Minister Calls for Impactful and Transformative Agricultural Research
BY BEN MOSES ILAKUT

KAMPALA: The ASARECA Agriculture Ministerial Conference (AAMC) closed on May 19, 2023, with a call on scientists to engage in research that easily benefits the intended beneficiaries—the farmers. The call was made by Uganda’s Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Hon. Frank Timwebaze while addressing over 350 delegates during the closing ceremony of the AAMC, which started on May 17, with Governance discussions, climaxing into the Council of Patron Ministers Meeting on May 18 and the ASARECA Scientific Conference held on May 18.
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Uganda’s Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (), Hon. Frank addressing

Earlier, his colleagues Hon. Bright Rwamirama, Minister of State and Livestock; Hon. Fred Bwino Kyakulaga, Minister of State for Agriculture, and the Permanent Secretary, officiated during the General Assembly, the Council of Patron Ministers Meeting, and
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Scientific Conference respectively. The three-in-one event constitutes ASARECA’s convening flagship.

“Research should help farmers build resilient seed systems and solutions to diseases for both animals and crops. It should be adaptive and impactful,” the Minister, who is also the current Chairman of the ASARECA Council of Patron Ministers, told over 350 delegates from 15 ASARECA Member States. “We want to see member countries sharing innovations to build resilience for our ecosystems.”

**Do not forget indigenous innovations**

Tumwebaze also challenged the researchers to engage in their speciality with ‘a native touch’. “Our agricultural research agenda must be driven by our indigenous knowledge as nations. It must be our agenda, not anyone else's,” he said.

He identified increased production as a game changer, noting that doubling yield comes with innovation. “Why should we produce research and it is kept on the shelves?” he wondered.

**Having all NARIs in Board is excellent**

The Minister thanked the ASARECA Secretariat and other Governance structures for fulfilling the demand by Member States to bring back all Directors General of the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) into the ASARECA Board of Directors.

“The Essence of having all the NARIs in the Board is to facilitate sharing of research methodologies and products, increase food production and fight food insecurity,” he said.

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