

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- *FG launched agriculture roadmap, "The Green Alternative"*Page 1
- *Security breach: Count us out, says Indorama*Page 2
- *IFDC held Listening Sessions on Strategic Plans for Staff and Stakeholders* Page 2
- *On the two major Nigeria-based companies accused of aiding terrorists*Page 3
- *Fertilizer Market Report for August 2016*Page 4

FG launched agriculture roadmap, "The Green Alternative"



R-L: Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbeh, Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Ogbonnaya Onu, Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dr Kayode Fayemi, during the official launch of the "The Green Alternative: Agriculture Promotion Policy 2016-2020", in Abuja

THE Federal Government has launched the agricultural sector roadmap, "The Green Alternative", for promotion of agriculture from year 2016-2020.

Present at the launching was, the Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, the Ministers of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbeh, Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Ogbonnaya Onu, Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dr Kayode Fayemi, representatives of Fertilizer Producers and Suppliers Association of Nigeria (FEPSAN), other dignitaries and stakeholders in the agriculture value chain.

The presentation was made by the Vice President, who said government would deploy 100,000 agric extension workers to assist farmers implement the policy.

He maintained that the move to diversify the economy through the agriculture sector had become necessary due to the huge food importation bill and the need to create jobs for the teeming population of youth in the country.

He also expressed optimism that the roadmap would address challenges in the sector and reposition it for economic growth and development. "There is no question at all that if we get agriculture right, we will get our economy right. The great clarity, 'The Green Alternative', sets out strategies to resolve these challenges and particularly impressed that the roadmap does not dismiss the agric policies 'building on the successes of the agricultural agenda'. "This particular issue of alignment is crucial, for instance, there is no way we can encourage agriculture than to encourage food production when we allow unbridled importation of the same things we are trying to produce".

According to the Vice President, the home-grown school feeding program will have one meal a day for pupils and specifically the food will be from farms in each state. He also assured that the Bank of Agriculture would be recapitalized and repositioned to meet farmers' financial need by giving them loans at single digit interest rate.

Speaking earlier, Chief Audu Ogbeh said the roadmap for the sector was all encompassing and would salvage the economy from

collapse. He said: "In this policy, you will see us navigating through the agricultural terrain, trucking on virtually every aspect. The emphasis on 'Green' is to capture the essence, spirit and orientation of this new policy/strategy document."

In his closing remark, the Minister of State for Agriculture, Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, who was represented by Dr Shehu Ahmed, the Permanent Secretary of the ministry said effective implementation of the policy required a systematic collaboration among the stakeholders.

"One significant element of this desire is the relevance & suitability of support institutions as an integral process of facilitating the consultative, coordinating and regulatory roles in the sector.

"In this regard, government's responsibility is to continuously put in place measures that will restructure, re-orientate and strengthen the relevant national institutions as well as utilize the opportunities offered by our international cooperating partners.

FEPSAN: Culled from Vanguard Newspaper

Security breach: Count us out, says Indorama

The Management of Indorama Eleme Fertilizer and Chemicals (IEFCL) denied involvement in the alleged sabotage of the national economy and security through their export of fertilizers to the detriment of Nigerian farmers.

The company said that all its domestic supplies to customers so far are in accordance with the approval of the Office of the National Security Adviser (NSA) and the Farm Input Supply Services (FISS) department of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

“Indorama Eleme Fertilizer & Chemicals Limited (IEPL) and its sister companies in Nigeria are NOT, and HAVE NOT, and would NEVER be directly or indirectly involved in any activities to undermine or sabotage the economy or security of the nation,” it said.

Dr. Jossy Nkwocha, spokesman for the company said that its new \$1.5 billion fertilizer plant, one of Nigeria’s largest foreign direct investment in the downstream sector — started pre-commissioning production only recently at 75% capacity, and in the past one month has been giving priority to the domestic market.

Nkwocha stated that IEFCL has been loading and distributing an average of between 90 – 100 long trailers of fertilizers, each carrying 600 bags of 50kg each, totaling over 57,000 bags of



Dr. Jossy Nkwocha, Head Corporate Communications/MD's office, Indorama Eleme Fertilizer & Chemicals Limited.

urea fertilizer daily over the past one month for the benefit of Nigerian farmers.

