



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Minister joins farmers; vow to stop introduction of GMOs in Ghana

The efforts to impose Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) on Ghanaian farmers and consumers came to an end on 14th January 2020 when Ghana government through the Minister of Food and Agriculture (Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto) indicated that, the nation has capable scientists who could use traditional breeding methods to produce high yielding varieties and disease resistant plants for cultivation by farmers and no need for GMOs in the next 100 years in Ghana.

The Ghana seed sector is plagued with numerous constraints ranging from poor resources for research institutions, such as Savannah Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) and academic institutions of learning to provide foundation seeds; limited irrigation facilities; poor transportation; storage facilities and difficulty in access to credit to support seed production and distribution.

The Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFAG), General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU), Food Sovereignty Ghana (FSG) and Centre for Indigenous Knowledge & Organizational Development (CIKOD) who have been championing the GMO campaign for years welcome the government position and call on all institutions, individuals and multi-national corporation who are benefiting from proceeds from MONSANTO to promote GMO in Ghana to rather join Ghanaian scientists and farmers to promote the local seed industry. The group further encouraged government to invest more resources in agroecology as a way of developing the agricultural sector and combating climate change. Climate change is a global phenomenon and countries like Australia, Canada and even Ghana had serious effect of climate change devastation through bushfires in later part of 2019 which require more attention and resources.

The earlier stance of the group against multi-national seed companies and their Ghanaian pro-GMO agents to control seed production and rip the patent right of a single seed purchased by

farmers must be commended. Accepting GMOs in Ghana would have been contrary to the President's vision of developing Ghana Beyond Aid and further impoverish smallholder farmers who would have bought expensive seeds every year.

Constraints that deserve government attention

The major constraints facing Ghanaian farmers today, has to do with high cost of mechanization services, impact of climate change, bush fires, high cost of inputs, high postharvest losses and limited extension staff. Increasing investment in these areas will go a long way to empower farmers and attract more youth to develop career in the agriculture value chain. GMO is meant for corporate takeover of the seed industry and to exploit Ghanaian farmers. Since GMO is now defeated; the focus should be on addressing the above constraints.

Gratitude to the President

The PFAG strongly commends President Nana Addo Danquah Akufo-Addo's sensitivity towards Ghanaian farmers and putting our fears to rest by giving us a verdict on the issue of GMO.

We are grateful Mr. President.

Long live Ghana, long live all those who genuinely fought against the introduction of GMO.

The Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana (PFAG), is the apex Farmer-Based Non-Governmental Organization in Ghana with the mandate to advocate for pro poor agriculture and trade policies and other issues that affects the livelihoods of small holder farmers.

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