

Improving value addition to meet consumer needs in Africa

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Due to increased rural-to-urban migration and an expected rise in family incomes, urban families in keeping with existing trends, would eat more processed and/or value-added foods 25 years from now. These huge changes in African food consumption patterns would have enormous implications for the agro-food enterprises, agricultural production and food safety. These are challenges which could be met by broadening our thinking to cover research systems that satisfied both the wants and needs of farmers and consumers. Value-addition through the development of agro-food industries and delivery of post-production technologies could serve as important cornerstone for healthy rural economies. Unfortunately, little or only fragmented attention is today paid by most governments, donor agencies, and research institutes to value-addition to deliver food from the rural to urban markets. There is the need to develop and improve dynamic partnerships between farmers and public, private and NGOs organisations that could lower the costs of agricultural production and marketing, help African agriculture compete more effectively in international markets, and, perhaps, most importantly, help the poor have access to the value-added food required for a healthy and active life.