IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF)
e-ISSN: 2321-5933, p-ISSN: 2321-5925.Volume 10, Issue 1 Ser. IV (Jan. – Feb.2019), PP 46-50
www.iosrjournals.org

Awareness of World Food Day Programme by Farmers in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

Harry, A.T. & Olowu, O,
Department Of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, P.M.B 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria,
Corresponding Author: Harry, A.T.

Abstract: *The study examined the awareness of World Food Day Programme by farmers in Ikwerre Local Government Area (KELGA) of Rivers State, Nigeria. The objective of the study described the socio-economic characteristics of the farmers, determined the level of farmers awareness on World Food day, ascertained the medium of information, determined the benefit derived by farmers from world food day and identified the major constraints to farmers participation in world food day. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select 110 farmers from five clans. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics tools. Findings indicated that majority of the farmers were males (52%), married (76%) and are aware of the programme (66.36%), but did not participate in World Food Day. (66.64%). Those who obtained information from television with ($\bar{x}$ =3.96), channels and level of farmers awareness of innovation and techniques were through personal knowledge ($\bar{x}$ = 4.67). benefit of the programmes to farmers include awareness to disease out break ($\bar{x}$ = 3.96), improved standard of living ($\bar{x}$ = 3.92) and new farming innovations and techniques ($\bar{x}$ =3.77), major constraints facing farmers in participating in world food day were insecurity issues ($\bar{x}$ = 4.49) and indiscriminate extortion of money from farmers ($\bar{x}$ = 4.39). It was recommended that proper sensitization be carried out, so as to create more awareness and medium through which such publication should be done.*

Keywords: *Awareness, World Food Day Programme, Ikwere Rivers State.*

Date of Submission: 21-02-2019 Date of acceptance:08-03-2019

I. Introduction

World Food Day (WFD) is a day of action against hunger, it is a day celebrated every year as a way of drawing the attention of the world to the importance attached to food production (FAO, 2014). The United Nation (UN) through its agency, food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) set aside 16th October of every year in all countries of the World to further sensitize the general public on the need to increase food production in various countries.

The celebration is sequel to the resolution taken at the 20th session of the FAO meeting held in Rome in November 1979 that the 16th October each year be set aside and observed as World Food Day (WFD). World Food Day was established by food and agricultural organization member countries at the organizations 20th general conference meeting held in November 1989.

The Hungarian delegation led by the former Hungarian minister of agriculture and Food Dr. Pol Romany played on active role at the 20th session of the FAO conference and suggested the idea of celebrating the World Food Day worldwide. It has since been observed every year in more than 150 countries raising awareness of issues behind poverty and hungers on the 16th October 1981 it officially held its first annual gathering with the theme "***Food comes first'*** Nigeria has been participating in marking the World Food Day yearly since the first WFD celebration in 1981 with series of activities including essay and quiz competition for students from various schools and colleges of agriculture all over the country, television and radio-decision programmes, food and agricultural exhibitions for the farmers, lecturers and symposia by eminent Nigeria scholars and television documentary programmes on agriculture in Nigeria.

These activities were organized to highlight some of the situation and move the country and states towards, self-sufficiency which is the central objectives of the programme. In Rivers State, the celebration offer farmers the unique opportunity to showcase the abundant varieties of food, crops, livestock's and fishes produce in the state while acting as a forum for government to sensitize the general public the various agricultural policies and programmes. It marks a proffering solutions, as well as identifying the areas that require fine-tuning so that the wheel of progress of agricultural delivery systems of the state can be improved upon and kept running. In this way, attention is drawn to such areas in which major success have been or are being made in our

food and agricultural production drive and encourage greater efforts as we plan for the next farming season and year ahead.

II. Statement Of The Problem

The principal constraints to agricultural production growth are the fact that the structure and methods of production have remained the same since independence more than four decades ago (Mohammed and Atte, 2006). This can only be so when the farmers are into large or mechanized farming which in other words, means commercialization of agricultural production and it includes use of heavy duty machines such as tractors, ploughs, harrows etc.

Large acres of farmland, labour, finance, etc. the government is responsible for recruitment and training of extension workers in schools of agriculture, establishing and maintaining agricultural demonstration farms for the benefit of farmers and supporting tractor hiring services which enables farmers to practice mechanization of farm operation on a modest scale (Ekong, 1988). Some research on barriers that inhibits the effectiveness of extension service according to Igben, and Ekpere, (1988) are inadequate financial support, lack of training personnel both in quality and quantities, long decision making and communication process, lack of adequate distribution of essential inputs, untimely and irregular distribution of essential inputs. Despite all these, it is still of importance to note the activities of farmers whether or not there is improvement in their farming activities, not only that, also their reactions to the benefits of the WFD and as well their constraints or problems they are facing which in turn helps proffer solution to their current situations. Lester (2010) however was of the opinion that WFD offers the opportunity to strengthen the national and international solidarity in the fight to end hunger, malnutrition and poverty Jacques, (2009) noted that WFD is not only about creating awareness for people to take food, but rather to also help in identifying the problems in food supply and distribution.

