Nigeria to begin export of sorghum- Crops Institute

The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics’s country representative in Nigeria, Hakeem Ajeigbe, has said that Nigerian-farmed sorghum will soon be exported as the demand of the produce has been on increase from local and international consumers. Consumption rate is also expected to increase across the country, he said. The ICRISAT representative in Nigeria, Mr Ajeigbe, disclosed this to PREMIUM TIMES in Kano State.

According to him, ‘Very soon we will be exporting malted sorghum to Britain.

“I have already linked the major market to some of our sorghum off-takers in Nigeria, they will malt the sorghum and then send it to Britain, there is a market there, there is somebody who wants to buy.”

“Here, people always think when you malt sorghum, (it) is for beer. It’s not for beer. All these malt drinks, biscuits, is from malted sorghum. Chocolate, beverages – all have malted sorghum.

“With malted sorghum, you can do so many things. Beer is one of it but so many things can be done with malted sorghum. The good thing is (that) there is some value addition, it’s not just sending the malted sorghum,” he said. “By now, they should have finished with the deal. I have made the linkage – that means that our farmers will be exporting malted sorghum this year, not next year. Actually, the thing is even in some weeks’ time, malted sorghum will be exported outside the country.”

Mr Hakeem stated that while implementing the federal government founded Agricultural Transformation Support Project (ATAPS 1), sorghum moved from a subsistence crop to an industrial crop, as farmers are now being networked to companies who will be using Sorghum.

According to him, “this includes top flour. If you go to the supermarket now, you can find sorghum flour, half a Kg, 1kg and so on. You can also get your maize and wheat flours. They are all available, the Northern Nigerian Flour Mill have launched their own, a few other companies are coming. A new food company is going to start this year. We will have Elshadie flour, and a few other companies are coming on board,” he said.

‘So, this, to me, is another achievement we have made and hopefully, we have also moved into making snacks. For example, we have taught rural women how to make sorghum snacks, the pop sorghum, it is like popcorn but much better than popcorn, we have women now in communities making cake, doughnuts from sorghum. So, once you do all of these, then the consumption will go up and then we have nutrition.”

“You will see a lot of sorghum flour now in the market, and once we start having that, it means the consumption of sorghum will actually go up,” he said.

The ICRISAT representative added that ‘one of the things noticed was the consumption of sorghum going down, despite Nigeria being the largest producer of Sorghum. Read more