



MOU AU *News*

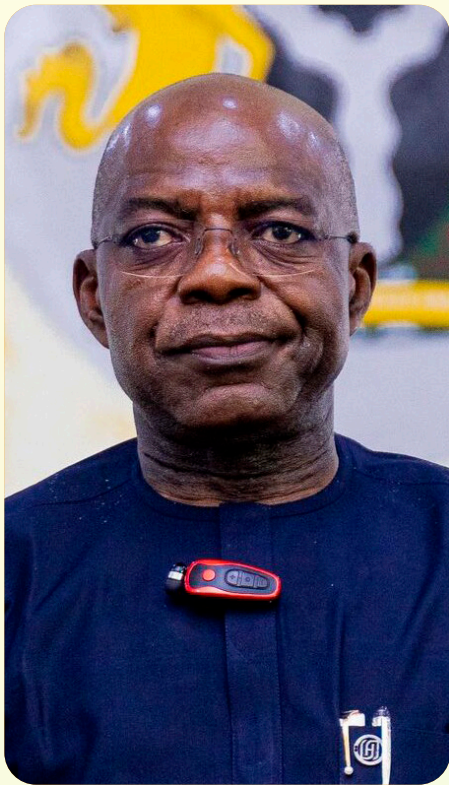
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31 years after establishment, MOU AU's C of O now ready for collection from Abia State Government

By Ubadire Agua, Sunday Anyim and Chinedu Ononiwu



Dr. Alex Chioma Otti
(Governor Abia State)



Comrade Fidelis Edeh
(Pro-Chancellor MOU AU)



Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe
(Vice Chancellor MOU AU)

It was a great relief to the 8th Governing Council of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike on November 27, 2024, when the Vice-Chancellor,

Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe, informed Council that the Institution's Certificate of Occupancy is now ready for collection from the Abia State Government.

"It is a thing of joy to inform Council that the long-awaited Certificate of Occupancy of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike is ready for collection," the Vice-Chancellor said, adding



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that the University now needs to pay an annual ground rent before collecting the document.

The recent announcement of the availability of the Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) for Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUUAU), after 31 years of the institution's establishment, marks a significant milestone for the University. This achievement, celebrated by the Vice-Chancellor, signals the formalisation of ownership and control over the University's expansive 6,425 hectares of land.

Benefits of the Certificate of Occupancy

With the acquisition of the C of O, the University can now move forward with its plans to develop and fully utilise its land resources. The University can now comfortably establish plantations for crops such as palm and rubber, which are vital for commercial agriculture and revenue generation.

Moreso, the land can be structured to include designated areas for arable cropping, student farms, research farms, and commercial farms.

In an interview with MOUUAU News, the VC said that such strategic allocation will support the Institution's mandate of advancing agri-

cultural research, education, and production. Regarding support for research and training in particular, designating specific areas for research and student farms would help to enhance practical training and innovation in agriculture. Students will equally gain hands-on experience, while researchers can test and implement solutions to tackle Nigeria's food crisis.

In addition, the C of O provides legal recognition and security of ownership for the University's land. This document will protect the Institution against disputes or encroachments, and ensure that the land remains an asset for its academic and developmental goals.

Furthermore, with secure land tenure, the University becomes more attractive to investors and development partners. Organisations and individuals interested in agricultural projects, research partnerships, or infrastructural development will find it easier to collaborate with the University, knowing its land tenure is secured. The C of O enables the University to formalize plans for large-scale agricultural activities, potentially boosting the institution's capacity for food production, research outputs, and agro-industrial projects.

These activities align with the Institution's role in supporting Nige-

ria's agricultural sector. From the revenue generation perspective, utilising the land for commercial farming ventures and agro-industrial projects can generate significant revenue for the University.

These anticipated revenues can be reinvested into infrastructure, research, and student welfare to an extent that can enhance the Institution's overall growth and sustainability.

With regard to community impact, developing the secure land can create employment opportunities and contribute to the local economy. For instance, commercial farms and plantations can provide jobs, enhance food security, and stimulate agro-industrial activities in the surrounding communities.

Reacting to the development, the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council, Comrade Fidelis Edeh expressed the gratitude of the Council to the Executive Governor of Abia State, Dr. Alex Chioma Otti, for facilitating the release of the C of O to the University. He assured that University will maximize the benefits of the C of O.

