

15th African Cashew Alliance (ACA) Annual Cashew Conference
A Sustainable Cashew Supply Chain for the Future - September 15-17, 2021
Speech by the Hon. Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture

The Hon. Minister for Commerce, Industry and Handicrafts, Burkina Faso

The Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Cameroon

The Hon. Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Benin

Fellow Government officials and representatives

Representatives of Development and Financial Corporations and Agencies

The President of the African Cashew Alliance and Board Members

Cashew stakeholders

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is a great honour to join you today as we commence the 15th ACA Annual Cashew Conference. It has been a year since the Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Ghana hosted the first ACA online conference following the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic.
2. I must commend the African Cashew Alliance, for your perseverance in the face of this pandemic. The Alliance has not relented in supporting and providing the needed knowledge for stakeholders in the cashew industry not only here in Africa but across the globe.
3. During the previous year's conference, we had hope to have a physical conference, unfortunately with the prevalence of the coronavirus and its new variants, this became impossible. Nevertheless, the Alliance has again made it possible for us all to meet virtually.
4. Ladies and gentlemen, over the past year, we saw the coronavirus bring to bear the actual state of the cashew industry across the globe. Farmers were

not able to sell their produce as borders were closed and movements of goods and services were restricted. Indigenous processors could also not take advantage of the abundance of Raw Cashew Nuts (RCN) to increase their production.

5. I am reliably informed that about 70% of African cashew processors have shut down due to the extra burden of providing the right protective measures to enable them operate their factories safely. We have realized that, Africa was ill-prepared for such a thing like the covid 19 pandemic.
6. Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I could not agree any less when I was presented the theme for this year's conference, "A Sustainable Cashew Supply Chain". In the last decade, sustainability has been a repeating theme for ACA and I believe, in these times it should be considered more seriously. How do we safeguard the cashew industry for the future? How do we ensure the industry does not dwindle? Ladies and gentlemen, these questions around the sustainability for the future, I believe should encompass our discussions during the period of this conference.
7. Ladies and gentlemen, cashew in most African countries including Ghana, is the number one non-traditional export earner for the country. Africa has remained the major producer of cashew in the world with a record of 2.14 million tons of RCN produced this year, 2021, representing about 58.5% of the world's total production. This shows the enormous numbers of farm families whose livelihoods are dependent on the cashew sub-sector
8. In Ghana, the newly established Tree Crops Development Authority (TCDA), a body corporate set up by an Act of Parliament under the TCDA ACT, 2019 (ACT 1010) to regulate and develop the production, processing, and trading of six tree crops including cashew in a sustainable environment has commenced operations. I am aware that, under TCDA millions of cashew grafts or seedlings have been distributed to expand area under cultivation so that by 2030, the country could obtain about 300,000 MT of RCN for processing and for export trade. I must also say that, Series of stakeholders'

workshops are being conducted to ensure that, the right regulations and policies are developed for the performance of the Authority's functions.

9. The TCDA is looking forward to partnering with neighboring countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, among others in the framework of CICC being represented today by Hon. Harouna Kobore, to ensure the cashew sub-sector in Ghana and Africa as a whole, is well structured. At this point, I must say we are grateful for the support the African Cashew Alliance has and continue to provide to the Authority in its journey.
10. Ladies and Gentlemen, I must reiterate that, the Government of Ghana is committed to ensuring a cashew industry that is sustainable for the future. It is for this reasons that we are working with diverse national and international bodies, governments and non-governmental agencies, private and public sectors, to ensure we are leveraging on the best examples across the globe. We are convinced that, with the right knowledge exchange platform such as the ACA Conference, we will build a sector that is sustainable.
11. As I conclude, I wish to express our profound gratitude to everyone who has supported the cashew industry directly or indirectly, especially the African Cashew Alliance which over the years has not only benefitted Africa but the entire global cashew industry. Congratulations ACA!
12. Ladies and Gentlemen, I must say that, together, let us take the cashew industry another step further into what we envisage as sustainability
13. On behalf of the Hon. Minister for Food and Agriculture, I want to express our gratitude to all the Hon. Ministers from the different countries that are participating in this year's event.
14. I thank you for your kind attention!