



2009 AWARD Fellow Alaba Jolaosho

Position:	Associate professor/ Reader
Institution:	University of Agriculture
Country:	Nigeria
PhD:	Pasture (Forage) Agronomy University of Ibadan 2000
Mentored by:	Professor Olufemi Sunday Onifade, Deputy Dean College of Animal Science and Livestock Production University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria

Research area: Forage production and conservation.

Dr. Alaba Jolaosho is the first female professor of Forage Production, Conservation, and Utilization in Nigeria. She developed her focus on forage conservation during a post-doctoral fellowship at the School of Biotechnology and Agriculture, University of Leeds, in 2002. Inspired during visits to farms in the U.K., she obtained a research grant to develop two affordable, manual hay balers for use by local farmers, and constructed a silo on campus to teach her students practical skills in forage conservation.

Increasing hay and silage production is critical in Nigeria, especially given climatic and demographic changes. "There has been a great rural-urban migration that has led to the under-development of rural areas," observes Jolaosho. "Agriculture, especially livestock, has been seriously affected, resulting in low protein intake within the populace. People move to the city seeking white-collar jobs and are abandoning farming. It's a result of the drudgery of farming due to a lack of simple machinery," she explains.

Jolaosho holds a PhD in Pasture (Forage) Agronomy from the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. She has served for 18 years with the Department of Pasture and Range Management at the University of Agriculture in Abeokuta, Nigeria. She has published articles in animal science journals worldwide, including in Australia and Japan, and has a special interest in the nutrition of small ruminants, such as the West African dwarf sheep. Jolaosho is a member of the British Grasslands Society and is a founding member of the Nigerian Grasslands Society.

Grasslands management has many applications, according to Jolaosho, including peace-building between herders feuding over precious pasture. "We want to educate farmers, policy makers and government members in solving the frequent communal clashes in northern Nigeria. We hope to discover other hidden benefits of proper grasslands management and harness the natural resources available in the country."

Jolaosho says AWARD is helping her to develop her leadership skills and competency. "It's a great opportunity to be mentored, instead of just the usual academic pursuit of reading and writing exams. I want to learn from others, instead of just learning from my mistakes," she says. "I intend to leave a legacy of hard work, development, integrity, and diligent leadership in my country."

Jolaosho is one of 180 African woman 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. For more information, please visit www.awardfellowships.org
