

Animals destroy OWC crops

NEBBI

By Benedict Okethwengu

Farmers in Nebbi and Pakwach districts benefiting from the Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) programme are counting their losses.

They allege that animals are left to graze freely in their gardens.

Joseph Awekonimungu, a farmer in Atego sub-county, said besides derailing livelihoods, the development is likely to impact negatively on

food security in the district.

Like Awekonimungu, James Okello, a farmer in Pakwach town council, said he lost a one-and-a-half-acre citrus fruit plantation to the animals without compensation.

The 65-year-old said he is considering abandoning the project due to the stray animals. The farmers raised their concerns during a performance review of OWC in Nebbi on Friday.

OWC is an agricultural development initiative that

was rolled out by President Yoweri Museveni, with the aim of boosting agriculture and fighting poverty in the whole country.

Jimmy Berocan, the head of production and marketing of OWC in Pakwach, admitted that they are grappling with the challenge of roaming animals.

Anthony Okwir, the Nebbi district production co-ordinator, said it is unacceptable for those who own animals to leave their animals to graze freely in people's plantations.

Doreen Nimungu, the Nebbi secretary for production, said the district is aware of the challenge and they are trying to address it, adding that the district has passed an ordinance to enhance production.

She said the office of the Solicitor General has already approved the ordinance and is ready for implementation.

During the review, Lt. Col. Lawrence Kermundu, the co-ordinator of OWC in the area, was tasked with explaining why inputs are delivered late.

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