

EU, Germany and Nigeria launch a €18.3Mn project to boost agriculture and food security

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The European Union (EU), Germany, and Nigeria have jointly launched a €18.3 million agricultural initiative aimed at revitalising key value chains, boosting food security, and reducing the country's dependence on imports. The four-year programme, known as the EU-VACE TARED Project, will be implemented across seven Nigerian states and focus on four priority crops: dairy, cocoa, tomato, and ginger. It is co-financed by the EU and Germany's development agency, GIZ, under the EU's Global Gateway Strategy and the Team Europe framework.

Speaking at the launch in Abuja, EU Ambassador to Nigeria Gautier Mignot said agriculture remained a cornerstone of Nigeria's economy but was constrained by poor infrastructure, weak processing and storage facilities, limited financing, and climate-related pressures. He underlined the need to make farming attractive for the younger generation, noting that the EU had already committed over €87 million to climate-smart agriculture in Nigeria, with a wider green economy investment pipeline worth nearly €1.5 billion.

Johannes Lehne, Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy, described the initiative as a strategic move to restore Nigeria's agricultural competitiveness. He recalled that Nigeria was once self-sufficient in food production and stressed that innovation, entrepreneurship, and reduced post-harvest losses could once again position Nigerian farmers for global markets. He added that creating local opportunities would also help curb irregular migration.

Nigeria's Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Security, Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi, welcomed the project as aligning with President Bola Tinubu's hunger-free vision. Highlighting that Nigeria spends \$1.5 billion annually on dairy imports despite its livestock potential, he said the initiative would help modernise production, reduce imports, and generate jobs. He added that expanding cocoa, tomato, and ginger production would further increase rural incomes, enhance exports, and promote peace.