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BACK-TO-STATION REPORT ON USAID PEANUT CRSP  
PROJECT VISIT TO UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, USA.

BY

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## **1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to express my profound gratitude to Dr. Jonathan Tim Williams, the Programme Director, Peanut Collaborative Research Support Programme, for the opportunity of inviting me to the USA to take part in the peanut project activities as well as participating in the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012.

I am grateful to the Director General, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Ghana, as well as the Director, CSIR-Food Research Institute (FRI), for the permission granted me to travel to the USA for the programme. I thank you so much.

My sincere thanks go to the UGA-GP3M team and all the support staff at University of Georgia, Griffin Campus. I salute you for all you did to make my stay a comfortable one in Georgia, USA.

## **2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As part of orientation and future project activity planning for the newly appointed leader of the USAID Peanut CRSP Project in CSIR-FRI, Ghana, the University of Georgia-Global Peanut Project, Processing and Marketing Team (UGA-GP3M) in Georgia, USA invited me, Mr. Gregory A. Komlaga, to spend few days in USA in order to review and plan project activities as well as discuss associated budgets. The visit also offered me the opportunity to participate in the 3-day Georgia Peanut Tour 2012 which offered me the exposure to the peanut industry in the USA, particularly in Georgia. I left Ghana on September 15, 2012 and arrived in Atlanta, Georgia on September 16, 2012. I was met on arrival by a representative of the UGA-GP3M team in Atlanta airport and I lodged in Best Western Hotel in Griffin, Georgia from September 16 to 17, 2012. Work started on the 17th of September but I had to travel to Albany, Georgia where the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012 took place. I left Griffin on September 18, 2012 morning for the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012 in the company of Eftila Tanellari, a representative of the UGA-GP3M team. The peanut tour programme started at 3pm on September 18, 2012 with what was termed "Hot Topics" seminar. The tour continued on the 19th with visits to commercial farms, National Peanut Research Laboratory and Peanut processing industries. The tour ended on September 20, 2012 with visits to University of Georgia irrigation research fields and peanut

processing factories. I returned to Griffin, Georgia on the 20th of September, 2012 after the Tour in Albany. Final discussions on the Peanut CRSP project activities were held with the UGA-GP3M team on September 20, 2012. The rest of the period (September 22 to 27) was used for sightseeing in the USA. I departed USA on 29th of September 2012 and arrived in Accra on 30th of September 2012.

### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

Peanut CRSP activity has since its inception in 1982, been particularly important to the realization of the goals of USAID because peanut is one of the most important crops in many areas of the developing world, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. This crop provides an important source of purchasing power to its small-scale farmers, many of whom are women. The peanut is nutritious and versatile and thus promotes health and family welfare and value-adding industries in developing countries. Because local markets exist for peanuts, they provide an essential opportunity for small-scale subsistence farmers to purchase inputs, such as fertilizers, needed to make farming sustainable. Substantial technical and economic advancement has occurred in many PCRSP host countries because of collaborative research between U.S. and national scientists. Since 2007 a renewed Peanut CRSP has been organized around a value chain approach with research projects addressing producer values, processor values and consumer values. A constant feature of the program has been the emphasis on capacity development and aflatoxin. The program has become a leading center for aflatoxin epidemiology and public health associated with aflatoxicosis in developing countries.

CSIR-FRI became a collaborator on the above project participating in two key investigations since 2010. There was the need however in July 2012 to have a project leader in FRI who will coordinate all the activities of the two investigations in the institute. Mr. Gregory Afra Komlaga was appointed as the leader of the project effective July 1, 2012. As part of orientation and future project activity planning for the newly appointed leader of the USAID Peanut CRSP Project in CSIR-FRI, Ghana, the University of Georgia-Global Peanut Project, Processing and Marketing Team (UGA-GP3M) in Georgia, USA invited me to spend few days in USA in order to review

and plan project activities as well as associated budgets. The visit also offered me the opportunity to participate in a 3-day Georgia Peanut Tour to provide exposure to the peanut industry in the USA, particularly in Georgia. The main aim of the orientation and discussions during the visit was to equip me in planning future project activities.

#### **4.0 ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT DURING THE PERIOD OF THE VISIT**

##### **4.1 Project activities discussion with UGA-GP3PM team.**

Dr. Manjeet S. Chinnan and Dr. Anna V.A. Resurrecion, members of the UGA-GP3MP team, welcome me officially on Monday September 17, 2012 at 10:00am at the Griffin Campus of University of Georgia. Discussions were held shortly after exchange of pleasantries. The discussions held were on the agenda below;

1. Fiscal Status
2. Purchase of peanut mill
3. Templates: technical and fiscal
4. Tutorials: reporting and financials
5. Choco Peanut spread report
6. Aflatoxin report
7. Final report
8. December travel
9. Future activities: Products/processors, Aflatoxin-rapid testing laboratory, Database for networking, Trip report.

I presented the status of project funds for CSIR-FRI as at August ending 2012. A peanut grinder was to be bought by the project for FRI but would be loaned to CBA foods (collaborating private entrepreneur on the project) for processing the Peanut Choco Spread. Prq-forma invoices were to be sought from dealers and forwarded to the team for further action. I was taken through tutorials on technical and financial reporting based on the agreed project reporting format after which exercises were carried out on such formats. I had Lunch with the UGA-GP3MP team, the Peanut CRSP programme Director, Dr. Jonathan Tim Williams, two south Africans from SG Groundnut Marketing (Mr. Alfonso Visser, Mr. Hector Lazarus) who were also in Georgia to participate in the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012 and Ms. Eftila Tanellari.



I was introduced to the Peanut CRSP programme Director, Dr. J. Tim Williams after lunch in his office by the UGA-GP3MP team. Discussions were held with the Director, key among which were;

The need to acquire a peanut grinder for FRI and loaned to CBA based on a MOU. This is brought about as a result of high demands for the Peanut Choco Spread product launch.