III. Objectives Of The Study

The broad objectives of the study was to assess the awareness of World Food Day Programme on agricultural production in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

The specific objective of the study were to:

(i) describe the Socio-economic characteristics of the farmers.
(ii) determine the level of farmers awareness on World Food Day in the area.
(iii) ascertain the medium of information for the respondents.
(iv) determine the benefit derived by farmers from World Food Day.
(v) identify the major constraints in the participation of farmers on World food Day.

IV. Methodology

Study area:

The study was carried out in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Ikwerre Local Government Area (LGA) has boundaries with Imo State in the North, Emohua Local Government area in the west and Etche Local Government area in the east and Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in the south. Its headquarters is in Isiokpo the population of Ikwerre LGA is 213, 538 people, (National population census 2006). The indigenous occupation of the people is agricultural production and its related activities such as hunting and lumbering. The major food crops grown by the farmers are yam, cassava, cocoyam, maize, vegetables, and melon, the average annual rainfall of 171.8mm of the area supports all year agricultural production activities of crop farmers in the LGA. Agricultural the area is referred to as an indispensable food basket for Abia, Imo and Rivers of Nigeria (Nlerum, 2013). The LGA occupy 1,099 Kilometers square fertile land.

The study concentrated only on farmers (Men and Women) both indigene and non-indigenes which make-up the farming community in the area. Out of the twelve (12), clans in KELGA which includes Igwuruta, Omagwa, Isiokpo, Elele, Omerelu, Apani, Ubima, Omuanwa, Omademe, Aluu, Ibaa, Ozuoba, only five (5) clans was randomly selected for the purpose of the work, two (2) communities were purposive chosen and eleven respondents (farmers were selected making total on one hundred and ten 110 respondents.

V. Results And Discussion

The Socio Economic Characteristics of Farmers

The result on Socio-economic characteristics of farmers is presented in Table 1. It revealed that majority of the farmers were males while the other 48% were females.

The results revealed that age of the farmers were 45 years, and 25.5% of the farmers were between 36 and 40 years. This implies that most of the farmers were matured, about 76% were married while 13.6% were single and, 10.9% were widow/widowers. This may imply possible decline in fertility. Further more 43.6% of the farmers did not participate in the World Food Day due to insecurity of the area and also lack of

communication gap. Also 42.7% of the respondents attain secondary educations, and 66.4% were crops farmers while 86.5 were into commercial farming.

Table 1 Socio-economic Characteristics of Sample Farmers

	Variables	Percentage (%)	Mean
1	**Gender**		
	Male	51.8	
	Femal	48.2	
2	**Age in year**		
	21-25	4.4	
	26-30	8.2	
	31-35	13.6	45
	36-40	25.5	
	41 and above	46.3	
3	**Marital Status**		
	Single	13.6	
	Married	75.5	
	Divorced	0	
	Widow/widower	10.9	
4	**Medium of participation**		
	Through cooperative	8.18	
	Individually	28.18	
	Did not participate	63.64	
5	**Level of Education**		
	No Formal education	22.7	
	Primary education	0.9	
	Secondary education	42.7	
	Diploma education	11.8	
	University education	21.8	
6	**Types of Agricultural Production**		
	Fishery	10.0	
	Poultry	22.7	
	Cropping	66.4	
	Piggery	0.9	
7	**Types of farming practice**		
	Commercial farming	85.5	
	Subsistence farming	14.6	

Sources: Field survey, 2017

Channels and Levels of Farmers Awareness of Innovation and Techniques in Agriculture

The result presented in Table 2 shows that majority of the farmers channels of awareness of innovation and techniques in agricultural production was through their personal knowledge. This ranked first with ($\bar{x}$ =4.67), while through fellow farmers ranked second with ($\bar{x}$ =4.15), also through extension agents ranked third with ($\bar{x}$ =3.28), electronic broadcasting ranked fourth with ($\bar{x}$ =2.92), printing media ranked fifth with ($\bar{x}$ =2.56) while through cooperative channel rank sixth with ($\bar{x}$ = 2.35). Finally, through N.G.O's channels ranked seventh with ($\bar{x}$ =1.94). This results generally showed that there is or absence of extension agents in our community.

Table 2: Channels and Levels of Farmers Awareness of Innovation and Techniques in Agriculture

Channels	Mean $\bar{x}$	Rank
Extension Agents	3.28	3rd
Cooperatives	2.35	6th
Printing media	2.56	5th
Electronic Broadcasting	2.92	4th
Fellow farmers	4.15	2nd
N.G.Os	1.94	7th
Personal knowledge	4.67	1st

Sources: field survey, 2017

Medium of Information on World Food Day

Table 3 presents respondents medium of information on World Food Day was television which was ($\bar{x}$ -3.30), this may be due to frequent use of appropriate audiovisuals should become its vital component for imparting information and knowledge to farmers effectively. While information get through friends ($\bar{x}$ =3.22) and radio ($\bar{x}$ =2.90). The implication is that people don't listen to radio but preferred watching television.

