

App helps West African rice growers use fertilizer to best advantage

Since 2014, the Syngenta Foundation has partnered with AfricaRice (<http://www.africarice.org/>) to develop and test RiceAdvice, an app-based tool for nutrient advice to African rice growers. Based on IRRI's rice crop manager (<http://cropmanager.irri.org/>), the tool provides tailor-made fertilizer recommendations based on a simple questionnaire and the farm's location. It is freely available to download from the Google play store and functional Android devices.

Joint studies by AfricaRice and the Syngenta Foundation have revealed that by following RiceAdvice-generated fertilizer recommendations, growers can greatly improve their productivity and profitability. For instance, tests in the Senegal River Valley indicated an increase in average rice yields of 1.2 t/ha for the main season and 1.6 t/ha for the dry season. In Ghana, an average yield increase of 0.6 t/ha has been achieved over two consecutive seasons, notably while decreasing overall input use. Observers report similar increases in Mali. More information on all these activities can be found on the Syngenta Foundation website.

These successful tests have now led to a partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (<http://www.jica.go.jp/english/>). Here the Syngenta Foundation was mandated to lead the dissemination of RiceAdvice in Mali together with the National Agricultural Research Station.

An AfricaRice media release provides further information:

<https://africarice.wordpress.com/2016/04/19/japan-and-africarice-promote-riceadvice-app-to-bolster-rice-yield-and-youth-employment-in-nigeria-and-mali/>