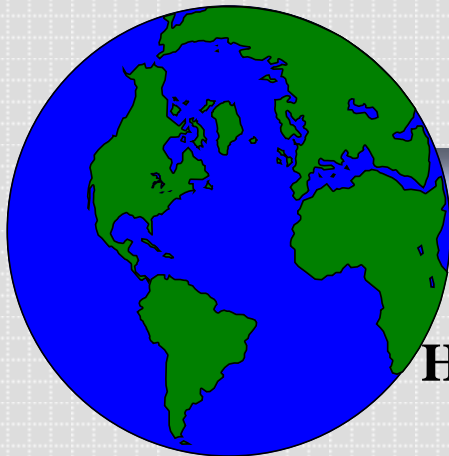




# Improving Producer Capacity – Increasing Access to Agricultural Research and Best Practices

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**Ernest. L. Okorley**

**HOD, Agricultural Economics and Extension,  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana**





## Why the need to improve producer capacity?

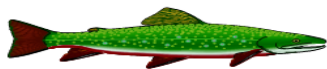
**Recent reports on food and poverty suggest that the rate of agricultural productivity must increase at a minimum of 25 percent per year to meet future demand**



**Crops**



**Livestock**



**Seafood**

**Improving producer capacity necessary to meet the demand and standards required by certification bodies cannot be achieved without a renewed focus on increasing access to agricultural research.**





# The Dept of Agric Economics and Extension, UCC – our experience

- We train Mid-Career Extension Staff for the Ministry of Food and Agriculture – Diploma & B.Sc. Levels
- Training: **1 ½ yrs on campus**; ½ yr off-campus where they introduce innovation to producer groups -Action Research
- Our experience in the programme:

**Substantial innovations are already available and known to producers but access and use are quite low for many reasons**





# What factors limit producers' access and use of agricultural research information?

Is it about ....

- Affordability – associated cost
- Availability – quality, appropriateness and timing
- Risk and uncertainty – weather, market & prices
- Attitude and competence of producers and extension agents
- Level of extension contact – low AEA: Farmer Ratio
- Availability of training manuals/guides

**NB: Our Experience and Research Show that these Factors can Affect Access and Use of Agricultural Innovations.**





# Can we improve producers' access and use of agricultural research in Africa?

Can we ...if we:

- Improve access to credit?
- Promote multi-stakeholder & participatory approaches to facilitate networks to share information and best practices among producers?
- Promote formation of commodity-based producer groups?
- Strengthen producer groups and organizations to be able to engage researchers and extension agents?





## Can we...if we:

- Support collaborative action research?
- Use ICT:
  - ◆ the internet
  - ◆ mobile phone: market info, agric advice
  - ◆ community radios and TV shows
  - ◆ recorded videos for self-training?
- Explore the establishment of Information Centres?
- Adopt Public-Private Partnership in extension delivery:
  - ◆ Training
  - ◆ Training materials
  - ◆ Staffing
  - ◆ Logistical support – transport

**All these have  
been found  
useful**





# Increasing producer productivity along with standards of food quality and safety...

... is a shared responsibility along the entire food chain - by all involved with the production, processing, trade and consumption - including certification bodies.



Planning & production



Post harvest



Marketing and Use





# Can Fairtrade Play a Role in this?

- What is our answer? **YES** or **NO** !
- If “**YES**” – the role will depend on the answers we give to the earlier questions.

**E.g. Do we believe we can improve producers’ access to research if we improve their access to credit?**





# THANK YOU

## Improving Producer Capacity – Access to Agric. Research !!!

This looks like a job for...

ALL OF US !!



**Together - we can!**

