



## **NEWSFLASH : Oil Palm Producers in Ghana looking at Best Management Practices to Increase Crop Yield**

October 01, 2012. Penang, Malaysia – Given the increasing demand for palm oil worldwide, and the reduced availability of land resources in traditional producing countries in Southeast Asia, frontiers for commercial oil palm production are being explored in Africa and South America.

Three major oil palm producers in Ghana have endorsed the establishment of a Best Management Practice (BMP) project to intensify their oil palm production. The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) - an organization that generates and disseminates information for sustainable plant nutrition and management of cropping systems - will work in partnership with Benso Oil Palm Plantation, Twifo Oil Palm Plantation, Norpalm Ghana Limited, smallholder out growers, Ghana Oil Palm Research Institute and Ghana Ministry of Agriculture to establish BMP project sites.

The project will be a pioneering effort in West Africa where intensive, high yielding, commercial oil palm production systems are in their infancy. It is estimated that losses in opportunities are indeed significant from the four million hectares of oil palm grown in West Africa, due to reduced yields. The BMP project proposed by IPNI provides an opportunity for oil palm growers to intensify production on pre-existing plantations, enhance their profitability and manage the environment sustainably, as shown in previously successful BMP projects in Indonesia.

Adapting best management practices from Southeast Asia, where production increases with BMP have been shown, the four-year project will include data collection (i.e. climate monitoring, soil chemical and physical analysis, fertilizer use, agronomic management, and crop recovery), optimization of production process, and training with cost-effective techniques to increase production of oil palm yields.

The BMP project site at Benso Oil Palm Plantation will also function as a learning centre for oil palm plantations in West Africa. By engaging with the Sustainable West African Palm-Oil Programme, that supports the intensification of oil palm production, IPNI aims to transfer best management practices from its BMP project sites to other plantations and smallholder systems in the region.

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### **About IPNI**

The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) is a not-for-profit, science-based organization dedicated to the responsible management of plant nutrition for the benefit of people. Through cooperation and partnerships with respected institutions around the world, IPNI adds its strength to agronomic research, education, demonstrations, training, and other endeavors. Best management practices for nutrient stewardship encourage the concept of 4Rs - applying the right nutrient source, at the right rate, at the right time, and in the right place. To learn more about IPNI, please visit: [www.ipni.net](http://www.ipni.net)

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