

Summer School Agriculture Training and Awareness Programme (2017)
(Developing the Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Youth to further Food Security and Nutrition)

Introduction

To encourage youth involvement in agriculture, RDTC during school breaks provide youth awareness and training programme for about hundred students of classes from seven to eleven or age between 15 to 24. The programme aims to improve nutrition, environmental awareness and food traditions through the establishment of school gardens, poultry, dairy, piggery and mushroom farming. Students also learn about food processing and postharvest of fruits and vegetables, and other aspects of farm economics and agribusiness. The students will also gain practical experiences through already established farms e.g. poultry, dairy, piggery, mushroom, fruits and vegetable farms in RDTC.

The programme is tentatively scheduled from 17th to 29th July 2017 in accordance with the summer break of the schools in Bhutan.

Rationale

There is and there will be increase in youth unemployment in Bhutan. It is significant that even under the most optimistic scenarios there are doubts about the potential of the urban sector to absorb these young people into wage-earning employment. Clearly, the role of agriculture – and smallholder family farming in particular – in providing decent livelihood opportunities for rural youth in the years ahead will be an important one. At the same time, the majority of youth do not currently see agriculture as a viable career path given the low productivity rates and the difficulties they know previous generations have faced. If smallholders cannot achieve a viable income, it is likely that their children and their children's children will head for the cities. Developing the knowledge, skills, and talent of youth will also require investing in smallholder agriculture in order to provide successful examples and viable livelihoods for all future generations.

The cultivating of agricultural interest among youth can ultimately lead to not only a more agriculturally aware society but also a workforce to support agricultural practices that allow society to thrive.

During the school breaks we normally see our students hanging around with no much work and some time engage in unhealthy activities like, drugs, alcohol, gang fight, etc. Therefore, RDTC can create an environment where the potential and talent of young people can be used as an engine to drive change in agriculture and food systems that can provide food security and nutrition for everyone.

Course Objectives

To provide basic knowledge and skills on the following topics

- Vegetable production
- Piggery
- Poultry
- Dairy
- Food processing
- Soil, manure & fertilizers
- Fruits

Who in turn will further share the knowledge and skills with their friends in schools and raise their interest in agriculture production for development of enterprises.

Expected outcome

1. Youths experienced hand-on with agriculture creating a significant increase in a youth's knowledge.
2. Quality and production improved in school garden or farms for nutrition and also a learning material, which is the single most important factor influencing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of youth learning about agriculture.
3. Awareness created among youth on importance of agriculture, which can ultimately lead to not only a more agriculturally awareness society but also a workforce to support agricultural practices.

Proposed participants - including resource persons if any.

Interested in-school youth or students actively involved in agriculture clubs and related activities in schools. The in-take of the participants' is 50 students of classes from 7 to 11, and 1 escort teacher cum matron.

Expected expenditures

The budget is estimated to Nu.0.265 million as TA/DSA and working lunch and refreshment during the training for 50 students, 1 escort teacher cum matron preferably from Zhemgang central school.

The participants/ students may be nominated from the schools in Zhemgang dzongkhag, because of road conditions and transportation problem especially during the monsoon and rainy season.

Conclusion

Agriculture has always been a significant factor in the sustainability and development of human society. Unfortunately, the important role of agriculture as a foundation for a secure and durable civilization is not always apparent to those outside of agriculture. Specifically, current generations of children and youth often see agriculture only in terms of narrow layman's job—a farmer, a header cow, etc. These groups of children and youth represent the future leaders of society, the people we will depend on to support, regulate, and advocate for agriculture.

Agricultural literacy is important to the future of our nation and the discipline of agriculture, because the majority of the youth is now almost completely removed from agriculture in their daily lives; it is of utmost importance that best practices in agricultural education are identified to ensure agricultural literacy is maintained in future generations of Bhutan.

Training Schedule

Date	0900 – 1030	1045 – 1200	1300 – 1430	1445 – 1600
Sunday 16.07.2017	Arrival of participants			
Monday 17.07.2017	Opening Course overview, Expectations and Norms, Overview of RDTc	RDTc campus orientation	Pig production	Pig production
Tuesday 18.07.2017	Pig production	Pig production	Pig production	Pig production
Wednesday 19.07.2017	Dairy production	Diary production	Dairy production	Dairy production
Thursday 20.07.2017	Dairy production	Dairy production	Mushroom cultivation	Mushroom cultivation
Friday 21.07.2017	Vegetable production	Vegetable production	Vegetable production	Vegetable production
Saturday 22.07.2017	Poultry production	Poultry production	Campus Cleaning	
Sunday				
Monday 24.07.2017	Fruit Production	Fruit Production	Vegetable production	Vegetable production
Tuesday 25.07.2017	Postharvest	Postharvest	Manure & fertilizers	Manure & fertilizers
Wednesday 26.07.2017	Poultry production	Poultry production	Poultry production	Poultry production
Thursday 27.07.2017	First Sermon of Lord Buddha			
Friday 28.07.2017	Fruit Production	Fruit Production	Post-test Course evaluation	Closing & Certificate
Saturday 29.07.2017	Departure of participants			

Submitted by;

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