The idea of re-scheduling the December 2012 travel time for the UGA-GP3MP team to Ghana.

The benefits of the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012.

The meeting and discussions with the Director of the programme lasted for two (2) hours. I returned with the UGA-GP3PM team to continue with discussions which started earlier in the day. I was informed by the UGA-GP3PM team that reports from investigators at FRI did not follow the project reporting format. This was discussed and the house agreed that investigators from FRI should re-write such reports to follow the project reporting format. This had since been communicated to all investigators. The reports were expected by middle of October 2013 to enable the UGA-GP3PM team to put the final reports together. The meeting also discussed future plans for the project. This included the establishment of aflatoxin-rapid testing lab for FRI. I was tasked to liaise with the team members working at the aflatoxin laboratory, FRI, to write a proposal for establishing such a facility at FRI. I was tasked to inform Mr. George Anyebuno, the Officer at FRI responsible for the aflatoxin work, to follow-up on the poster presented at Brazil on aflatoxin in peanuts and make an updated abstract for submission to IFT for next year's conference. The last date for the submission of the abstract to the UGA-GP3MP team is November 15, 2012. The meeting ended at about 5pm with arrangements put in place for movement from Griffin to Albany, Georgia where the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012 took place. Final discussions were held with the team after the tour on September 21, 2012 at Griffin Campus, UGA on future project activities.

## **4.2 The Georgia Peanut Tour 2012.**

I left Griffin at 11:30am on September 18, 2012 for Albany, Georgia in the company of Eftila Tanellari for the Georgia Peanut Tour 2012. The journey by road took us about two and a half hours. We checked-in to our hotel rooms and registered at Mercy Acres, the official lodge for participants of the tour, just after arriving in Albany. The "Hot Issues" seminar with special focus on Peanut Disease Management started at 3pm just after registration. The Chairman for the 2012 tour, Dr. John Beasley, officially welcomed all participants and declared the tour opened. He however stated that the official orientation for the tour was scheduled for the morning of September 19, 2012. He finally handed over the affairs of the afternoon to Dr. Yen-Con Hung who was the MC for the afternoon. The MC introduced the six (6) speakers for the afternoon one after the other after which they delivered speeches on the various topics listed for discussion. Fifteen (15) minutes was allocated to each speaker after which five (5) minutes comments and question time was allowed. The various topics and their respective speakers were as follows;

1. Update on 2012 Georgia Peanut Crop -Dr. John Beasley
2. Peanut policy and market updates -Dr. Stanley Fletcher
3. Peanut Diseases, now and then: three decades of Georgia Peanut Diseases – Dr. Alexander Csinos
4. How to develop new fungicide: an industry perspective -Mr Keith Rucker
5. Peanut Disease prevention and control: an academy perspective – Dr. Timothy Brenneman
6. Peanut disease farm testing and treatment decision –Dr. Bob Kemerait.

The programme for the day came to a close at 6:00pm.

The tour resumed on September 19, 2012 morning with an orientation and information about the programme line-up for the day by the Chairman of the tour. Participants set off at exactly 8:30am in a convoy of a bus and several cars with police escort. The first point of call was Israel Farm, a commercial peanut farm at Sumter County. Demonstrations were carried out on harvesting of peanut mechanically at the farm. The second point of call was Smithville Peanut, a peanut buying point. Participants were conducted round the company and given explanations as what is

done on daily basis at the factory. Participants visited another commercial peanut farm, Neil Lee farm, Terrel County just before lunch. Lunch was served at Terrell County Extension Office at Dawson. The team visited the National Peanut Research Lab after lunch. We were conducted round and given a tour of all the research work that was on-going. The last point of call for the day was JLA Global, a peanut quality control testing laboratory. We were conducted round the lab as what they do to support the peanut industry. One of the key analysis that is carried out at JLA Global on peanut products is aflatoxin analysis. We had dinner after the long day's work at Chehaw Park Education Centre in Albany and this brought the second day of the tour to a close.

The third and final day of the tour started just after breakfast. We set off as usual at 8:30am in a convoy with police escort. The first point of call was Thrush Aircraft, a crop duster manufacturer at Albany. We were conducted round the plant of the company after which questions were asked and comments made by participants to Management of the company. The next point of call was University of Georgia Peanut Irrigation Park at Camilla. We were conducted round the field where we had briefing by researchers on various research projects that were on-going in the field. The research works were all sponsored by the peanut industry and this was revealing. We had lunch at Plant Mitchell, Electric power at Albany. We had briefing just after lunch by personnel at Electric Power and departed to Tara Foods, a peanut butter processing factory. We were conducted round the factory as what goes on in terms of the processes for producing the peanut butter from the peanuts.. We were given peanut butter presents and served with a lot of peanut snacks to consume at the factory premises after the tour. Participats were very grateful to Management of Tara Foods for the opportunity. The last and final factory" visited for the day was Birdsong Peanut, a peanut shelling company. We were as usual conducted round the entire company facilities to witness all that go on in the factory. The company buys raw peanuts, cleans them up and shells them for industry use. Sampling is done to :assure quality before consignments are accepted by the plant for further processing. Participants left the company very satisfied with operations of the company and thanked Management for the opportunity. The last item for the day was dinner. Participants were hosted to a dinner at Southern Woods Plantation in Sylvester to crown the tour. The tour officially came to a close after the dinner.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The visit was very beneficial to me in that it gave me the insight to what the peanut industry is doing in USA, particularly in Georgia. I have also realized that much of the research that is carried out is supported by stakeholders in the industry in USA. Much has also been learnt from the UGA-GP3MP team about reporting formats and planning of activities on the project.