“Indorama-Nigeria is 100 percent committed to the growth and development of the Nigerian economy; and has in the past ten years demonstrated such total commitment and loyalty by providing more than 85% domestic needs of polymers which were hitherto imported into the country at huge foreign exchange cost.” **Culled from the Nation Newspaper**

IFDC held Listening Sessions on Strategic Plans for Staff and Stakeholders



Participants During the strategic Stakeholders listening session

The International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) recently held a strategic plan listening sessions for staff and stakeholders on the 9th of August at the IFDC Office in Abuja. Dr. Scott Angle the new President/ Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IFDC has as one of his priorities the need to develop a new strategic plan based on input of staff and stakeholders across the world.

Mr. Mohammed Salasi, IFDC Country Representative, Nigeria, while giving the over view of IFDC, said stakeholders’ point of view in planning is important to any organization that is planning to get it right even in the face of commendable achievements, and called on participants to contribute positively during the session.

Dr. Kofi Debrah, the Chief of Party of IFDC implemented USAID Feed the Future project moderated the discussions.

Participants drawn from various organizations along the fertilizer value chain were given opportunity to interact and brainstorm on issues ranging from key events internal/external that affected IFDC’s work in the last 5 years, its proud achievements, strengths, weaknesses, uniqueness and issues holding IFDC back.

The Fertilizer Producers and Suppliers Association of Nigeria (FEPSAN) and other stakeholders suggested possible goals that IFDC should pursue in the next 5 years, some of which include: IFDC to enhance working relationship with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture by active participation in the Green Alternative initiative to implement the policies and programs to help achieve food sufficiency, food security and job creation; develop location and crop specific fertilizer formations; strengthen partnership with other Associations and players along the fertilizer value chain; build capacity of agro dealers to improve agro input supply in rural communities; etc.

In conclusion of the fruitful interactions, IFDC said it would collate all the goals as they have been suggested, filter them and present to their headquarters, for possible adoption. **FEPSAN**

On the two major Nigeria-based companies accused of aiding terrorists

Thecable.ng August 07, 2016 11:09 by Ebuka Nwankwo

The National Security Adviser (NSA) has accused two major Nigeria-based companies of sabotaging the government's fight against terrorism and militancy. Babagana Monguno accused Notore and Indorama Eleme Petrochemicals of being the conduit through which some terrorists get their fertilizer-based explosives. Presently, only Notre and Indorama import Urea Nitrates, which are used in making fertilizers. And the NSA says that the Improvised Explosives Devices used by terrorists in Nigeria are made from these Urea Nitrates.

In issuing the riot act to these companies, the visibly angry NSA made other allegations: apart from aiding terrorists, Monguno accused these companies of sabotaging the economy by exporting fertilizers that ought to be used in the country. In fact, he implied that they had vested interests.

The NSA accused these companies of exporting most of their products, thereby creating scarcity in-country. These threats were unnecessary and should not have been allowed to get to the public domain. Instead, the NSA should have gone back to his drawing board and figured out how best to regulate these companies. It is obvious that the present regulations have failed.

First, as researcher [my PhD thesis was on strengthening materials to resist blast and explosions], I know the problem is actually with Carbon-Hydrogen- Oxygen-Nitrogen compounds. And these compounds are used in many chemical companies. These compounds are referred to as "precursor chemicals" – industrial reagents that could be used in making explosives. The question is: do we close down all major chemical companies in Nigeria because the proliferation of explosives in Nigeria is actually alarming. For instance, Nitroglycerin is explosive but could be used in making medicines for people with heart conditions and chest pains. Even a very explosive compound called Nitrocellulose is used in making tennis balls and nail polishes. And off course, the very explosive Ammonium Nitrate is used in making fertilizers, while Nitroguanidine can be used in making pesticides. Another compound, Potassium Nitrate, which could be used in making gun powder, can also be used in making preservatives.

Some explosives such as Dinitrotoluene, which is mainly used in waterproofing explosives and making gun powder, can be banned out rightly. But, some others actually have multiple uses and could be abused by miscreants.



National Security Adviser; Babagana Monguno

And this is where we need to put on our thinking caps on how to regulate these chemicals. Though most countries are trying to find alternatives to very explosive compounds like Tetryl and TNT, many mining companies need them in Nigeria. And Nigeria is presently looking up to mining in order to shore up its revenues. From the economic point of view, you cannot give a business some kind of arbitrage and expect it to be ethical. And this is why you have governments to check their excesses.

So, what could be done? In the US, there is an Act which stipulates the requirements that should be met by organizations handling these chemicals. And this is where we should start from. We need to make our laws on the handling of these chemicals and explosives up to date.

