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Makerere University launches research centre, solar drying

KAMPALA

By Agnes Nantambi

Makerere University College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES) has launched an Agricultural Appropriate Technology Research Centre (ATR) and a new solar-powered drying machine to dry animal feeds, mainly cereals.

The sh37m machine and the research centre were acquired with support from the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), the Korea Invention Promotion Association (KIPA) and Chonbuk National University, plus Dooypork Inc.

Launching the dryer and the research centre at the college's research institute in Kabanyolo, Wakiso district, the principal of the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT), Prof. Henry Alinaitwe, thanked the people of Korea for choosing Makerere as a collaborative associate.

Alinaitwe said the solar-powered dryer is efficient and appropriate for Ugandan conditions and the project entails carrying out technology transfer for the design, construction, installation and maintenance of the dryers in Uganda.

He said although many countries in the sub-Saharan Africa, largely depend on agriculture, the sector is faced by challenges, such as climate change, declining soil productivity, increasing population and post-harvest losses.

Alinaitwe said post-harvest losses in Uganda are estimated at 10-50% with grains registering 70% losses, while losses in fruits and perishables go up to 100% due to lack of cold storage chain.

"If post-harvest losses are ignored, we cannot achieve the 6% growth in agriculture," he said.

Alinaitwe noted that with rapid changes in technology and the daily advent of new ones, Makerere graduates and the farming community are in need of empowerment on how to solve daily challenges.

He said knowledge and technology are essential in having a sustainable economic growth, strengthening market efficiency and promoting job creation.

Alinaitwe thanked the Koreans for helping Uganda construct the fruit factory, using simple, accessible, affordable and environmentally-friendly technologies.

The research centre will provide linkage to farmers, investors, customers, peer firms and specialised innovation locally and internationally and save costs arising from post-harvest losses and associated risks.

The head of appropriate technology sharing project at KIPO Chonbuk University, Lim Hyun Suk, commended Makerere University for building a strong partnership with Chonbuk University that resulted in the co-operation in agricultural technology and exchange of faculty and students.

r the Masterclass in your area contact:

FARMER	LOCATION	CONTACT NUMBER
	MARACHA	0782 256 072