

Cooperative Ventures Grant Project Report.

Benin June 2021

Project Title: Training on postharvest solar drying of Pineapples.

Project Implementation Organization: NatureHarvest (Frederick Mbah).

Project Dates: 25 to 27 June 2021.

Location: l'Union Départementale des Producteurs de l'Atlantique (UDP-ATL) Allada Benin.

The Training program took place at the **l'Union Départementale des Producteurs de l'Atlantique (UDP-ATL) Allada Benin**. An outreach and sensitisation program was carried out to meet the target audience in Atlantique Department of Allada and Abomey-Calavi the main pineapple production zone in Benin. Targeted participants underwent a registration process to be selected for the training by filling a registration form in which they answered some questions including brief explanations on why they will like to take part in the training program and what they will do after the training program if selected to participate. The forms were to be filled and submitted to the organizing organization before the training program dates.

At the end of the registration process, 27 registration forms were submitted and were carefully reviewed. The 10 that demonstrated the best reasons, interests for the training and needs were approved.

Prior to commencing the training, 3 preparatory meetings were held; (1) A meeting was held with the cooperative organizations on the preparation and how to engage the target audience. (2) Meeting was held with partners on outreach program, dissemination of registration forms, preparation of training venue, assembly of training materials etc. (3) Meeting was held to review participants registration forms and prospective participants notified through phone calls and invited to take part in the training program.

The participants; 7 males and 3 females representing pineapple producer cooperatives, groups and wholesale buyers were selected, notified and invited to take part in the postharvest training program scheduled to take place at the meeting hall of **l'Union Départementale des Producteurs de l'Atlantique (UDP-ATL) Allada**. In cooperation with **Coopérative de Valorisation des Produits et sousproduits Agricoles (COVAPA-SEGBEDJI)** and

l'Union Départementale des Producteurs de l'Atlantique (UDP-ATL) Allada Benin, the training was scheduled to take place from the 25th to 30th of June 2021.

On the first day of the training program during greetings and self introduction phase, participants expressed a situation concerning the number of training days and requested if the number of training days can be reduced due to some other livelihood activities they are engaged in during the weekly days such as harvesting and marketing of their produce and other activities. The situation was looked into and considered, the training was then compressed to take place for 3 days.

Prior to end of training, participants were handed out evaluation forms to answer a few questions about the training. The overall expression was impressive with participants expressing their enthusiasm, some indicated how they have started constructing their solar dryers and also extended greetings and expressed gratitude to the sponsoring organization; **The Postharvest Education Foundation PEF**.

At the end of the training, instead of digital thermometers initially intended to be awarded to trainees, digital scales (1gm to 5000gm) were distributed alongside end of training attestation to all participants.

A follow up mechanism (WhatsApp Group) was created and named; **Post-recolte Ananas** where all participants joined to give feedback of the implementation of their skills and for follow up.



Figure 1. Presentation of solar radiation black absorption surface of a solar dryer, how it works and how to construct.



Figure 2. Presentation on how to construct a solar dryer



Figure 3. Presentation of a solar dryer and how it works



Figure 4. Participants curiously watching a video presentation on solar drying of pineapples



Figure 5. Postharvest training program introduction taken at the entrance of the training venue



Figure 6. A general photo of all participants, project initiator and cooperative partners' organization representative



Figure 7. Photo of trainees after receiving end of training attestation and digital scales



Figure 8. Frederick Mbah handing an Attestation/Award to a female trainee during end of training ceremony



Figure 9. Frederick Mbah handing Attestation /Award to a trainee during end of training ceremony



Figure 10. Handing Attestation/Award to the first trainee who started constructing his solar dryer before end of training.



Figure 11. End of training handing over ceremony



Figure 12 Photo of trainees practicing how to put sliced pineapples in a solar dryer rack and solar dry.



Figure 13. Photo taken after general and self introductions on first day of arrival



Figure 14. Frederick Mbah; lecturing participants on postharvest handling of pineapples.



Figure 15. Photo of trainees curiously looking during more lectures on how to solar dry pineapples as a business.