



FoodAfrica: Turning Research into Opportunities for Agribusiness

Background: Bioscience research is a powerful engine to produce knowledge and tools to, strengthen agri-sector's technological development and improve agricultural production, while mitigating the effects of climate change on food production and livelihoods. However, are we utilizing these research findings up to their full potential? Are all relevant stakeholders actively included in the research process? Is the business community, with the most potential to turn results into commercial use, part of the research process? Does the entrepreneurial youth have access to the research process? Do students and alumni know how to benefit from the research findings?

The training session on Turning Research into Opportunities for Agribusiness discusses all these questions and provides answers and tools for various target groups – both through theory and practice.

Objectives of the session:

- For the education and research community, including students, the training session creates understanding and encourages discussion on how the research process and results can be a source of inspiration and a practical tool in promoting entrepreneurship building and creating businesses.
- For entrepreneurs the training session highlights the potential of using research in business development.
- For all participants the training gives practical information on how African Agribusiness Network (AAIN) supports business driven agribusiness incubation.

Participants: We invite students, teaching staff and the academic decision makers of higher education institutions, as well as potential start-ups in the agribusiness sector to participate in the session! Also entrepreneurs already active in the agribusiness sector are very welcome to join this hands-on introduction into the world of research and how they can benefit from making use of research results in an innovative way.

Methodology: The three hour training session is divided into two parts: theory and group work. The interactive theory part focuses on cooperation and networks in entrepreneurship development, and will shed light on the student centered processes of learning, innovation and business incubation. The presentations are supported with examples of successful collaborative working methods between research and business. The group work will utilize research results from the FoodAfrica Programme to develop business ideas. Participants will brainstorm in groups on ways to capitalize on the results by turning them into innovations for agri- or other small businesses. Each group will present their ideas as a pitch. If potential ones are identified it will be in all our interest to take them further!

Due to the holistic methodological approach, we expect our participants to commit to the full side event. For any questions, please feel free to contact FoodAfrica coordinator: mila.sell@luke.fi

Organising partners:

Häme University of Applied Sciences - HAMK www.hamk.fi

Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) www.luke.fi

African Agribusiness Incubation Network – AAIN www.africaain.org

The FoodAfrica programme (www.luke.fi/foodafrica) has been running since 2012, mainly funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The programme has resulted in a large amount of new information on topics ranging from micronutrient deficiencies in the soil and dairy cattle genetics to reducing post-harvest losses, improving child nutrition and using ICTs to help farmers access the market.