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Liberia Joins KAFACI to Enhance Agricultural Development and Food Security

Liberia officially joined the Korea-Africa Food & Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (KAFACI), a significant step forward in the Assembly. Liberia's Agriculture Minister, Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah, highlighted the nation's commitment to sustainable agriculture and food security country's agricultural development. This announcement was made during the 6th KAFACI General through this strategic partnership.



According to him, despite the sector's importance, agriculture still faces challenges such as low investment, inefficient production systems, and limited access to finance. [Read more on this story](#)

Ministry of Agriculture in Liberia Launches 2024 National Fair



The Ministry of Agriculture on Thursday, August 15, 2024, officially launched the 2024 National Agriculture Fair, a significant event aimed at promoting agricultural innovation, boosting

local production, and enhancing food security across the nation. [Get the details of this story](#)

CERATH Development Organization Launches New Fisheries Project for Liberia

Stakeholders of the fisheries sector have launched the Liberia Fisheries Governance Project, a new fisheries project to strengthen governance within the sector.



The Country Director for the CERETH Development Organization, Leroy N.S. Kanmoh said that the new project will do all it can to make sure that the capacity of the fisheries communities of Sinoe County is strengthened.

[Read more on this story](#)

Liberia Agriculture Minister Unveils Plan to Rebrand CARI

The Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Alexander Nuetah has announced plans to rebrand the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) as a professional and technical institution, free from political interference. This pronouncement was made at the induction ceremony of Dr. Arthur Bob Karnuah as the new Director General of CARI.

“Rebranding CARI as a purely professional and technical institution is crucial for the advancement of our agricultural sector. We are committed to creating an environment where our researchers can work independently, focusing on evidence-based solutions that will benefit our farmers and the nation as a whole,” said the Minister.



Liberian President, Joseph Boakai recently named Dr. Arthur B. Karnuah as the new Director General of the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI). [Read more about this story from CARI by clicking here.](#)

Inter-African Coffee Organization Delegation Meets President Joseph Boakai



A delegation from the Inter-African Coffee Organization (IACO) met with President Joseph Boakai in Monrovia on Thursday, August 8, 2024. The delegation led by IACO Secretary-General, Solomon Rutega and Dr. Celestine Gataryiha, Director of Research and Development discussed strategies to rejuvenate Liberia's coffee industry, which has faced challenges over the years due to economic and environmental factors

During the meeting, President Boakai expressed his administration's commitment to revitalizing the sector. He stressed the need for IACO to begin seeing the possibility of providing capacity building for young people around Africa to take over the agricultural sector. [Read more on this story](#)

14 Farmer Cooperatives Trained in Commercial Farming and Agrochemical Handling

Over 50 farmers from 14 cooperatives in six counties participated in a four-day intensive training on commercial farming and the safe handling and management of agrochemicals at the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) in Bong County on 14-17 August 2024.



Beneficiaries participating in the training were ecstatic about the new modules introduced to them by the facilitators. The farmers said the training will potentially impact how they conduct their farming activities as cooperatives and individual farmers. [Read more here](#)

Jorwah-Gbarnga Road Closure Stalls Farmers' Produce in Bong



Farmers in Jorwah and its surrounding villages are facing severe challenges as the Jorwah-Gbarnga road remains impassable. For over a week now, vehicles have been unable to traverse the route, leaving local farmers unable to transport their produce to market. The consequences are dire, with crops beginning to rot in the fields and livelihoods hanging in the balance. [Read more on this story](#)

A Smallholder Farmer Seeks Support to Overcome Challenges in Mixed Crops

Smallholder farmer Eric Sarmue based in Salala District, Bong County is facing an uphill battle to sustain his family's livelihood through mixed crops farming. With his modest plot of land, Eric Sarmue a father of ten children has been striving to cultivate a diverse range of crops, including cassava, maize, and vegetables, to ensure food security for his family and generate income. However, like many smallholder farmers in the region, Eric faces significant obstacles that hinder his productivity and threaten his livelihood.



He notes that basic tools such as hoes, cutlasses, and wheelbarrows are either insufficient or absent. ***“Without the proper tools, the work becomes extremely difficult and time-consuming,” he explains. “We need hoes, shovels, wheelbarrows, and other equipment to help with planting, weeding, and harvesting. But right now, we’re doing almost everything by hand.”*** [Read the details of this by clicking](#)

Rampaging Elephants Destroyed 22 Farms in Gbarpolu



Farmers in Gbarpolu County have been alarmed over the mass destruction of their farms by roaming elephants.

The affected farmers are from Zuo, Tumuquelleh, Gbaryama towns, and surrounding villages in Dongbea Chiefdom, Barma clan in Gbarpolu County. [Read more on this development from Gbarpolu County](#)

Minister Alexander Nuetah Tours Several Farms in Western Liberia

As the Government of President Joseph Nyuma Boakai gears up to revamp and improve agriculture productivity in the country, farmers in Bomi County are ready to promote the “Liberians Feed Yourself agenda.”

