

AFICAT Newsletter (Côte d'Ivoire No. 3)

Issued on February 19, 2024 (English Version)

*Please note that this is an English translation of the original French newsletter.

This newsletter highlights the activities of the “Africa Field Innovation Center for Agricultural Technology” (AFICAT). In this third and final issue covering the AFICAT pilot phase in Côte d'Ivoire, we delve into the activities and research spearheaded by the Ivorian government and Japanese companies, all coordinated by the AFICAT team from April to October 2023 in Côte d'Ivoire.

Japanese cashew moisture testers exhibited at SIETTA

The AFICAT team attended the 4th edition of the International Exhibition of Cashew Equipment and Technologies (known in French as *Salon International des Équipements et des Technologies de Transformation de l'Anacarde*: SIETTA), held in Abidjan from April 6 to 8, 2023. The purpose of this visit was to gather insights into the Ivorian cashew sector and explore the markets for related technologies, with the intention of sharing this valuable information with Japanese companies interested in the Ivorian market.



As Japanese technologies were relatively new to the Ivorian cashew sector, the sole Japanese technology showcased

at the event was moisture testers manufactured by Kett Electric Laboratory, Co. Ltd. (Kett). Kett's local distributor, CI-MOTORS CORPORATION, presented stick-type raw cashew moisture testers along with stationary moisture testers suitable for various grains, including cashew. If you are interested in exploring these products further, please visit Kett's website at the URL provided below or contact CI-MOTORS CORPORATION for more information.

- Raw Cashew Moisture Tester HB-600:
https://www.kett.co.jp/products_en/hb-600/
- Grain Moisture Tester PM-650:
https://www.kett.co.jp/products_en/pm-650/
- Grain Moisture Tester PM-450:
https://www.kett.co.jp/products_en/pm-450/
- CI-MOTORS CORPORATION:
Mr. Mamadu Camara
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Kett's moisture testers, PM-650 (left), HB-600 (Center) and PM-450 (right).

Kubota combine harvester operator training in Niakala and Yamoussoukro



Kubota Corporation (Kubota) introduced the DC70 PLUS

combine harvesters to the Ivorian market. In early June 2023, the AFICAT team was invited to observe one of the DC70 PLUS training sessions organized by Kubota's local distributor, Lassire Industrie. This session was attended by operators of agricultural machinery service providers in Niakara and Yamoussoukro. The DC70 PLUS, powered by a reputable Kubota engine, demonstrates high harvesting efficiency, even in challenging paddy lodging conditions, thereby reducing grain losses. During the sessions, one of the trainees who had

encountered a broken part promptly sought assistance from Lassire Industrie's trainer. Without delay, the trainer ordered the spare part and provided guidance on how to address the issue. Kubota prioritizes offering reliable and swift after-sales service, a philosophy well-embraced by its distributor through internal training (please refer to the article in the previous issue). If you are interested in Kubota machinery such as the DC70 PLUS, please reach out to Lassire Industrie for further information.

- Lassire Industrie:
Mr. Soro Abou
a.soro@lassire.com.
- Kubota official website:
<https://www.kubota.com/>



DC70 PLUS introduced to a machinery service provider in Niakara



DC70 PLUS introduced to a machinery service provider in Yamoussoukro

AFICAT exhibits Japanese technologies at the 9th CARD General Meeting



The 9th General Meeting of the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) convened in Abidjan on July 4 and 5, 2023. CARD serves as a consultative body comprising bilateral donors and regional and international organizations collaborating with rice-producing African countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹ The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) assumes the lead role in coordinating all activities.

This biannual general meeting provides a platform for stakeholders from 32 African countries to convene, assess progress, and deliberate on strategies for doubling rice production across Africa. The theme of the 9th general meeting, "Rice value chain development through engagement of the private sector," sparked dynamic discussions on the private sector's role in mechanizing rice production and processing.

The AFICAT team was honored to host a booth at the meeting venue, showcasing product brochures and videos from 12 Japanese companies. While AFICAT operates in five countries, this exhibition facilitated the introduction of Japanese companies' products to participants not only from Côte d'Ivoire but also from other African nations.

