



2011 AWARD Fellow
Foluke Abimbola Aderemi

Position	Senior lecturer
Institution	Bowen University
Country	Nigeria
PhD	Animal Science, University of Ibadan, 2001
Mentor	Dr. M.K. Adewumi Department of Animal Science, University of Ibadan

Research area: Characterizing the carbohydrate fractions of some agro-industrial waste with the aim of developing effective enzymes that will aid the digestion and usage of such in monogastric animals.

Foluke Abimbola Aderemi always wanted to be a problem solver, so she was naturally attracted to agricultural studies. "My eldest brother studied agriculture and he did everything to discourage me from taking it, but I just kept on moving up."

Today, Aderemi is a senior lecturer at Bowen University where her research is focused on using agro-industrial waste, such as cassava leaves and root reject and sieviate, to produce poultry feed. "Affording feed is the biggest problem that poultry farmers face," she says. "About 60 to 70 percent of their profit goes to purchasing feed. If we can bring down the cost and produce better feed, then even the poorest smallholders could afford to raise poultry."

Concerned about food security in Nigeria, Aderemi wants to help provide solutions. "People and animals are competing for the same food. We have to start using agro-industrial waste for feed instead of maize," she says. "I look around at all the agricultural waste that is causing environmental problems, and I ask myself, 'What can you do to change this?'" Recently, a factory in Nigeria read about her research on the Internet and approached her about possible collaboration. "They produce cassava syrup and the process produces a lot of waste that they usually give to pig farmers. They wondered if they could do something better with it." Although the collaboration was stalled because of the economic crisis, she hopes to resume talks with the factory in the future.

In her research, Aderemi also replaced wheat bran with sweet potato tubers and vines in poultry feed. "It is much cheaper and doesn't affect the performance of the broilers negatively," she observes. She plans to publish more scientific articles, and recently completed a research on using moringa oleifera as poultry feed. "I'm also experimenting on harnessing aquatic weeds harvested from fish ponds as feed ingredients in monogastric production."

An ambitious researcher, Aderemi is determined to keep advancing. "The day I became a PhD holder, I was so happy. After so many discouragements, I made it," she laughs. This former dean of students and the mother of three grown children now has her sights set on being a professor. "I want to be a good mentor to

upcoming scientists," she says. However, she recognizes that she needs to be more visible in her field if she is to move up the ladder. She has already started networking more deliberately, beginning with some 250 fellow AWARD scientists. "You can be good, but invisible. With this platform, we AWARD Fellows will be projected."

Aderemi is one of a growing number of African women agricultural scientists who have won an AWARD Fellowship. AWARD is a professional development program that strengthens the research and leadership skills of African women in agricultural science, empowering them to contribute more effectively to poverty alleviation and food security in sub-Saharan Africa. AWARD is generously supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development. For more information, visit www.awardfellowships.org