During a tour recently in Western Liberia, most of the farmers expressed their excitement that Agriculture Minister, Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah decided to solicit their input into the government's vision to promote agriculture.



Farms visited across Bomi also included Stamar Kamar Farm, the West African Learning Center for No-Till Agriculture International (WAL CENTER), Molley, and Patten Farms amongst others. [Read more about this story](#)

Amid Climate Change Threats, Local Cooperative Empowers Over 200 Farmers with New Techniques in Oil Palm Farming

Catherine Dahn, a palm farmer for about three years experienced significant losses before learning the new techniques of oil palm cultivation.

She said that a drum of boiled palm nuts whose production involved lots of hard labor, several

hours of pounding using her hands, coupled with the extreme heat that oozed from the boiling palm nuts and the blazing fire, in the time passed would give her just one tan of the 20-liters oil plus two gallons.



The UN Food System Hub reports that agriculture contributes about 36 percent to Liberia's GDP. Oil palm is a key crop for farmers, providing a significant source of income. It covers over 1 million hectares of Liberia's land.

[Read more](#)

Liberia Vice President Launches Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) project.

Vice President Jeremiah Kpan Koug has officially launched the Liberia Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) project.



The project, supported by a \$19.4 million investment from the African Development Bank (AfDB), aims to transform Liberia's agriculture sector by reducing the country's dependence on food imports, creating jobs, and alleviating poverty through sustainable practices and strategic investments.

The launching ceremony was held in Monrovia at the Industrial Freezone Compound on Wednesday, July 31, 2024. [Read more](#)

Liberia Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries Federation Concludes One-Day Consultative Meeting in Gbarnga, Bong County

The Liberia Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries Federation (LAIFF) successfully concluded a one-day consultative meeting with fish farmers in Gbarnga, Bong County. The meeting aimed to discuss the challenges and opportunities within the sector, and to strategize on ways to improve productivity and sustainability. [Read more on this story](#)



Ministry of Agriculture New Leadership Convenes First ACC Meeting

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) on Monday, August 26, 2024, held its first Agriculture Coordination Committee (ACC) meeting, after several months of dormancy.

The objective of the meeting was to bring together various sub-sectors, farmer's organizations, and development partners to discuss the unfolding achievements and challenges within the agricultural sector. [Read more on this story](#)

Severe Flooding Submerges Homes in Gbah Jahkeh, Senjeh District, Bomi County



The town of Gbah Jahkeh in Senjeh District, Bomi County, is grappling with severe flooding that has submerged homes, leaving residents displaced and in urgent need of assistance. The flooding, which occurred after days of relentless rainfall, has caused significant damage to properties and infrastructure in the area.

Residents of Gbah Jahkeh have described the situation as unprecedented, with many losing their homes and belongings to the rising waters. ***“This is the worst flooding we have seen in years,” said Moses Dunor, a resident. “We are struggling to find shelter and food.”*** [Read more about the flooding situation in Bomi](#)

Environmental Justice Foundation Host Investigative Journalism Workshop



The European Union-funded Communities for Fisheries Project has concluded a two-day journalists workshop under the theme, ‘Enhancing investigative journalism workshop in Liberia’s Fisheries sector’ in Monrovia with the Deputy Director General for Technical Services at the National Fisheries and

Aquaculture Authority, NaFAA highlighting the impact the project is having on the Liberian Fisheries sector, mainly through the establishment and empowerment of the Collaborative Management Associations, CMAs.

The project is implemented by the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) in collaboration with NaFAA in four of the nine coastal counties in Liberia. The Workshop started Wednesday, August 14, 2024, at a local hotel in Congo Town. [Read more about the EJF story](#)

Plastic Pollution, Poor Waste Management Threatens Public Health and Livelihoods



As Liberia grapples with these challenges, environmental experts warn that the combination of poor waste management and the rampant use of single-use plastic bags and bottles is filling up land space, contaminating water sources, and endangering public health.

The consequences are particularly dire for urban farmers across Montserrado County and its surrounding areas. [Read more on this article](#)

Locals Push towards Conservation amidst the Environmental Dilemma of Logging to Mitigate Climate Change Impacts



In the Bondi Mandingo Community Forest of Liberia's Bopolu District, the shadows of a logging industry's past linger, casting a complex web of challenges and opportunities for the community. For years, logging companies have invaded their lands, cutting down massive trees and leaving behind a trail of destruction.

Though the promise of jobs and economic growth was tempting, locals have begun to realize the cost.

