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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMEs benefit from Makerere Value Addition initiative

With support from the Presidential Initiative for Value addition, The School of Food Technology, Nutrition and Bio-Engineering, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, has succeeded in catalysing the agro-processing industry in Uganda.

Some of the activities under this initiative have been the training of 138 youths, this financial year, in different agro-processing technologies. Several of these youths have commenced agro-processing enterprises.

Twelve Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) have been recruited into the Food Technology and Business Incubation Centre under this initiative and have initiated agro-processing enterprise in various communities.

The Support to SMEs to improve their businesses has mostly contributed to the diversification of products, improvement in product quality and access to improved production and packaging technology.

Some of the products developed by the SMEs under this initiative include Soya milk, soya yorghurt, tofu (soya meat), Shelf stable low cost bushera, Shelf stable smoked meat (*ntalike*), Nutrient balanced cookies and flours, Fruit juices and jams, Canned *katunkuma* (*Solanum spp*), Sausages and canned maize/beans blend.

Incubatees have created jobs for themselves and about 50 other people. Some of the incubatee products have penetrated markets in neighboring countries. The enterprises are expected to grow, graduate from incubation into sustainable private firms and recruit even more employees.

Besides boosting the agro-processing business sector, the School of Food Technology, Nutrition and Bio-Engineering has, through this initiative, acquired modern processing and analytical equipment, contributing to strengthening of teaching, research and services to the industry.

Through research, twelve food value addition technologies have been developed to different stages. These are listed in the table below.

1. Production of corn syrup (sweetner) from maize
2. Production of health promoting oil from Nile perch processing waste
3. Production of nutrient-dense, bean-based products for nutritionally vulnerable people
4. Improvement of traditional banana beer (<i>Tonto</i>)
5. Production of a high protein and energy potato-soybean weaning food for improved nutrition and health among children
6. Minimally processed ready to cook vegetables suitable for selling in supermarkets
7. Extraction, stabilization and utilization of passion fruit flavor
8. Canned <i>empengere</i> (maize-beans mixture)
9. Development of a nutrient dense food product for emergency conditions
10. Production of high energy milk based pudding for school going children
11. Production of health boosting flour from amaranth (<i>ddodo</i>) seeds
12. High quality value added <i>gonja</i> (<i>Musa spp</i>) products

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