

Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project Highlights

June 2018

Scholar Program 17

MY VISIT TO MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY: BENEFITS AND SURPRISES

The Nigerian Agricultural Policy Project has really been beneficial enough. The visit was a wonderful experience for me personally as an adventure to see the others; I mean culturally and geographically as well, in terms of weather conditions. I lived under a terribly cold weather condition in Michigan and survived it.



LEARNING HOW MSU MANAGES ITS DAIRY FARM

I was able to interact with over 17 faculty members at MSU within the short period of 4 weeks. This has definitely raised the bar of my research network and engagement. I also discovered that the faculty members craved for more research collaborations. They readily indicated their areas of interests, discussed on-going & completed research as well as current proposals. I have been able to see that the faculty members are very thorough and well prepared for the tasks. I therefore did not wonder too much seeing that most of them have attracted research grants to the university through the department. I learnt that the PhD students are engaged and become part of teams delivering these projects. I see this as academic success which leads to good self-esteem among the faculty while providing great opportunities for the students. The faculty members were also much facilitated by the job design. First, they were not loaded with administrative logistics. Second, many have one semester to teach and the other to concentrate on their research. This I really appreciate.

I noticed that there is strong relationship between the US government and the department, through the university. In my understanding, this has led to what I describe as 'holistic agricultural economics' that integrates and engages the farmers, the agricultural entrepreneurs, food processing industries and the community into her programmes. This is just amazing. The extension unit also provides services to the department with impactful outreach programmes. Innovations to the farmers and other stakeholders include training packages on financial accounting, record keeping and management. This is also fully funded by the government. I see an efficient services engagement of faculty members from other disciplines as well. Research collaboration in MSU is quantum and worth emulation. The department has a very strong collaboration with a number of countries and organizations around the world. I don't have to hide the fact that timeliness in MSU is taken so seriously. Time allocated for the commencement and end of classes and seminars are strictly observed. It's really a business-like atmosphere.



INTERACTING WITH FACULTY FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

I noticed that MSU at large gives opportunity to the brilliant, whatever the race. Faculty members in MSU are not only from the United States of America but from China, India, Ghana, Nigeria, and Nepal among others. Hence, it really makes MSU an international knowledge depository. Thus opportunities are created for MSU graduates to secure top

job placements as they have been exposed to cross-fertilised ideas.



THE FPIC SUPPORTS AGRO INNOVATION

Lastly, the technology at the research stations of MSU visited was impressive. Examples are:

- W.K. Kellogg Biological Station (KBS) which showcased robotic milking of cow and highly scientific pasture management practices.
- Food Processing and Innovation Centre (FPIC) which is a practical outfit for food value addition. The small and medium food industries engage the services of FPIC on training or processing/preservation of their products in order to meet the standards. This guarantees food safety and readily meets consumer preferences.



INSPECTING SEED AT THE KBS



EXPERIMENTING WITH AMERICAN FAST FOOD



DISCUSSING RESEARCH AND EXTENSION WITH THE KBS FARM MANAGER

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This work is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Feed the Future initiative through the Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project, Associate Cooperative Agreement Number AJD-620-LA-15-00001. The contents are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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Published by the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State University, Justin S. Morrill Hall of Agriculture, 446 West Circle Dr., Room 202, East Lansing, Michigan 48824.