

## Progress review meeting held for Gratitude project- reducing waste from root and tuber crops

All partners of the FP7 project 'Gratitude' gathered recently (22<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> April) in Bangkok, Thailand to conduct a successful mid-term review planning meeting.

Presentations were given by each of the project's eight research package leaders on what has been achieved so far on the proposed tasks. The team also discussed the issues and challenges that need to be addressed in order to reach the mid-term review targets. The Nigeria team participated in the review meeting via a video conference from Ikoyi, Lagos state.



**Cross-section of the Nigeria team at the mid-term review meeting (through video conferencing)**

The Gratitude project (Gains from Losses of Roots and Tubers), which involves partners from three continents; Africa, Asia and Europe, facilitates the interaction between Asia and Africa on solutions that will reduce waste from postharvest losses of root and tuber crops cassava and yam.

'Gratitude' is led by the Natural Resources Institute and funded by the European Union Seventh Framework Programme.

The presentations and discussions that took place during this meeting were particularly useful for connecting the partners in the 'south' who shared information on methods for utilising the waste from cassava, for example the peels and stalks. Prof. LateefSanni who is the leader of workpackage 6 and the Country coordinator presented progress made on workpackage 6 online through video conferencing.

Communications was a key topic discussed at the meeting. Participants were provided with materials and guidelines to increase the impact of the project's communications strategy.

One particular challenge highlighted during the meeting was the difficulty of researching food safety for food product development in Nigeria and Ghana.

As part of the meeting, to gain an understanding of the cassava industry in Thailand, participants were given the opportunity to tour a cassava starch based sweetener manufacturer, Chao KhunAgroproducts, where they could observe the whole process. They also visited Namfon farms, a dairy farm in the Saraburi Province of Thailand, which uses cassava chips for feeding their 3,000 cattle because of the high carbohydrate content of cassava.

Dr NanamDziedzoave from the Food Research Institute in Ghana said of the visit: "It has been interesting to see the set up at Chao KhunAgroproducts because the process of syrup making is something we have been trying very much to develop in Ghana. To see it operating live is very encouraging."

The meeting was a success. Professor Keith Tomlins, the Gratitude Project Coordinator says: "The meeting in Thailand demonstrated the interesting comparisons and insights between the cassava value chains in each country, and how waste is currently managed. We are making progress in understanding ways to improve the storage life of yams, develop new products and find new uses for waste products. It is great to see new links being forged between partners in Africa and Asia and to see future visits being planned. I very much appreciate the effort and contribution everyone is making and look forward to the next steps in the project."

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### About the funder

The European Commission (EC) is the executive body of the European Union (EU) and represents the interested of Europe as a whole (as opposed to the interests of individual countries). The EC is responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the Union's treaties and day-to-day running of the EU. The term 'commission' refers to both the college of commissioners and the institution itself – which has its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium with offices in Luxembourg. [http://ec.europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm)

### About the project

Gratitude (Gains from Losses of Root and Tuber Crops), led by the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Greenwich UK, in collaboration with 15 other organisations, will help find solutions that will reduce waste from postharvest losses of root and tuber crops and turn



unavoidable waste into something of value, enhancing the role these crops play in food and income security. Gratitude is a European Union FP7 project. <https://www.fp7-gratitude.eu/>

### **About Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB)**

The University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) is one of the three universities of agriculture established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in January 1988. FUNAAB provides teaching, research, and extension services including consultancy, training and advisory services to ensure sustainable agricultural development, income generation and poverty alleviation in Nigeria. FUNAAB has a programme of work focussed on pre- and post-harvest issues on tropical commodities such as cassava, yam, banana, cocoyam, sweet potato as well as other staple food crops, industrial and livestock sectors in Nigeria. FUNAAB have collaborated with Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Greenwich UK since 1999. These collaborations have included: DFID funded project on commercialisation of a traditional cassava product; EC-funded CASSAVA-SMEs project; Bill and Melinda Gates funded Cassava: Adding Value for Africa (C:AVA) project and the EU-ACP science and technology project on root and tuber crops. <http://www.unaab.edu.ng>