

## AKANKWASA GEDION'S SUCCESS STORY TO.....



# AGROECOLOGY PRACTICES.



**M**y name is Akankwasa Gedion a dedicated farmer passionate about horticulture. For years, I struggled with declining yields on my agricultural products. The soil had lost its fertility, and pests were becoming increasingly resistant to conventional pesticides. Farming, once my source of pride, was turning into an uphill battle coupled with the impacts from oil and gas projects.

One day, I was invited for a training organized by the Centre for Environmental Research and Agricultural Innovations (CERAI) in Hoima District. The training, themed *"Rooting Smallholder Farmers Agroecology Movement for a Sustainable Food System in Uganda,"* aimed to equip small holder farmers affected by oil projects with knowledge on making Organic manure to increase agriculture production. Seeing an opportunity to transform my farm, I eagerly signed up.

During the two-day training, Myself and other farmers from Hoima, Kikuube, and Buliisa Districts were taken through hands on sessions on how to turn organic farm waste into nutrient rich compost manure, and how to make natural pesticides from locally available plants to control pests without harming the environment. Inspired

by the knowledge gained, I returned home determined to implement the new practices.

With renewed energy, I gathered dry leaves, animal dung, and kitchen waste to prepare my first batch of compost manure. I carefully followed the steps I had been taught, such as monitoring the temperature of the compost, and turning the heap regularly to ensure proper decomposition. After a few weeks, the dark, crumbly compost was ready. I applied it to my red pepper garden and coffee plants, eager to see the results.

To my amazement, within one month, my red pepper plants turned a vibrant green, producing larger and healthier fruits than before. My coffee trees, once weak and struggling, showed improved growth and flowering, promising a good harvest ahead. The natural herbicide also proved effective, reducing pests without harming beneficial insects or the soil, Gideon Narrates a story.

By the following harvest season, my yield had doubled, and the quality of produce improved significantly. Buyers from local markets preferred my red peppers due to their rich colour and size, allowing me to fetch higher prices.

Even neighbouring farmers noticed the transformation and sought my advice on compost making.

Feeling grateful, I shared my experience with CERAI trainers, expressing my appreciation for the life changing knowledge they had imparted.

***“This training has transformed my farming practices. I no longer rely on expensive chemical fertilizers and pesticides. My yields have improved, and my soil is healthier. Thank you, CERAI, for empowering smallholder farmers like me!”*** he said with a smile.

Today, I am not just a successful farmer but also an advocate for sustainable agriculture in Kijumba village. I continue to share knowledge with fellow oil affected small scale farmers, encouraging them to embrace organic farming for better yields and environmental conservation. Thanks to CERAI, I now envision a brighter, and more sustainable future for myself and my community.



Edited by;

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