

**SYSTEM
STRATEGY
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LAB**

Nigeria

**GREEN ECONOMY, SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY:**

**AN AGENDA FOR MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**



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“The best way to stand out is not to be different. It's to be better. Better at solving problems, better at creating value, better at delivering results” – Scott D. Clary



During the electioneering, President Bola Tinubu promised Nigerians to increase agricultural production to ensure sufficient food in the country and guarantee food security. To demonstrate the administration's seriousness about local production of agricultural produce, President Tinubu declared a state of emergency on food security in July 2023. At the end of the just concluded retreat for the Ministers, President Tinubu has redefined the priority areas of his administration into eight Key Results Areas KRA: KRA number 3. is *Boost Agriculture to Achieve Food Security*.

To ensure that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food Security translate President Tinubu's renewed hope agenda on Agriculture and Food Security there is a need for the Minister to set up Agriculture and Food Security Results Delivery Coordinating Unit. The establishment of an Agriculture and Food Security Results Delivery Coordinating Unit is essential to ensure that Nigeria can meet its food security goals, address

the challenges of a growing population, and contribute to sustainable agricultural development. It will enable the government to plan, implement, and monitor its agricultural programs, leading to improved results and outcomes for the sector more effectively.

Nigeria has 70.8 million hectares of agricultural land area with maize, cassava, guinea corn, yam beans, millet, and rice being the major crops. Animal production has remained underexploited. Livestock mostly reared by farm families in Nigeria are the small ruminants like goats (76 million), sheep (43.4 million), and cattle (18.4 million). The ecology in the northern part of the country makes it famous for livestock keeping. Nigeria is the largest fish consumer in Africa and among the largest fish consumers in the world with about 3.2 million metric tons of fish consumed annually. The contribution of forestry to agriculture and development in general cannot be overstressed. Nigeria's forest ecosystems are threatened by

rapid population growth and economic activities with annual deforestation rate ranging between 0.72 and 2.38 percent.

The world is being confronted with a multitude of crises, from food and fuel crises to climate and financial crisis. In the last few decades, 60 percent of the world's ecosystems have been degraded, global carbon emissions have risen by 40 percent, significant water, and oil scarcity may be less than a decade away, one billion people are going hungry, and another one billion people suffer from nutrition-related diseases, one in four people in developing countries live in absolute poverty, two billion people live on less than \$2 a day.

Nigerian agriculture faces a range of challenges that hinder its development and potential to contribute significantly to the country's economy. Many smallholder farmers lack access to affordable credit and financial services, which restricts their ability to invest in modern farming techniques, equipment, and inputs. Poor road networks, storage facilities, and transportation infrastructure result in significant post-harvest losses and reduce the value of agricultural products. Erratic weather patterns, including droughts and floods, affect crop yields and livestock production.



Climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies are essential. The majority of Nigerian farmers rely on traditional, labor-intensive methods, which limit productivity and income potential. Crops and livestock are vulnerable to a range of pests and diseases, leading to reduced yields and increased production costs. Inconsistent government policies and inadequate implementation of existing policies can create uncertainty for farmers and agribusinesses. The level of public and private investment in agriculture is below what is needed to drive significant growth and development in the sector. Insecurity in some parts of the country,

including farmer-herder conflicts and insurgency, disrupts farming activities and hinders food production.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and coordinated effort involving government policies, private sector engagement, research and development, infrastructure development, and support for smallholder farmers. Agricultural transformation can play a significant role in Nigeria's green economy, sustainable agricultural development, and food security. For Nigeria to safeguard the ecological systems, enhance agricultural productivity, stabilize the economy, and secure people's livelihoods there is a need to achieve food and nutrition security through an appropriate balance between domestic production and trade; contribute to achieving the right to adequate food for all; ensure decent rural livelihoods; and use traditional and scientific knowledge to maintain healthy ecosystems that integrate food production and respect natural resource constraint.

Nigeria's green economy potential can be realized through a coordinated effort involving government, private sector, civil society, and international partners. An emphasis on sustainability, environmental responsibility, and clean energy solutions can help drive growth in this important sector while addressing pressing environmental and social issues. Agriculture and Agribusiness are one of the pillars of the green economy. Organic farming and agroforestry can contribute to the green economy by promoting eco-friendly and socially responsible farming practices.

One of the ways to ensure that, President Tinubu will achieve the goal of *boosting agriculture to achieve food security* is through sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture, often referred to as "sustainability in agriculture," is an approach to farming and food production that aims to meet the current needs of society for food, fiber, and other agricultural products while also ensuring the long-term health of ecosystems, the well-being of farmers, and the equitable distribution of benefits. It is a holistic and environmentally conscious approach to agriculture that seeks to balance economic, social, and environmental factors. Sustainable agriculture plays a crucial role in addressing food security, environmental conservation, and the long-term resilience of agricultural systems in the face of climate change and other global challenges.

An Agenda for The Minister of Agriculture and Food Security.

To translate President tinubu's agenda of *boosting agriculture to achieve food security* in Nigeria, the Minister of Agriculture can consider the following.

AGENDA 01

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY RESULTS DELIVERY COORDINATING UNIT

One of the Minister's top priorities should be the establishment of the Agriculture and Food Security Results Delivery Coordinating Unit. The coordinating unit would streamline the implementation of agriculture and food security policies and strategies. It will ensure that government policies are translated into concrete actions and results. The Unit can establish clear performance indicators and targets for the agriculture and food security sub-sector and parastatals. This will promote accountability, transparency, and results-based management, helping to track progress and ensure resources are well-utilized. The Unit can serve as a hub for knowledge sharing, best practices, and capacity-building activities. It can facilitate the exchange of information and expertise between different stakeholders, including government agencies, research institutions, and NGOs. The Unit should utilize modern technology and data-driven approaches to monitor and improve



agricultural practices, including the use of mobile apps, remote sensing, and big data analytics. The Unit should facilitate the implementation of a robust monitoring and

evaluation system to assess the impact of agricultural policies and initiatives, allowing for adjustments and improvements. With a strong data system, the Minister will get the necessary support from international organizations, donor agencies, and International Non-governmental organizations.



