



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

## Focus: Agricultural Technology

Small-scale agriculture is the production of crops and livestock on a small piece of land without using advanced and expensive technologies.

Growth in agricultural productivity has been rapid, largely as a result of the extensive adoption of new technologies. Advancement of the green revolution provided a way out of poverty by directly increasing farmer's income and wages. This experience is not the same worldwide because hunger and poverty continue to affect some small-scale farmers.

In Zambia, agriculture is the major contributor to the economy and it is mainly comprised of small-scale farmers who depend on rain-fed agriculture. Some success has been recorded in isolated areas and despite this success, productivity has not kept pace with the increase in population and growing food security demands.

# The Weekly

## Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

### Problem: Lack of Adoption of Agricultural Technologies

Improving agricultural income has become an urgent need. Population growth, climate change and demand for land are contributing factors to a growing need for food.

Access to and use of appropriate technologies may be one of the tools required to meet production challenges. Conservation Agriculture is a simple technology that needs to be promoted. Seed technology is also one activity our farmers often don't consider.

To improve agriculture productivity small scale farmers must invest in some of the basic

technologies like water management, soil improvement and seeds.

The Zambia National Farmers Union has introduced the Agriculture Technology Exchange Program in collaboration with Golden Valley Agriculture research in Chisamba.

This is helping farmers to learn different approaches to agriculture production.

FAO and partners are encouraging farmers to learn new ways to farm to improve crop yields. Approaches like conservation methods and irrigation are just two technologies that need greater promotion.

## Solutions: Activities for Journalists

The promotion of innovative farming techniques need to be prioritized by communities.

The University of Zambia has been developing various technologies, but adoption is very poor.

August 1st is Farmers Day in Zambia and it'll be a good time to use community radio to encourage farmers to participate and learn new technologies for increasing production and adapting to climate change.

Even though August 1<sup>st</sup> is a month away – it is a good time to start planning programs around this theme.

Use your community radio station to help small-scale farmers invest in agricultural technology such as conservation farming and machinery. This becomes very critical with climate change impacts on food production.

Interview an extension officer and discuss the different types of small-scale agricultural technologies for improving crop yields.

In agriculture, women do most of the farming and thus they play an indispensable role in food production. Find out what kinds of agricultural technological challenges women face.

The three main inputs identified in small-scale farming systems are fertilizers, animal waste and compost. Find out what other types of inputs small-scale farmers use in their crops.

Intercropping is a common tradition among small-scale farmers, but combining crops is

practiced differently among farmers. Find out from farmers what kind of crops they mix. Recommend intercropping of legumes and cereal crops.

Women share the burden of farm work in most households, yet they have few agricultural assets such as farm tools. Find out from listeners how best women can be recognized and what kind of equipment is suitable for them.

The University of Zambia is also promoting technologies for students who are learning agriculture and engineering.

Use your community radio station to talk about various tools that small-scale farmers need.

For instance, small-scale irrigation systems can help farmers during periods of little or no rainfall.

Encourage farmers to work closely with extension offices and experts to learn new efficient ways of farming.

### Useful Links

Information about farming and the environment:  
Makweti Sishekanu, National Farmers Union Zambia:  
+260-211-252-649 or +260-965-098-360. Email:  
[makwetiskanu@yahoo.com](mailto:makwetiskanu@yahoo.com)

Good source of information: Vincent Ziba, National Coordinator, Community-based National Resource Management Forum, Zambia; Email:  
[vinceziba@yahoo.com](mailto:vinceziba@yahoo.com). Phone: 0966-246-924

Good source of information; Mwape Sichilongo, WWF Conservation Manager. Email:  
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