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The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LAB FOR LEGUME SYSTEMS RESEARCH

August 2020



The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research fosters dynamic, profitable, and environmentally sustainable approaches that contribute to resilience, productivity, and better nutrition and economic opportunities. The lab is managed by Michigan State University.

From the Management Office

Legume Industry Consultative Council (LINCC) meets and provides expert industry input

In July, the Legume Systems Innovation Lab held a biannual Legume Industry Consultative Council (LINCC) meeting welcoming several new members to the council. The LINCC is comprised of private sector legume experts who provide stakeholder input to the directors for the Legume Systems Innovation Lab that ensure that the Management Entity (ME), its projects, and research outputs remain critically relevant to the legume private sector for its growth and competitiveness.

The biannual meetings serve to make the ME and projects aware of emerging opportunities or challenges in the private legume sector, foster public-private sector interactions that afford legume stakeholders opportunities to deepen links with the legume industry, and explore opportunities for messaging regarding the benefits of legumes, including nutrition and consumption.

The LINCC is led by Michigan Bean Commission Executive Director, Joe Cramer. Members of the council include:

- **Rebecca Bratter, US Dry Bean Council**
- **Cindy Brown, Chippewa Valley Bean**
- **Thoric Cederstrom, US Dry Bean Council**
- **Todd DeKryger, Gerber/Nestle**
- **Randy Duckworth, Global Pulse Federation**
- **Tim McGreevy, US Dry Pea and Lentil Council**
- **Dee Richmond, US Dry Bean Council**
- **Jeff Rumney, US Dry Pea and Lentil Council**
- **Katia Sambian, Chippewa Valley Bean**
- **Jeff Van Pevenage, Columbia Grain**
- **Charles Wachsmuth, Chippewa Valley Bean**
- **Andi Woolf-Weibye, Idaho Bean Commission**

The Legume Systems Innovation Lab looks forward to growing the LINCC to include additional private sector stakeholders.

From the Field

Neem, seeds of opportunity; Project empowers women as entrepreneurs in Niger

Indo Maman's grandsons begin their day energized by breakfast at school and with their extra fees and school supplies paid.

Sa'a Moussa purchased fertilizer to grow her crops strong and bought clothes for her grandchildren.

Aicha Mahaman purchased clothes for herself and her children, but the sheep she acquired will provide much return for the entire family.

New opportunity from a familiar landscape

Indo, Sa'a, and Aicha live in the African Sahel, in small villages in the Maradi region of Niger. Each are experiencing new opportunities afforded through an oval-shaped seed from a tree they've known since childhood.

The Neem tree stands tall throughout this south-central section of Niger. Its oblong shaped leaves appear almost palm like as they sway in the breeze and provide welcoming shade. Hanging from those palm-like branches are the seed of the Neem, the women's seed of opportunity.

The seeds of the Neem tree provide natural protection against insects including the legume pod borer, a pest that attacks cowpea fields and can account for up to 80% crop loss. Cowpea is an important crop in this region. Researchers, led by Dr. Manuele Tamò from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Benin in collaboration with Prof. Ibrahim Baoua from the University of Maradi and Dr. Amadou Laouali from INRAN, Maradi, have been working to develop innovative cowpea pest management solutions that incorporate non-synthetic pesticide options.

Innovation that empowers

The Neem seed alternatives have also proved to be a great success in providing economic opportunities, especially for the women of rural Niger. Women like Indo, Sa'a, and Aicha. They and others have learned to harvest the seeds and manufacture them into natural pesticide packets.

"The 'neem tea bag' was developed and tested with success by our Niger collaborators," explains Dr. Tamò. "We've expanded tea bag production into new communities and are seeing a potential to create a whole bio-pesticide value chain, creating job opportunities for women and youth." The project was funded through the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research managed by Michigan State University.



43-year-old Sa'a Moussa is from the village of Serkin Hatsi in the Guidan Roundji Department



Indo Maman. Indo, lives in the village of Danja in the Madarounfa Department.



Aicha Mahaman with her sheep in Mai Ganga village in the Mayahi Department.

Featured Legume of the Month

Green Beans



One cup of raw green beans contain just 34 calories and 30% of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C and 20% of vitamin K.

Crisp and tender right off the plant, green beans add a fresh crisp and bright color to any recipe when steamed or blanched.

Also a great snack raw, alone or with a dip. Heart healthy and delicious!

Cooking with Green Beans...

String Beans Adobo

[Dr. Jane Payumo](#) is usually found behind her computer analyzing data that drives the Legume Systems Innovation Lab monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Here, Jane steps away from the computer to share one of her son's favorite legume dishes, String Beans Adobo. A wonderful dish that combines garlic, soy and vinegar with pork and fresh string beans.



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Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research**

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