific agricultural outcomes to serve as a strategic framework for effective partnership in agribusiness development.

Together, HortiNigeria and the Kaduna Ministry of Agriculture are combining resources, expertise, and shared visions to forge a more prosperous and sustainable future for agriculture. According to Abdullahi Umar, the HortiNigeria Lead on Sector Coordination and Business linkage, "Our commitment is seen as we strive to bring about meaningful change in Kaduna State's agricultural sector. Through the collaboration more than 12,477 farmers, comprising of over 44% women, 56% men and 76% youth. ■

# Learning Visit: Insights from Benin

The HortiNigeria team's learning visit to Benin on December 18-21, 2023, marked a significant step in enhancing horticultural knowledge and fostering international collaborations. Participants, including staff and selected stakeholders, focused on exchanging knowledge, learning best practices, and exploring potential collaborations in horticulture.

During the visit, the delegation engaged with several central institutions and donor-funded programs in the Benin, such as the World Vegetable Center; the Laboratory of Genetics, Horticulture, and Seed Science (GBioS); Songhai Farms; and the Communal Approach to the Agricultural Market in Benin Phase 3 (ACMA3) project learning site. These visits were not just educational but inspirational, showcasing the latest advancements in horticulture.

This learning trip was more than just an educational excursion; it was a catalyst for future growth in Nigerian horticulture sector, as HortiNigeria plans to utilize what it



Some participants of the learning visit in Benin.

has learned to establish joint research initiatives and adapt successful practices to local contexts. ■

## Are you an aspiring farmer or agro-entrepreneur? We have gathered some links on information on various grants that may help you with your business!

<https://fatefoundation.org/project/orangecorners/>

<http://www.tefconnect.com>

## Story of Change: Abdulwahab's Path to Financial Empowerment

Abdulwahab Tsoho Adamu's story is an inspiration for farmers navigating the complexities of modern agriculture. Abdulwahab is a 50-year-old farmer from Dawakin Kudu Local Government Area, Kano State. He has a background in biology and geography, but he has been deeply involved in farming since childhood, a passion inherited from working alongside his father.

The primary obstacle in Abdulwahab's farming career has been a lack of adequate capital, a common hurdle for many farmers, but his involvement in the HortiNigeria program marked a turning point. The program, recognizing the critical need for financial access for farmers, brought in LAPO Microfinance Bank to enlighten participants on the nuances of obtaining loans.

Abdulwahab learned about the prerequisites for loan accessibility, such as being a group member, providing guarantors, aligning his crops with the program's value chain, and holding accounts with financial institutions. The bank's conditions included adhering to a repayment timeline at a fixed monthly sum for certain loan amounts.

For Abdulwahab, this knowledge opened a world of possibilities. Such a learning experience offered more than just financial literacy; it was a gateway to transforming his farming practice and a promising opportunity to overcome the challenge of inadequate capital. He expressed optimism, acknowledging that fulfilling the bank's requirements could significantly empower farmers like him. "If we

are able to meet the demands of the financial institution, it will be a great opportunity for farmers because one of our main challenge in farming is that we lack capital to get all we need," he said ■



Abdulwahab Tsoho Adamu

## Innovation Brief: Seedling Trays

Seedling trays, an important innovation in agriculture, are gaining popularity in Nigeria. These trays, primarily made of plastic, are designed with multiple cells to house individual seedlings, making them a necessary tool for vegetable farmers, particularly for crops like tomato, pepper, and cucumber.

### Benefits

- **Enhanced Growth and Survival:** The trays protect young plants from transplant shock and root wounds. Such protection is crucial for delicate seedlings like tomatoes and peppers.
- **Uniform Germination:** By providing controlled environmental conditions, seedling trays ensure consistent and uniform seed germination.

- **Space Efficiency:** These trays allow a large number of seedlings to be raised in a limited space.
- **Protection from Elements:** Acting as a barrier, they shield seedlings from harsh weather and pests.
- **Easy Transplantation:** With individual cells, seedlings can be easily and safely transplanted without root disturbance.

### Types and Features

- **Cell Count:** These trays are available in various cell counts, including 104, 128, and 200 cells. Trays with smaller cells are used for certain seedlings like pawpaw, while larger ones cater to tomato and pepper.
- **Materials:** Trays are predominantly made of plastic, with

options in biodegradable materials as well.