We could adopt California's law on the control of explosives. The State requires that companies obtain a permit to manufacture, distribute, receive or possess, transport, use, operate a terminal for storing and handling, or park vehicles carrying these chemicals. We could go further by investing on the computerization and tracking of these chemicals. These investments could be partly funded by companies handling these chemicals.

This is possible. After all, the UAE has a very sophisticated system which it uses to track every drop of oil produced in the kingdom – from the ground to the refineries and to the gas stations.

For now, threatening two major companies with a combined investment of over \$4 billion is not the way to go in a recession. I agree with the NSA that security comes first, but the dangers of sending wrong signals that could be given a political undertone still exist.

Culled from the Cable.ng

Fertilizer Market Report for August 2016

Summary of Local Fertilizer Market Prices

The average fertilizer prices across the states increased by 19.36% for Urea, 13.13% for NPK and 11.99% for SSP compared to average fertilizer prices of July, 2016. Average fertilizer price of NPK is now 44.74% higher, Urea is now 66.51% higher, SSP is now 43.66% higher compared to August, 2015. The available fertilizer brands in the market were Golden, Tak-Agro, Solar, Afcott, Ebonyi fertilizer, Notore, Superphosphate Fertilizer, Wacot, Elephant, Indorama, Bauchi Blend, Stallion, Kaffo Mines, Olam, Diamond, MBS Merchants, Betta and Springfield. In the open market NPK sold between N6, 200 – N9,750, Urea N6, 500 – N11, 250, SSP N4,800 – N8,000, Agrolyser N750 –N1,500

Farmers and Agro dealers' views on the Fertilizer Market Situation

Bauchi state agro dealers met with federal government to address lingering problems associated with fertilizer supplies. Benue state farmers want government to intervene in the current fertilizer situation to ensure food security. Ebonyi state agro dealer said farmers still buy fertilizer despite the price increase. Ekiti state agro dealers complained of low patronage by farmers due to high cost of fertilizer. Edo state agro dealers affirmed that they were paid 25% of their outstanding debt for 2014 GESS and farmers complained of high price of fertilizer. Kaduna state agro dealers said fertilizer scarcity pushes the prices up. Kano state agro dealers complained of high cost of fertilizer caused by fluctuation of the dollar. Oyo state agro dealers complained of Urea scarcity pushing the price up in the market. Zamfara state agro dealers complained of drop in sales due to high prices of fertilizer, some buy fertilizer on loan to pay later. In many states farmers had to reduce the hectares cultivated due to lack of finance to purchase fertilizers

Brief on GESS and other agricultural activities

Bauchi state government fertilizer distribution to farmers is ongoing. Edo state is registering farmers for the CBN anchor borrowers program. Ekiti state government had embarked on planting of trees to serve as wind break. Imo state government had started "back to farm" an initiative to encourage farming among civil servants by allowing them to work for only three days in a week. Kaduna state continues distribution of inputs to farmers under the CBN anchor program but farmers complained of non-disbursement of labor costs into their account. Niger state CNB anchor borrowers' program distribution of inputs to farmers had commenced. IFAD Projects assisted extension agents working under the programs with motorcycles for effective extension delivery to farmers. In Oyo state federal ministry of agriculture and rural development said to participate as an agro dealer in 2016 GES agro dealer must have in stock minimum of 120 tons (2,400 bags) of fertilizers and farmers without mobile phones will not benefit from the program. Taraba state government to partner with Germany in training of youth in modern technology to boost food production

International Fertilizer Prices as at 17th August 2016

S/N	Fertilizer Types	Price (US\$ /ton)
1	Urea Prilled	345
2	DAP	453
3	MAP	482
4	MOP	344
5	Ammonia	522
6	UAN 28	249
7	UAN 32	299

The significantly lower retail fertilizer prices are not a surprise, according to retailers. Most appear content to wait for the low in the market to occur before they release fall fill prices. Rob Fritz, senior agronomist for Hefty Seeds based in Baltic, South Dakota, wrote in the Aug. 9 edition of the Fertilizer and Equipment Gazette email newsletter that fall fertilizer prices could be lower. "From all indicators, it looks like fertilizer will be lower and possibly much lower than last season," Fritz wrote. Urea prices are already "much lower" than the previous year, he said. This, in turn will pressure the liquid nitrogen market to drop, so he is expecting to see big moves lower. Fritz added that phosphorus and potash prices are currently fairly flat at this time. However, these fertilizers too could have lower fall fill prices in the coming weeks. DTN

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