

**SPEECH BY HON. BRYAN ACHEAMPONG (MP.) PH.D.,
MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ON THE OCCASION
OF THE LAUNCH OF THE 39TH EDITION OF THE NATIONAL
FARMERS DAY CELEBRATION HELD AT THE FORECOURT OF
THE MINISTRY ON WEDNESDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2023**

Hon. Minister, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture

**Hon. Minister, Ministry of Local Government Decentralization
and Development,**

Hon. Minister, Western Region,

Managing Director, Exim Bank,

Managing Director, Stanbic Bank,

Managing Director Agricultural Development Bank,

The Chief Executive, Ghana COCOBOD,

**The Chairman, National Farmers and Fishermen Award Winners
Association,**

**Chairperson, Ghana Association of Female Agricultural Fish
Farming Award Winners**

Development Partners,

All National Directors and Project Coordinators,

Members of the Press,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. With great pleasure and honour, I am here to announce the launch of this year's Farmers Day Celebration, the 39th edition since its inception. The

annual event is a testament to the tremendous contribution made by our hardworking farmers and the vital role they play in our nation's development.

2. I must extend my appreciation to you all for participating in today's occasion at very short notice. Your presence is a great inspiration and reflects your genuine commitment to the noble course of supporting our farmers and transforming Ghana's agriculture.
3. Ladies and gentlemen, this year's Farmers Day Celebration as dictated by law will be held on Friday 7th December 2023 under the distinguished patronage of His Excellency the President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo. Today's program officially ushers us into the critical planning phase to ensure a successful and memorable occasion. The occasion promises to be a momentous one since we plan to be a little different and by moving away from business as usual, at least at the national level.
4. Accordingly, the chairman of the national planning committee has been tasked to deliver an innovative celebration to commemorate the occasion. Towards this objective, we seek to harness the power of innovation and technology to improve the organization of the national award event. We will achieve this by enhancing efficiency, reach and overall experience.
5. Ladies and gentlemen, I must also observe that today's occasion has immense significance. One high point of the occasion is the announcement that will be made to confirm the next region selected to

host the upcoming 39th edition of the National Farmers Day Celebration. This platform also presents a unique opportunity to remind ourselves of the need to stand in solidarity with our hardworking farmers whose sacrifices, perseverance, and tireless efforts ensure our sustenance. We cannot take for granted the constant supply of our food and nutritional needs by our farmers in spite of the numerous challenges they face.

6. The issues of land ownership, limited access to market and financial services, effects of climate change, post-harvest losses, high cost of input, and low return on investment among others should make us appreciate our farmers even more. Through their dedication in the face of these adversities, agriculture has remained the backbone and driving force behind Ghana's food security, industrialization process, creation of job opportunities, economic growth, and foreign exchange earnings from diverse sources among others.
7. Beyond our appreciation, respect and admiration for the efforts of our farmers, we must fulfill our obligation of creating the necessary environment through policy interventions and other incentives to motivate our farmers to play their role more effectively. As an imperative, we must demonstrate more sensitivity to the needs of our farmers to enable them to optimize productivity, build resilience, and attain a level of competitiveness derived from the efficient use of resources and technology. In line with this, the theme for this year's National Farmers' Day celebration is **"Delivering Smart Solutions for Sustainable Food Security and Resilience"**. This is why the Government rolled out its

flagship program in 2017 to deliver target solutions to the problems within the agricultural sector.

8. The broad objectives of the Planting for Food and Jobs(PFJ) were to boost productivity, guarantee food security, produce ample raw materials for sustained industrialization, promote exports, and generate job opportunities, particularly for our teeming youth.
9. After six years of implementation, there have been notable successes, especially in the area of utilization of fertilizer, acceptance and adoption of improved seeds as well as the adoption of good agronomic practices by farmers leading to increased productivity and production. Our evaluation also reveals that, notwithstanding these achievements, there is a need for new strategies to optimize returns on investment.
10. We recognize the urgent need to expand our productive capacity and harness the opportunity to unlock the full potential of the sector. The outcome is the birth of the second phase of the Planting for Food and Jobs initiative which was outdoored last month by the President in Tamale.
11. At full implementation, the PFJ 2.0 will certainly change the face of Ghana's agriculture. It is a five-year master plan for the renewal of agriculture in Ghana. It represents a new trajectory that replaces the input subsidy programme with an input credit intervention designed to accelerate the development of agriculture through a value chain approach.

12. Besides the input credit system that provides farmers with access to inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, other elements of the programme are support services such as mechanization and extension; storage infrastructure and logistic hub; off-taker arrangements/commodity trading and last but not the least, a digitized platform for management, monitoring and coordination.
13. Ladies and gentlemen, with the commitment and support from all stakeholders, there is certainly hope for Ghana's agriculture in the next five years. We are introducing an enduring system through PFJ 2.0 which will stand the test of time by making agriculture a very attractive enterprise.
14. As we wait to reap the full benefits of the programme, we will continue to celebrate our farmers for their invaluable contribution to the development of our country. As our collective expression of our debt of gratitude, I now have the honour to declare the 39th edition of the National Farmers' Day duly launched. I thank you for your attention and may God bless us all.