AGENDA 02

DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SECURITY POLICY.

The Minister should work on crafting a robust agricultural policy that aligns with President Tinubu's vision. This policy should outline clear objectives, strategies, and timelines for boosting agriculture and achieving food security. Address land tenure issues and enact policies that favor sustainable agriculture. Ensuring land tenure security can incentivize long-term investments in agriculture. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) emphasizes the

importance of secure land tenure for agricultural development. The policy should have a strong component for research and development. There is a need for the Minister to also invest in research and development for crop improvement and innovation. Research-based innovations can lead to higher crop yields. For example, the release of drought-tolerant maize varieties in Africa increased yields by 20-30%.

AGENDA 03

SUPPORT SMALLHOLDER FARMERS AND STRENGTHEN EXTENSION SERVICES.



Data from the Central Bank of Nigeria shows that improved access to credit can increase agricultural production and reduce poverty among smallholder farmers. The Minister should consider the implementation of programs and policies that provide smallholder farmers with access to credit, quality seeds, modern farming equipment, and training. This can significantly improve productivity at the grassroots level. The Minister should invest in irrigation infrastructure to improve water management and increase crop production, especially in regions with irregular rainfall patterns. Strengthen agricultural extension services to provide farmers with the knowledge and tools needed to adopt modern farming techniques and best practices. According to a World Bank report, effective extension services can increase agricultural productivity by 20-30%.



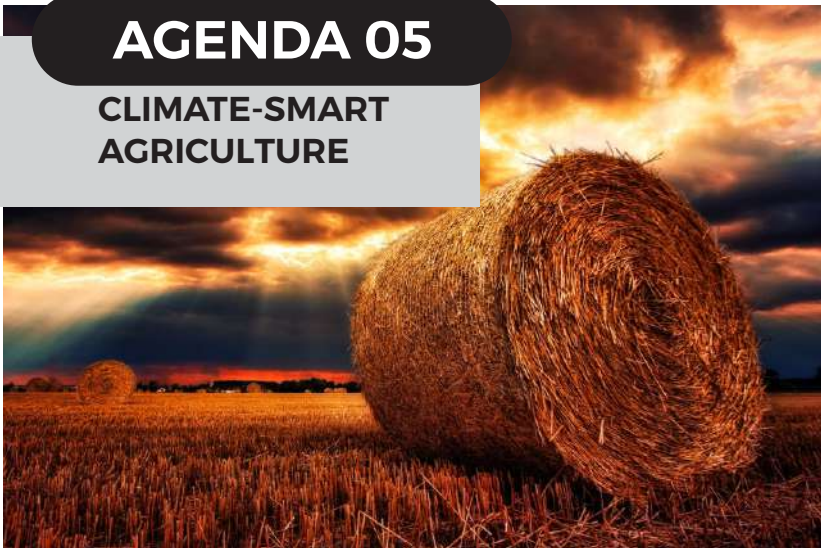
AGENDA 04

VALUE ADDITION AND AGRO-PROCESSING.

The Minister through a result-based investment should promote agro-processing industries to reduce post-harvest losses and increase the value of agricultural products, creating employment and income opportunities. Support agro-processing industries to reduce post-harvest losses and add value to agricultural products. A report by the African Development Bank states that value addition through agro-processing can create jobs, increase incomes, and stabilize the economy. Strengthen agricultural extension services to provide farmers with knowledge and resources. Implement comprehensive value chain development programs that involve multiple stakeholders, including farmers, processors, and marketers. This approach can lead to significant improvements in supply chain efficiency and increased incomes for farmers. Develop programs that specifically target and support the involvement of youth and women in agriculture, recognizing their crucial roles in food security.

AGENDA 05

CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE



The Minister should develop and promote comprehensive climate-resilient farming systems that integrate multiple climate-smart practices, including agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and efficient water management. These systems can lead to substantial increases in productivity and resilience over time.

Encourage climate-smart agricultural practices that help farmers adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects on agriculture.

Promote the cultivation of drought-resistant and high-yield crops. Crop diversification can reduce the risk associated with mono-cropping and increase food production. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) reports that crop diversification can improve food security and income for farmers.

AGENDA 06

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

The Minister should encourage large-scale commercial farming investments through PPPs to increase agricultural productivity and create jobs in the sector. Through a series of breakfast meetings, foster collaborations with private sector stakeholders to attract investment, technology transfer, and market linkages to the agricultural sector. Establish agribusiness clusters where public and private sectors collaborate to provide a supportive ecosystem for agricultural enterprises, including access to infrastructure, finance, and markets. Encourage the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices such as conservation agriculture, organic farming, and agroforestry to protect soil health and minimize environmental degradation. Sustainable agriculture can lead to improved soil fertility and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. A study by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) found that sustainable farming practices can increase yields by 79% in Africa.

By considering the implementation of this agenda, the Minister of Agriculture can help realize President Tinubu's agenda of boosting agriculture to achieve food security in Nigeria. This comprehensive approach, with a focus on sustainability and inclusivity, will be essential in addressing the challenges and opportunities in Nigeria's agricultural sector.

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[1] <https://www.fao.org/nigeria/fao-in-nigeria/nigeria-at-a-glance/en/>
<https://www.fao.org/nr/sustainability/greening-the-economy-with-agriculture-gea/en/>

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