Representatives from three Japanese companies, namely Kett, Satake Corporation (Satake), and Sumitomo Corporation, actively participated at the AFICAT booth. CI-MOTORS CORPORATION, Kett's local distributor, demonstrated Kett's moisture testers; Satake's local sales manager and two Japanese members engaged visitors at the booth; and a local consultant to Sumitomo Corporation promoted telematics devices, leading to productive business discussions with interested parties.

Through these efforts, we believe we have contributed to bolstering the presence of Japanese technologies in Ivorian and African markets,

¹ CARD website: <https://riceforafrica.net/about-card/>



leveraging the support and extensive networks of CARD. We look forward to fostering continued collaboration between CARD and AFICAT, both committed to the overarching goal of advancing agricultural production in Africa.



The AFICAT booth received visits from the Ivorian Minister of Justice, General Director of ADERIZ, Vice President of JICA, and other VIPs.



Satake, Sumitomo Corporation, and Kett representatives (from the left to right) engaged visitors to the AFICAT booth.



Many people visited the AFICAT booth and inquired about Japanese technologies.

Invitation program participants report their insights from their visit to Japan

Mr. Bi Kouassi Christian Cyrille Kouame from the *Agence pour le Développement de la filière RIZ* (ADERIZ) and Mr. Awless Marcel Codjo from the *Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Côte d'Ivoire* (CCI-CI) represented the public and private sectors, respectively, and participated in the Invitation Program to Japan in May 2023 (for more details, please refer to AFICAT Newsletter All Countries No. 1). Following their return from Japan, in July, two debriefing sessions for the program were conducted. During these sessions, the two invitees separately shared insights and experiences from their visit to Japan with other stakeholders in the Ivorian agricultural sector.

The first session, aimed at the public sector, took place on July 12, during which Mr. Kouame delivered a presentation to officials from ADERIZ and the *Ministère d'État, Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural de Côte d'Ivoire* (MEMINADER). During the discussions, participants emphasized their appreciation for Japanese products in the Ivorian market due to their durability. They expressed hopes that Japanese products would become more widely available in the country through AFICAT. Another point of discussion centered on the significance of rice moisture management. It was highlighted that products from Kett (moisture testers) and Satake (milling machines)—companies that Mr. Kouame personally visited in Japan—could significantly contribute to addressing this concern.



The debriefing session held at ADERIZ by Mr. Kouame for the public sector stakeholders

Likewise, on July 20, Mr. Awless shared his program insights with a private sector audience. He expressed admiration for Japanese technologies and the strong public-private relationships observed in Japan. Drawing from his experience at CCI-CI, he proposed that the Ivorian market explore the introduction of more Japanese products. His presentation prompted numerous questions and suggestions from the audience. One suggestion proposed the establishment of a network among Ivorian private and public entities to facilitate the sharing of information about Japanese products, emphasizing self-reliance rather than sole dependence on support from development partners like JICA.



The debriefing session held at CCI-CI by Mr. Awless for the private sector stakeholders

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Mr. Kouame and Mr. Awless, AFICAT successfully conveyed the potential of Japanese products to more members of the Ivorian agricultural community. Through these endeavors, we aim to strengthen our relationship with both the public and private sectors of Cote d'Ivoire, fostering advancements in agricultural mechanization.

Satake optical sorter demonstration at Yamoussoukro

On July 6, participants of the CARD General Meeting had the opportunity to visit the laboratory of JICA's technical cooperation project, *Le Project de Promotion du Riz Local Phase 2* (PRORIL2) (Local Rice Promotion Project Phase 2) in Yamoussoukro. PRORIL2 has incorporated numerous Japanese machines into its laboratory for its operations. Among these machines is an optical sorter manufactured by Satake Corporation (Satake). As part of the visit, CARD participants witnessed a demonstration of rice sorting conducted by PRORIL2 members.



