

Empowering Women through Better Agriculture and Improved Yields

Farmer Field Schools in Ghana Benefit Groundnut Growers

By SPRING/Ghana



Photo credit: SPRING/Ghana

Ganabi Insuidor receives a district award for best groundnut farmer after participating in SPRING/Ghana's farmer field school.

"To me, the significance of the award is neither about the souvenirs nor the large quantity of groundnuts produced. Rather, it is about the confidence and self-worth that have been imbued in me."

--Ganabi Insuidor,
Best Groundnut Farmer,
East Gonja District

A Groundnut Grower Sharpens Her Skills

Ganabi Insuidor, a farmer in Kayereso community in Ghana's East Gonja District, grows groundnuts to feed her family, then sells the excess at markets for income. Unfortunately, in recent seasons, Ganabi's yields of nuts were not enough to both eat and sell.

Then Ganabi joined a farmer field school (FFS) managed by Strengthening Partnerships, Results, and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING), USAID's multi-sectoral nutrition project. The FFS trainings teach farmers good agronomic practices, which make it easier to grow and harvest healthier crops with greater yields. She also learned how to reduce or prevent contamination by aflatoxin, a fungus that grows on groundnuts and other legumes and grains and poses serious risks to human health. Aflatoxin contamination can impede nutrient absorption in the human body, leading to poor nutritional outcomes, particularly in young children.

Maximizing Yield in the Field

After participating in the FFS, Ganabi offered to use her seven-acre farm as an FFS demonstration plot to share good agriculture practices with her neighbors. She began to plant crops in rows, ensured timely weeding, and turned her groundnut shoots upright to facilitate initial drying in the field before plucking the nuts to dry them to reduce the likelihood of aflatoxin contamination.

As a result, Ganabi improved her yield. She recorded 15 bags of groundnuts, a significant increase from the previous average of 11 bags. Her efforts were rewarded at the National Farmers' Day celebration in

where she was recognized as the East Gonja District Best Groundnut Farmer.

“When I got the award, I was so happy. I was not expecting it, though,” Ganabi remarked.

Success beyond Souvenirs

Ganabi attributed her success to the support she received from SPRING on good groundnut farming practices. She also spoke of her newfound confidence: “To me, the significance of the award is neither about the souvenirs nor the large quantity of groundnuts produced. Rather, it is about the confidence and self-worth that have been imbued in me. I feel more encouraged and confident that I have won this award, even beating all the men in the district. I am so grateful to SPRING/Ghana for their support.”

With a bag of groundnuts selling at an average price of 120 GHC (about \$25), Ganabi plans to use her increased income to send two of her children to the high school and support an older child in the university.

Good agriculture practices learned through the SPRING FFS helped 14,370 farmers produce yields more likely to be aflatoxin-free. After receiving training and follow-up visits from Ministry of Food and Agriculture staff, FFS participants report reaping a higher yield within that same farming season.

Because of her zeal for putting her FFS knowledge into



A group of female farmers weeding on their farm. Through SPRING/Ghana’s farmer field school, farmers like these learn good agronomic practices.

practice, and her subsequent award, Ganabi has gained prestige in the community and now serves as a peer mentor, giving advice to her fellow community members.

While Ganabi looks forward to an increase in her groundnut yield in subsequent years, SPRING will continue to explore additional opportunities to help other farmers in the district. Ganabi also hopes she’ll win the best farmer award one more time.

As of September 2016, SPRING/Ghana has trained 14,370 groundnut farmers, of which 10,710 are women.

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