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Editor's Note: All media materials related to Africa Food Prize can be found at www.africafoodprize.org/media

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At Agriculture Summit in Ghana, Officials Launch New \$100,000 Africa Food Prize to Spur Innovations in Production and Marketing

A successor to prestigious Yara Prize, former Nigerian President Obasanjo to chair the Africa Food Prize Committee; winners to be revealed at African Green Revolution Forum in Nairobi

12 April 2016, ACCRA—With agriculture emerging as Africa's best bet for increasing food security and expanding economic opportunity, officials gathered in Ghana for a critical agriculture meeting launched a new prestigious US\$ 100,000 award called the Africa Food Prize, which is intended to inspire innovations in the field and the marketplace.

"We want to celebrate individuals and institutions that are changing the reality of farming in Africa, from a grueling struggle to survive to a profitable family business that thrives," said former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, who is chairing the Africa Food Prize Committee.

The announcement was made in Accra as high-level leaders from across the region gathered under the auspices of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) to seek new sources of investment and financing for African farmers and agriculture businesses.

"The Africa Food Prize is another way we can drive a search for solutions to fundamental problems, like a chronic lack of financing, that prevent African farmers from achieving their potential," said Strive Masiyiwa, Chair and CEO of Econet Wireless International and Board Chair of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). "It can put a bright spotlight on bold initiatives and technical innovations that can be replicated across the continent to eliminate hunger and poverty and provide a vital new source of employment and income."

Winners will be chosen by the Africa Food Prize Committee, which, in addition to Obsanjo, will include other distinguished leaders in African agriculture. The winners will be announced annually during a prize ceremony at the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF), starting with the 2016 AGRF slated for 5-9 September in Nairobi.

A Prize as a Call to Action

Today, in places like Ghana and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa there are glimpses of the enormous progress African farmers can make when they have what they need to succeed, and how the food they produce and the income they earn can send good vibrations throughout the economy. But many challenges remain. In addition to a dearth of financing, millions of farmers lack understanding of good agricultural practices and they have limited or no access to high quality agricultural inputs, safe storage, and basic processing, which collude to stifle production and income opportunities.

In 2004, Kofi Annan challenged the world to create an African Green Revolution. Yara responded to this call for action with the Yara Prize in 2005. “The winners this past decade have had one thing in common: A profound impact on African agriculture. I believe the Africa Food Prize will continue to attract global attention to all the impressive African women and men with a ‘can-do attitude’ and drive - people who play such a vital role in transforming agriculture in Africa”, said Svein Tore Holsether, President and CEO of Yara International.

Past winners include Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, the former Nigerian Agriculture Minister who now heads the African Development Bank (AfDB); Agnes Kalibata, the former Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources in Rwanda who now serves as AGRA’s President; and Ousmane Badiane, Africa Director for the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

AGRA and Yara have established a secretariat for the prize and will continue to fund and support the Prize.

Nominations can be made through the Africa Food Prize website at www.africafoodprize.org.

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