Council also appreciated the doggedness of Prof. M.O Iwe's administration in pursuing issues of the C of O to the point of reality



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MOU AU researchers shine at TETFund Innovation Fair

By Joy Nlebedum, Patrick Oparah and Ginger Eke



Five distinguished research scientists from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOU AU), demonstrated exceptional innovation at the recently concluded TETFund National Research Fair held at Eagle Square, Abuja.

The MOU AU Team, comprising of Prof. K.ayode J. Simoyan, Dr. Eberechi C. Osuagwu, Prof. Jude C. Nnaji, Prof. Eugene N. Nwachukwu and Prof. Bethrand N. Nwankwojike, were among Nigerian research scientists selected and invited by TETFund to participate in the Fair as Exhibitors.

MOU AU News gathered that Prof. Simoyan and his co-researchers

including Dr O.O Onuh, Prof. O.D. Omodamiro, Dr. O. Oke, Dr. C.H. Kadurumba, Dr. A.C Onyenwoke, Dr. T. Paul and Mr. O.A Okafor-Yadi presented their work on **endogenously developed multi-task ginger rhizomes expression machines**, while Prof. Nwankwojike and his Team presented their work on **integrated advancement of pitting and milling machineries for sustainable small and medium scale date fruit processing and value addition**.

On his own part, Prof. Nwachukwu's presented a work with his team entitled **development of trypanotolerant composite beef cattle in the rain forest agro ecological zone of Nigeria**, while

Prof. Nnaji's work was **the use of biologically syntesized zincoxide and magnetite nanoparticles for industrial wastewater remediation**.

Dr. Osuagwu also presented her research on **Soil Microbiome - A bio-organic agricultural innovation: A road map to national food bio-security, ecosystem restoration and economic stability**.

MOU AU News gathered that in demonstration of the commitment of the current University Management, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe, approved financial and logistical supports to the Team to facilitate their participation at the Fair.

The TETFund Innovation Fair served as an invaluable platform for the researchers to engage productively with stakeholders and entrepreneurs, paving the way for the commercialization of their technologies.

Through their participation, MOU AU has further cemented its reputation as a leading Institution in agricultural research and innovation, reflecting its dedication to driving progress in Nigeria's agricultural/technological landscape.



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2024 World Soil Day: Experts Advocate for Healthy, Productive Soil

By Sunday Anyim and Ginger Eke



Soil Scientists from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, have called for the adoption of practical measures to enhance soil health for food production and wellbeing of humans.

The Scientists made the call at the celebration of the 2024 World Soil Day (WSD), held in the University's College of Crop and Soil Sciences (CCSS).

Speaking on the theme of the year, 'Caring for Soils: Measure, Monitor, Manage', the lead paper presenter, Prof. Olayinka Nwachukwu, stated that "food and core natural re-

sources that are the basic of man's survival place huge responsibility on man to take care of the soil".

Prof. Nwachukwu listed some of the threats facing soil health as pollution, deforestation, bush burning, erosion, flooding and many other unsustainable human activities. She advocated for a symbiotic relationship between man and the soil as no healthy human society can exist without a healthy and productive soil.

In his remarks, the Head of Department of Soil Science and Land Resources Management (SSLRM) of the University, Dr. Ndem Nsor pointed out that the survival of planet depends on the link with soil as over 95 percent of food and natural resources come from it.

Dr. Nsor pointed out that climate change, pollution, over tillage, bush burning and other human activities that degrade the soil are still prevalent in our society.

He therefore advocated for sustainable soil management practices, such as minimum tillage, crop rotation, organic matter addition, cover cropping, reduction of ero-

sion and pollution, among others.

Other experts who spoke at the event include the Director of University Research Administration, Prof. J. K. Simonyan, a former Dean, College of Natural Resources and Environmental Management (CN-REM), Prof. E. C. Nzegbule.

World Soil Day is celebrated globally, on every December 5 to highlight the importance of healthy soil. The day served as a reminder of the critical role soil play in our ecosystem and the need to protect and conserve this invaluable resources for future generations. It also aims at raising awareness about soil degradation and its management.

The event featured health walk and a soil science quiz completion involving MOUAU Demonstration Secondary School, Umudike, Ndume Otuka Community Secondary School, Umuahia, Awom Nebo Secondary Technical School, Ikwuano and Mother of Mercy High School, Umuahia.

"We need to work with nature, not against it."



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