- **Colors:** Most trays available in Nigeria are black.
- **Thickness and Durability:** Varying thicknesses are available, measured in millimeters.
- **Drainage:** Drainage holes prevent overwatering of the seedlings.

**Planting Media Options**

- **Coco Peat:** A popular choice for tomato and pepper seedlings,

coco peat is used as a substrate and needs saturation to remove excess sodium.

- **Rice Husk and Soil:** These are often mixed together for better results.
- **Treated Soil:** Advised to be treated to prevent diseases, it can be mixed with manure and ash.

**Cost Range**

- Prices vary based on quality and size. They range from about 800 Nigerian naira (U.S. \$0.89) for a 104 or 200 cell tray to 900 nai-

ra (U.S. \$1.00) for other types. It is important to consider quality over price when making a purchase.

The variety of sizes, materials, cell sizes, drainage levels, and prices allows farmers to choose trays that fit their specific needs and budget. These trays are integral for modern farming methods in Nigeria, enhancing productivity and ensuring the healthy growth of various crops. Their adoption in Nigerian agriculture marks a significant step toward more efficient and sustainable farming practices. ■

## Food and Nutrition: Power of Embracing a Veggie Foodie Lifestyle

In a world where nutritional security is an increasingly pressing concern, HortiNigeria continues to ignite transformation in the Nigerian horticulture sector through its various activities. The program is committed to not only boosting the food supply itself, but also elevating nutritional security. This section is dedicated to enlightening and motivating our readers about the profound benefits of being a veggie foodie. Here we will delve into the world of some of the vegetables promoted by HortiNigeria. ■

### Cruciferous Vegetables: Cancer’s Nemesis

Cruciferous vegetables, including cabbage, are renowned for their cancer-fighting properties. They contain glucosinolates, which break down during digestion to form biologically active compounds, such as indoles and isothiocyanates. These compounds are noteworthy for their ability to inhibit cancer growth, particularly in the lungs and digestive tract. ■



### Tomatoes: Guarding Against Prostate Cancer



Tomatoes are a rich source of lycopene, a powerful antioxidant. Lycopene may help reduce the risk of prostate cancer, according to research published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute. The cooking process increases the bioavailability of lycopene, making cooked tomatoes an even better dietary choice. ■

## Carrots: Vision's Best Friend

**R**ich in beta carotene, a compound the body converts to vitamin A, carrots are beneficial for maintaining healthy eyesight. The National Institutes of Health affirm that vitamin A is important in the formation of light-absorbing molecules necessary for both low light and color vision. ■



## Bell Peppers: Immunity Boosters

**B**ell peppers, especially the brightly colored ones, are packed with vitamin C. This vitamin is known for its immunity-boosting properties and, according to the National Institutes of Health, is vital for the growth and repair of tissues in all parts of the body.

In conclusion, the incorporation of a diverse array of vegetables in the diet is not merely a culinary delight, but also a fundamental strategy for disease prevention and optimal health. The old adage, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," might well be updated to, "A vegetable medley a day keeps diseases at bay." ■



# UPCOMING EVENTS IN QUARTER 1, 2024

**JAN** KANO STATE

SENSITIZATION EVENTS AT LEARNING SITE IN KANO

**18TH JAN 2024**

COURTESY VISIT TO NIRSAI

**JAN - FEB 2024**

FIELD DAYS IN KANO AND KADUNA

**26TH JAN 2024**

INTERNATIONAL CLEAN ENERGY DAY CAMPAIGN

**29TH JAN 2024**

TRAINING OF WOMEN ON VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS

**6TH FEB 2024**

SIGNING CEREMONY BETWEEN GREENPORT AND HORTINIGERIA

**10TH FEB 2024**

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SCIENCE CAMPAIGN

**13TH FEB 2024**

WORLD RADIO DAY

**27-28TH FEB 2024**

AGRO-DEALER TRAINING

**1ST MAR 2024**

LAUNCH OF SIMKAY POWDERED TOMATO PLANT

**8TH MAR 2024**

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

**11-13TH MAR 2024**

SENSE-MAKING EVENT

**22ND MAR 2024**

WORLD WATER DAY

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE EVENTS, CONTACT THE COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR ON +234 8174814264

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<https://ifdc.org/projects/hortinigeria>



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