A PRORIL2 member demonstrating rice sorting with SATAKE's optical sorter (FMS2000-F)

The multi-purpose optical sorter, FMS2000-F, designed to sort various crops beyond rice, including nuts and coffee beans, was the focus of a product introduction seminar organized by the AFICAT team in collaboration with Satake. This seminar, targeting individuals in the cashew nuts sector, took place on July 19 at the PRORIL2 laboratory. During the initial segment of the seminar, a representative from Satake's Cote d'Ivoire Office delivered a presentation on the FMS2000-F technology. Subsequently, a member of PRORIL2 demonstrated the optical sorting of cashew nuts using FMS2000-F. Participants emphasized the importance of accurate sorting in enhancing the quality of cashew nuts. Conducted in partnership with *Le Centre d'innovations et de technologies de l'anacarde* (CITA) (Cashew Nuts Innovation and Technology Center), this event provided a platform to introduce Satake's high-precision optical sorter to individuals within the



cashew nut sector. The seminar saw participation from 32 attendees, including cashew nut processors, government officials, and representatives from development partner projects, all gaining insights into the capabilities of FMS2000-F.



Participants checking the sorting results

In addition to optical (or color) sorting, FMS2000-F possesses the capability to sort grain size, effectively identifying broken materials, materials adhering to others, and defective materials of similar color to good materials. This functionality allows for the sorting of all nuts without omission, including those with thin skins or cracked shells. Following the demonstration, participants lauded the accuracy of the sorting results while also offering valuable feedback on areas for improvement to optimize the sorter's utility at their facilities. This seminar marked Satake's first opportunity to promote FMS2000-F to stakeholders within the cashew nuts sector in Cote d'Ivoire. With insights garnered from participant reactions, Satake now possesses a deeper understanding of the sector's needs. As a result, the AFICAT team anticipates that Satake will take more proactive measures to market FMS2000-F and contribute to the mechanization of the Ivorian cashew nuts industry.

- Satake website:
<https://www.satake-group.com/index.html>
- Satake Europe Ltd. Cote d'Ivoire Office :
Mr. Kassem Nameh
Kassem.Nameh@satake-europe.com

The field test of foliar fertilizer, ORGAMIN, initiated at AfricaRice



AfricaRice



Pulsar International
株式会社バルサー・インターナショナル

In collaboration with AfricaRice, an international research institute for rice headquartered in Côte d'Ivoire, Pulsar International, a Japanese agricultural input manufacturer, initiated field trials of their organic foliar fertilizer product named ORGAMIN at AfricaRice's research field in Bouaké. The primary objective of these trials was to assess the efficacy of ORGAMIN in Ivorian farming conditions, focusing on factors such as yield, quality, and disease resistance under varying irrigation and chemical fertilizer application scenarios. AfricaRice researchers have shown considerable interest in ORGAMIN and have developed a comprehensive field-testing plan to evaluate its performance.

The researchers planted seeds in the nursery on August 3, 2023 and treated the seedlings with ORGAMIN. During the transplanting stage, it was observed that the rice seedlings treated with ORGAMIN exhibited better-developed roots compared to the untreated seedlings. Furthermore, field observations on September visually confirmed vigorous grass growth in the plots sprayed with ORGAMIN. The harvest took place in December, and detailed analysis of the yield increase and other factors is currently underway. Once the results are available, AFICAT plans to provide the data to potential local distributors who have shown interest in ORGAMIN, allowing them to understand the positive effects of this product. If you are interested, please reach out to the AFICAT team for further information.

【ORGAMIN】

ORGAMIN consists of a blend of ingredients, including fermented fish extract, molasses (sugarcane), and various nutrients like magnesium sulfate, manganese sulfate, boric acid, among others. The fermentation process yields a mixture rich in organic materials such as amino acids, vitamins, sugars, and nucleic acids. Utilizing ORGAMIN can lead to several benefits in agricultural settings. It has the potential to enhance sugar content, promote the development of robust root systems, increase crop yield, and bolster resistance against diseases.