Table 3: Medium of information on World Food day

Source of information	Mean score ($\bar{x}$)	Rank
Television	3.30	1st
Radio	2.90	3rd
Internet	2.52	5th
Newspaper	2.33	6th
Magazine	2.64	4th
Town crier	2.13	7th
Through friends	3.22	2nd
Seminars, conference and field day	1.90	8th

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Benefits Derived by Farmers on World Food Day

Table 4 revealed the benefits of the programme to farmers were awareness of farm diseases outbreak which was ($\bar{x}$ =3.96), new farming innovations and techniques ($\bar{x}$ =3.77), increased income ($\bar{x}$ =3.71), increased agricultural produce ($\bar{x}$ =3.63), creating of marketing channels for farm produce ($\bar{x}$ =3.55). This implied that the respondents were enlightened to some extents.

Table 4: Benefits derived by Farmers on World Food Day

S/NO	BENEFIT	MEAN ($\bar{X}$)	SCORE
1	IMPROVED STANDARD OF LIVING FOR FARMERS	*3.92	
2	ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL LOANS AND GRANTS	2.95	
3	PROVISION AND AVAILABILITY OF FERTILIZERS FOR FARMERS	*3.30	
4	NEW FARMING INNOVATIONS AND TECHNIQUES	*3.77	
5	CREATING OF MARKETING CHANNELS FOR FARM PRODUCE	*3.55	
6	AWARENESS OF FARM DISEASES OUTBREAK	*3.96	
7	ENCOURAGEMENT OF FARMERS TO FORM COOPERATIVES	2.92	
8	ESTABLISHMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AGENCIES	2.70	
9	INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE	*3.63	
10	CREATION OF AGRICULTURAL SKILL ACQUISITION PROGRAMME	3.31	
11	PROVISION OF MECHANISED FARMING	2.32	
12		*3.71	
13			

14	EQUIPMENT	
	INCREAESED INCOME	2.03
	PROVISION OF INSURANCE COVER	1.65
	NO BENEFITS	

SOURCE: Field Survey, 2017

Major Constraints as a result of farmers participation on World Food Day

The major constraints in table 5 facing farmers in participation on World Food Day were insecurity and the Niger Delta challenges (x=4.49) because of youth restiveness and kidnapping very common, followed by extortion from farmers (x=4.39), Negligence (x=4.33) on the part of the local government council and finally poor publicity (x=4.00) was the last which indicated that less publicity was given on World Food Day awareness.

Table 5: Major Constraints of Farmers Participation in World Food Day

Constraints Factors	Means score ($\bar{X}$)	Rank
Transportation challenge	4.22	4th
Politicization by the LGA Council	4.11	5th
Poor publicity	4.00	8th
Extortion from farmers	4.39	2nd
Insecurity issues	4.49	1st
Not carried along	4.01	7th
Poor communication	4.11	5th
Negligence	4.33	3rd

Source: Field Survey, 2017

VI. Conclusion

Majority of the farmers were aware of the World Food Day programmes but did not participate because many constraints they faced including as insecurity issues, extortion from farmers, negligence, transportation challenge, poor publicity, and politicization by the LGA council. Entrepreneurship is the driving force behind the ability to translate creative ideas into profitable Agro-ventures. Entrepreneurs originate profitable business ideals.

VII. Recommendations

The following are the recommendations proffered based on the empirical findings.

1. It was recommended that proper publication should be carried out to create awareness and the medium through which such publication should be done must be accessible.
2. Extortion from farmers and negligence on the LGA council should be examined
3. There should be maximum security in the rural areas so as to encourage the farmers go to their various farms for agricultural practices.

References

[1]. Ekong, E.E. (2003), An Introduction to Rural Sociology, Dove Educational Publisher Uyo, Nigeria.
[2]. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (2004): The State of Food Insecurity in the World Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nation.
[3]. Igben, M.S. and Ekpere, J.A. (1988), The Nigerian Farmers and Agricultural Institutions: An Assessment Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan
[4]. Jaxques, D. (2009), World Food Security the Challenges of Climate Changes and Bioenergy.http://orissi.gov.in
[5]. Lester, R. B. (2010), Ten Things to Know About Foods in World Food Day, Retrieved from www.earth-policy.org.org.on 23rd July, 2016.
[6]. Mohammed, A.I. and Atte, O.A. (2006), An Analysis of Agricultural Production in Nigeria 2, 25-27.
[7]. National Population Commission (NPC) (2006). Population and Housing Census of Federal Republic of Misene, Rivers State Priority table 1,
[8]. Nlerum, F.E (2013), Effect of National Open Apprenticeship Scheme on Youth Employment, in Ikwerre, Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria, Journal of Agriculture & Social Research, 13(1), 56-62.

Harry, A.T.. "Awareness of World Food Day Programme by Farmers in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria." IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF) , vol. 10, no. 1, 2019, pp. 46-50.