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## We need to integrate farm gate as component agric policy in Nigeria — Professor Okunmadewa

*Hakeem Gbadamosi | Tribune*

**A** professor of Agricultural Economics and World Bank Consultant, Foluso Okunmadewa, has stressed the need to integrate farm gate as a core component of agricultural development policy in the country.

Okunmadewa who stated this during the 10th Distinguished lecture series of Joseph Ayo Babalola University (JABU) titled “Nigeria Agriculture and the Economy- unlock the farm gate”

According to him, farm gate will go a long way to help to reduce cases of non-performance of agricultural policies in Nigeria, describing farm gate as a direct marketing method whereby farmers sell agricultural produce, mostly food, directly to the consumer, to restaurants and caterers, and to independent retailers. He maintained that the development of agricultural sector is key to the overall development noting that the strength and sustainable potential of Nigeria is in agriculture.

Okunmadewa however maintained that research has a major role to play in bridging the gap between farm gate price and final market price, saying enhancing farm gate prices through production, marketing and utilisation research and application of such research as a veritable strategy in bridging the gap between farm gate prices and the final market prices.

He said:” efforts should be concentrated on research aimed at adding value to agricultural produce. Biotechnology should be embraced as a panacea to the daunting production problems faced by farmers.

“The development of market infrastructure and adoption of ICT information solutions are key to resolving the agricultural value chain problems while also ensuring increased farm gross margin and farmer's welfare. Research on use of non-traditional crops can help reveal hidden treasure”

Okunmadewa noted that improved farm gate prices will encourage farmers to commit land and labour resources into immediate and future production but said there's need for robust research to illuminate the dark tunnel of the farm.

The Agricultural Economist however said the agricultural research system in the country is bedeviled by some constraints which include, shortage of and instability of qualified researchers, weak linkage of research institutes, poor state of infrastructural facilities, lack of adequate funding and lack of political will.

He however, said: “the various constraints need to be addressed now with a view to using robust research activities to isolate enduring solution to the food, fuel and financial crisis that is rocking the Africa in general and threatening growth and development in Nigeria.

“Quick fix can only work for some time. Long term solution is germane now. The 3Fs present a challenge and an opportunity for us to unlock the farm gate and awake the giant, which is Nigeria. Let us act now”

In his opening remark, the Vice Chancellor of the institution, Prof. Olaosebikan Fakolujo, described the

lecture as thought- provoking and inspirational and will further advance human development and upliftment

He noted that the lecture topic showed the breadth of the vision of the lecturer and also show the depth of his concern for Nigeria society as a whole.

He said: “Agriculture is crucial to economic growth: accounting for four percent of global gross domestic product (GDP)and in some countries, it can account for more than 25 percent of GDP.

But agriculture – driven growth, poverty reduction, food security is at risk: multiple shocks – COVID-19 related disruptions to extreme weather, pests and conflicts – are impacting food system, resulting in higher food crisis that is driving millions more into extreme poverty.



**Prof. Foluso Okunmadewa**  
*World Bank Consultant and Professor of  
Agricultural Economics*