- Contact (Pulsar International):
Mr. Rinpei Inoue, CEO
inoue@pulsar.co.jp
<https://orgamin.com/>



FUJIMIN, fulvic acid solution, and ORGAMIN, foliar fertilizer



Left: Plot with ORGAMIN and fertilizer application. Right: Plot with Fertilizer-only.



Roots at the time of transplanting. Left: Seedlings sprayed with ORGAMIN

Japanese technologies exhibited at SARA 2023

From September 29 to October 8, the AFICAT team actively participated in the 6th edition of the *Salon de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Animales* (SARA) (Agriculture and Animal Resource Salon) as an exhibitor. Leveraging one of ADERIZ's booths, the AFICAT team distributed brochures and leaflets from 14 Japanese companies, showcasing a diverse array of agricultural machines, materials, and technologies.



CI-MOTORS staff demonstrating Kett's moisture testers



The AFICAT team listened to visitors' inquiries and introduced Japanese companies' products according to their different needs.

Several Japanese companies participated in the AFICAT booth by sending their local representatives. CI-MOTORS CORPORATION, serving as Kett's local dealer in Côte d'Ivoire, brought Kett instruments to the AFICAT booth. Members from CI-MOTORS demonstrated how to operate these instruments to visitors. Additionally, Sumitomo Corporation, a Japanese trading company that sells telematics devices manufactured by Tierra S.p.A., an affiliate of the Japanese optical equipment manufacturer, TOPCON CORPORATION, sent their local consultant to the AFICAT booth to promote the telematics devices.

During the 10-day active promotion of Japanese technologies at SARA, more than 300 individuals signed the visitor's book at our booth, with many other visitors engaging with us despite not signing. Visitors listened to our explanations, sought additional information not covered in the brochures, and exchanged contact details with us. This extensive outreach at SARA led us to believe that a significant number of Ivorians are now aware of the presence of Japanese companies in the local market.

The technologies offered by the 14 Japanese companies have the potential to enhance various aspects of the agricultural value chain, spanning from land preparation, machine maintenance and monitoring, plant growth, harvesting, to post-harvest management, and beyond. Through conversations with visitors, we reaffirmed that Ivorians already hold a high regard for the quality of Japanese technologies, with many expressing interest in purchasing Japanese machines or equipment. Of particular note, was the demand for small-scale machines suitable for smallholder farmers, as well as environmentally friendly agricultural inputs. We intend to convey the demands and preferences of Ivorian agricultural stakeholders to Japanese companies through our Japanese newsletter, aiming to attract them to the Ivorian market with appropriate technologies that address local needs and concerns.



Many visitors showed interests in Japanese products



Yanmar machines were exhibited at the booth of their local distributor, ATCComafrique

AFICAT pilot phase wrap-up seminar

The pilot phase of AFICAT in Côte d'Ivoire, initiated in July 2022, concluded in October 2023. On October 3, the AFICAT team organized a wrap-up seminar to present the results and outcomes of its activities over the past 15 months.

The seminar took place at the Grand Hotel d'Abidjan and saw the participation of approximately 30 AFICAT stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. Among the participants were representatives from MEMINADER, ADERIZ, l'Agence Nationale d'Appui au Développement Rural (ANADER) (National Rural Development Support Agency), CITA, AfricaRice, CCI-CI, a rice industry group (OIA Riz), a private agricultural machinery dealer (ATCComafrique, Yanmar distributor), an input dealer (FIRMAGRO), a Japanese company (Sumitomo Corporation), and many others.

Following the AFICAT team's presentation, participants shared their views and feedback on the results of the AFICAT pilot phase, which were overall very positive. Mr. Traore Aboubakary, Director of Evaluation at ADERIZ, expressed appreciation for AFICAT's efforts in facilitating the entry of Japanese products into the Ivorian market.

During the pilot phase, AFICAT was implemented jointly by JICA and the two governmental organizations MEMINADER and ADERIZ. The AFICAT team extends sincere gratitude to these main partner organizations for assigning focal persons who worked together to conduct field studies and activities. Their significant contributions were instrumental in the successful completion of the pilot phase. With a shared goal of improving the Ivorian agricultural sector, the AFICAT team aims to deepen its partnership with these organizations in the next phase to attract more Japanese companies to Côte d'Ivoire.



