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EDUCATION BOARD**

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**TAI SOLARIN UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
CENTRE, IJAGUN, IJEBU-ODE, OGUN STATE**

Present

A 4 - day workshop tagged

**EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING
OF BASIC SCIENCE PRACTICE IN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OGUN STATE**

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GROWING BETTER CROPS

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Introduction

No occupation involves such varied knowledge and skills as farming, it involves the great percentage of the populace worldwide and no day passes without the slightest movement of everyone with the times in agriculture directly or indirectly. Its major product-“food” is the engine that propels life in all and sundry.

The “better” crops as used in this paper presentation refers to quality crops that came from the farm for human consumption. In the course of producing the quality crops, several activities are undertaken in sequential manner. Teachers of agriculture, must be abreast of techniques of classroom situations and classroom experiences.

Teaching of agriculture involves the identification and the provision of ideal opportunities to enable the learners acquire and demonstrate the objectives of agricultural education as and when needed. The opportunities to be provided by the teacher are usually in the form of developing and using appropriate content materials in pedagogically integrated manner so as to ensure that an

appreciable clearly defined learning.

Learning outcomes implied here are:

- ✍ Creative thinking
- ✍ Speed and accuracy
- ✍ Entrepreneurial skills
- ✍ Risk taking skills
- ✍ Patriotism
- ✍ Professional values and ethics etc

It therefore follows that strategic teaching of agriculture should:

- ✍ Plan for a meaningful and functional agricultural education
- ✍ Implement a functional agricultural education
- ✍ Evaluate a functional agricultural education within the framework that it is relevant and of high quality for that society
- ✍ Be accessible and non-disciplinary
- ✍ Enhance students and teachers work
- ✍ Encourages inter-disciplinary cooperation
- ✍ Achieve human development and national empowerment

The present Universal Basic Education (UBE) encourages strategic teaching of all subjects including Agriculture, in that it:

- ✍ has vision, and is timeless in operations
- ✍ contains all elements of a functional education viz:
 - content

- relevance to societal needs
- teacher education and manpower development

Classification of Agricultural Crops

Cereals	Legumes	Tuber	Vegetables	Tree/fruit crops	Latex/oil crops	Fibres	Drugs	Beverage
Maize	Beans	Yam	Leafy	Mango	Coconut	Cotton	Tobacco	Cocoa
Rice	Soya beans	Cassava	Celostia	Guava	Oil palm	Jute	Indian hemp	Coffee
Wheat	Groundnuts	Cocoyam	Anonratins	Cashew	Rubber	Sisal		
Millet	Melon	Carrot	Eluted pumpkin	Apple	Caster oil	Flax		
Guinea Corn		Ginger	Jews mellow					
Barley		Radish	Bitter leaf					
Oat			Water leaf					
Rye								
			<i>Fruit</i>					
			Pepper					
			Otho					
			Tomato					

From the comprehensive list, one can then decide on a crop to be planted.

Farming and Cultivation Practices

Several programs motivated by government in the past and in recent times have led credence to the fact that farming is a specialised enterprise. The wrong notion that agriculture is a low remunerative and dirty profession which anyone without any special skill, training or expertise can venture into is fast disappearing in the society.

It is an established fact that one requires special skills to till the soil and plant crops. This is a fraction of the complex concept of farming.

What are Cultivation Practices?

It is the sum of all experiences from the conception of an idea of planting a crop up to marketing. Cultivation practices can be further broken down thus;

(a) Pre-planting operations

- Choice of farm
- Farm layout
- Clearing
- Stumping
- Ridging (Depending on the crop)
- Mulching (If required)

(b) Planting operation – The actual planting of the crop on the farm (nursery, field or the main farm)

(c) Post planting operations

- Thinning and supplying

- Fertilizer application
- Weeding (Depending on the period to maturity)
- Stalking / Pruning
- Harvesting
- Storage
- Processing

(d) Marketing – farm ventures

Quality Requirements of Crops

- Must be able to withstand presentation.
- The edible parts (leaves, roots, stems, fruits) must not have been unnecessarily exposed.
- Must have regenerative qualities
- Must not deteriorate in the storage house.
- Must maintain freshness.
- Crop products must not be contaminated with foreign materials
- The moisture content, if dried, must be considerably maintained to prevent deterioration in storage.
- The quality of the products must be such that will be of added value.
- Must maintain their nutritive value.
- Must be handled with care during processing to avoid contamination.

Educational Implications

Objectives can be achieved when the teaching-learning processes

in agricultural education are sequential and complex. For the processes to be meaningful, they need direction, in the form of the proper components of the selection of curriculum contents, experience given activities, standard criteria and adequate evaluation in order to be of immense benefits to the learners.

In agricultural education, the major consideration is the effectiveness of skills and knowledge in practical terms, which could be best achieved by ensuring that:

- The environment in which teaching-learning takes place, should be such that students will participate actively.
- Students learn best when they are ready to learn and also show interest in what is taught.
- It is easier for learners to receive instruction, make progress in learning when they have a strong purpose and a fixed reason for learning.
- The more often we use the knowledge we have learned, the better we can perform or understand it as continuous practice and repetition leads to perfection.
- Learning something new is much easier if it is built upon something the learners already know a little about i.e. from simple to complex concepts.
- Learning cannot be complete until the knowledge gained is put into practice.

For teaching-learning process to be meaningful, the teacher must be able to convey ideas through classroom instruction freely

to the learners. He should:

- a. sell himself first and then his ideas later
- b. be genuine
- c. make ideas and concept relevant
- d. practice good setting
- e. encourage outside and on-site lectures when appropriate
e.g. visit to pastures, erosion site, agric engineering workshop, fish pond, etc.
- f. provide orderly classroom setting
- g. dress appropriately and maintain proper rapport in the classroom
- h. make the most effective of reality in the classroom.

Summary and Conclusion

Better crops or quality crops as used here, refers to crops that have the full complements of nutritional qualities for human needs. Crops when properly produced on the farm may occasionally depreciate in quality if improperly processed or stored under unhygienic conditions. Anti-nutritional factors may occur as a result of excess heat, poor storage, poor processing, poor packaging, undue exposure, bruises, contaminations etc. As teachers of agriculture, we must transmit quality agricultural education to serve as the mode of development of today's youths in the society through a positive change in farming. As the youths develop, two complimentary factors – the environment and heredity influence the youths' educational experiences and we

must take advantage of these to prepare them for future challenges through a window of opportunities.

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