

Sudan Wants to Learn Satellite Imaging in Farms with Brazilians

Contributed by Isaura Daniel
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Sudan wants to send their technicians to Brazil to receive training at the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa). The intention was expressed during the visit of a mission from the Arab country to Brazil last month.

The idea, according to information supplied by the Embrapa, is for professionals at the Agricultural Research Corporation (ARC) to come to Brazil and study agricultural technologies, especially in the area of integration between agriculture and livestock.

Embrapa usually offers this type of training to other countries by means of international agreements. The Sudanese delegation that came to Brazil was comprised of the person in charge of the Sudan Agriculture Revitalization Program, Ahmed All Geneif, the international foreign relations director at the ARC, Babiker El Hag Mousa, and the executive at agricultural company Zeidab International, Khalid Omar El Sheikh.

The group visited two units of Embrapa, in the Federal District: Embrapa Cerrados (for the Savannah) and Embrapa Hortaliças (for Vegetables).

According to the researcher at Embrapa Cerrados, Roberto Teixeira Alves, the type of integration between agriculture and animal husbandry that appealed to the Sudanese is crop rotation of pasture and grain.

The aim is to recover old grazing land. Embrapa recommends that every three years, part of the grazing land should be farmed with other cultures such as corn, sorghum, rice, millet, soy and bean. The idea is for parts of the land to gradually receive rotation, until it spans the entire grazing area.

Alves explains that remote sensing also attracted the interest of the Sudanese group. The system uses satellite images to monitor the country's native vegetation and production areas. According to Alves, every existing biome in Brazil is currently mapped out.

Thus, claims the researcher, it is possible to make a rational plan for using the land. By means of the system, it is possible to know, for instance, how much land can be used for production while ensuring the maintenance of native vegetation areas.

According to the researcher, the exchange program was not defined. This type of cooperation usually involves the research institution's international section, as well as other government organizations.

Demand for international training from Embrapa, however, is on the rise, as it is a federal government policy. At Embrapa Hortaliças, for example, the group sought information on production, research, technology transfer and the seed market.

The mission's schedule in Brazil was organized by the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade. The aim of the delegation was to identify possibilities for partnerships in the agricultural field. The Sudanese ARC is based in Khartoum and has existed since 1902. The company does research in 24 different areas, especially wheat, rice, sunflowers, sorghum, corn and cotton.

Approximately 30% of the Sudanese economy is linked to the agricultural sector. The segment answers to 80% of job generation in the country. Agricultural production in Sudan is basically comprised of cotton, peanut, sorghum, corn, wheat, Arabic gum, sugarcane, cassava, mango, papaya, banana, sweet pea and sesame.

The country also farms sheep and cattle. Despite the relevance of agriculture, Sudan made oil discoveries in recent years, thus increasing its investment and revenues in the sector.

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