Participants actively discussed the achievements of the AFICAT pilot phase activities and future actions to be taken.



Results of the AFICAT pilot phase in five countries shared in a webinar in Japan

On December 19, the 5th subcommittee meeting for African agriculture of the JICA Platform for Food and Agriculture (JiPFA) was convened online. The AFICAT team presented the results of AFICAT pilot activities over the past 2 years to approximately 100 participants from Japanese companies and other stakeholders.

At the beginning of the meeting, representatives from JICA headquarters and JICA Tsukuba Center highlighted that AFICAT successfully collaborated with numerous Japanese companies through its pilot activities. They emphasized JICA’s commitment to further promoting AFICAT by synergizing with other JICA schemes such as the “Agriculture Co-Creation Hub” at JICA Tsukuba.

Subsequently, the AFICAT team presented the results of their engagements with over 30 Japanese companies across the five countries, along with the lessons learned and their implications. Based on these insights, the AFICAT team proposed the establishment of an AFICAT committee in each of the five countries, composed of representatives from the local public and private sectors, tasked with fielding inquiries from Japanese companies. These committees are expected to facilitate the sustainable implementation of AFICAT initiatives.

Representing Japanese AFICAT partner companies, Kett and Honda Motor Co., Ltd. (Honda) delivered their remarks. Kett expressed gratitude, stating, “Thanks to AFICAT, we received new orders from Ghana where we had no prior business establishment”. Honda remarked, “We now have a deeper understanding of the realities of agricultural machinery in Africa, previously unknown to us. Agricultural machinery has become a core business for our African subsidiaries”. Their statements underscore the significant contribution of AFICAT support to their business expansion across various fronts.

Five AFICAT advisors, representing the private sector, academia, and media, shared their positive feedback regarding the AFICAT pilot phase and offered suggestions for the next phase. Their

valuable recommendations included: “Consider viewing several neighboring countries as one big regional market”; “Promote personnel exchanges to enhance the capacity of engineers, researchers and AFICAT focal persons”; “Increase efforts in PR activities to enhance the visibility of Japanese technologies in African markets. For example, Japanese companies should participate in local exhibition events and JICA should organize Japanese company missions to Africa.”; and many others.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Osamu Kubota, JICA Vice President, highlighted the food security challenges in Africa, driven by population growth and the emergence of a significant market. He emphasized that introducing Japanese technologies on a commercial basis in Africa could enhance agricultural productivity and address food security concerns. To conclude the meeting, he reaffirmed JICA’s commitment to collaborating with Japanese companies through AFICAT to tackle Africa’s food challenges.

- Agriculture Co-Creation Hub: https://www.jica.go.jp/Resource/tsukuba/english/office/activities/activities_11.html

(2) AFICATパイロット活動の実績 ③本邦企業の概要

30社以上の本邦企業と連携（下表はニュースレターで紹介した企業のみ企業名を掲載）

農機メーカー (20社)		etc.
資材 (6社)		etc.
技術/システム (4社)		etc.
その他 (4社)		etc.

The AFICAT team’s slide in Japanese. More than 30 Japanese companies benefitted from AFICAT support



Editors' postscript

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to you for your consistent support and for reading our three newsletters for AFICAT in Côte d'Ivoire during the pilot phase. At present, we have amassed over 450 subscribers to our AFICAT Ivorian newsletter, highlighting the collaborative efforts and support we have received from numerous individuals during our pilot phase. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to all our important stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire.

Moving forward, we remain committed to actively promoting the attractiveness of Côte d'Ivoire to Japanese companies, thereby facilitating the contribution of more Japanese technologies to the mechanization and enhancement of the Ivorian agricultural sector. JICA plans to initiate the next phase in 2024, and we hope for your continued patience and anticipation as AFICAT and Japanese companies prepare to return to Côte d'Ivoire. Thank you very much for your support!

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(<https://www.jica.go.jp/activities/issues/agricul/aficat/index.html>)

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