Stanford David, a lifelong resident and mother of three in Gbarquoista of Bopolu district, voiced the growing frustration in the community. She said, ***"They came in, cut down our trees, took some, and left us with nothing,"*** She said, ***"We see the beauty of our forest dying,"*** so, ***"we want to protect our home for our children."*** [Read more about this environmental story from Gbarpolu County](#)

Residents along Nyarfor River Narrate the Unbearable Scars of Chinese Chemical Waste Pollution in Margibi County



Residents along the riverfront of the Nyarfor River in Margibi County continue to witness the devastating impact of unchecked industrial waste disposal. Local water sources, once clean and teeming with life, have turned into toxic reservoirs. Streams essential for drinking water now carry the deadly burden

of hazardous chemicals. The aquatic life that sustained many families has all but disappeared from Nyarfor River.

The health implications of this pollution are profound. Clinics particularly Weala are seeing an alarming rise in patients suffering from illnesses linked to chemical exposure. Skin rashes, chronic respiratory conditions, and gastrointestinal problems are common complaints. Children, with their developing bodies, are especially at risk. [Follow this link to read more.](#)

EPA Executive Director Stresses the Importance of Environmental Conservation



Speaking at the Eco-Stove Training Program graduation in Ganta on Wednesday, August 7, 2024, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia Executive Director, Dr. Emmanuel Urey Yarkpawolo, and CEO called on the newly certified graduates to utilize their skills in advancing environmental sustainability and mitigating climate change.

Dr. Yarkpawolo highlighted the historical richness of Nimba's forests, which were once home to diverse wildlife, including elephants and tigers. He lamented the current state of deforestation caused by unsustainable practices like fire coal production further exacerbating the situation nationwide. [Read more about the story from EPA Liberia](#)

MEET OUR FARMER OF THE MONTH AUGUST 2024

This month, we are thrilled to highlight the incredible journey of Leo Katakpah, a dedicated smallholder farmer from Suakoko, Bong County who has transformed his passion for agriculture into a thriving business. Leo Katakpah has called on Liberians to see the sector as a major source of income generation. [Click the link](#) to read more as Leo Katakpah recounts success after 9 years of Piggery Farming.



Leo Katakpah

Pig Farmer

Meet Our Farmer of the Month August

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The image shows a man, Leo Katakpah, wearing an orange t-shirt with a graphic that says "THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE 2023" and "MR. JOHNNY B. OJEMBA". He is standing in a stone-walled enclosure, touching a pig. The background shows lush greenery.

Editorial: Cutlass and Hoe No Longer Game Changers for Liberia's Agricultural Sector Development

For decades, the image of the Liberian farmer has been synonymous with a cutlass in one hand and a hoe in the other. These traditional tools have served as the backbone of Liberia's agricultural sector, symbolizing the resilience and hard work of our farmers. However, in an era where global agriculture is being revolutionized by technology, mechanization, and innovation, it is evident that the cutlass and hoe are no longer adequate for driving the development of Liberia's agricultural sector.

Liberia's agricultural potential is immense. With vast arable land, favorable climatic conditions, and a youthful population, the country is well-positioned to become a breadbasket not just for its citizens but also for the West African region. Yet, this potential remains largely untapped due to the continued reliance on archaic farming practices. The use of rudimentary tools like the cutlass and hoe limits the scale and efficiency of farming, keeping productivity low and trapping many smallholder farmers in a cycle of poverty.

The world is moving towards precision agriculture, where technology is used to optimize farming practices, increase yields, and reduce waste. Drones are being used for aerial surveillance of crops, tractors are now equipped with GPS for precision plowing, and mobile apps are helping farmers to monitor soil health and weather patterns in real time. These advancements are creating unprecedented opportunities for increasing productivity and ensuring food security. However, Liberia is being left behind.

The continued reliance on manual labor and traditional tools in Liberia's agricultural sector is unsustainable. It not only limits the country's ability to compete in the global market but also exacerbates issues of food insecurity and poverty. The introduction of modern farming techniques and equipment is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity. This shift is essential if we are to realize the full potential of our agricultural sector and transform it into a major driver of economic growth.

Moreover, the government must play a proactive role in this transition. There needs to be a concerted effort to provide farmers with access to modern equipment, training, and financial support. Initiatives such as subsidized loans for the purchase of farming machinery, investment in agricultural research, and partnerships with international agricultural organizations can significantly enhance productivity. Additionally, creating an enabling environment for private sector investment in agriculture will accelerate the mechanization of farming in Liberia.

Smallholder farmers, who form the backbone of our agricultural sector, should not be left behind in this transformation. They must be supported to transition from traditional to modern farming practices. Success stories from neighboring countries have shown that when smallholder farmers are empowered with the right tools and knowledge, they can significantly increase their output

and income. For Liberia, the adoption of modern agricultural practices could be the key to lifting thousands out of poverty and ensuring food security for all.

In conclusion, the era of the cutlass and hoe as the primary tools for farming in Liberia must come to an end. The future of Liberia's agricultural sector lies in modernization and mechanization. The government, private sector, and international partners must work together to ensure that Liberian farmers have access to the tools and technologies needed to thrive in the 21st century. Only then can we unlock the full potential of our agricultural sector and ensure a prosperous future for all Liberians.

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