

The Rubber Outgrowers Unit (ROU) is the extension wing of the Ghana Rubber Estates Limited (GREL) responsible for the implementation of the Rubber Outgrower Plantations Project (ROPP). ROPP is a government project aimed at assisting Outgrowers to alleviate poverty. The vision of the unit is economic empowerment through rubber cultivation for sustainable rural community development to alleviate poverty.

Its mission statement are to deliver quality and affordable inputs and services to rubber Outgrowers through advance and innovative technology; to enable Outgrowers have sustainable income, enjoy a better living and to contribute to national development and to collaborate with all stakeholders to effectively and efficiently

Plan Your Future;



Plant Rubber Trees

GUARD YOUR TREES AGAINST FIRE OUTBREAK

Rubber trees suffer from injuries most of the time. Prominent among them is fire damage. This is quite a common incident in rubber cultivation, especially during the wintering season, as the condition is dry and there are a lot of dry leaves on the ground. The cause of the fire is mostly accidental. Rat hunters and palm wine tappers are most of the time found to be the cause of the fire outbreak in rubber plantations. Young plants can be killed outright. Leaves of older trees become scorched, turn brown and eventually fall. The affected bark bleeds, and later is invaded by borer beetles which eventually kill the tree. Trees affected by fire damage must be immediately (before the borer beetles come in) white-washed with a mixture of 500 grams dehydrated lime in 1 litre of water. This is to reduce the radiation effect of sunlight on the already scorched bark and at the same time keeps away the borer beetles. Later, the affected dead tissues must be removed and the resultant wounds treated with suitable wound dressing such as neutral grease. As the dry season approaches, outgrowers must ensure that a high level of maintenance culture is maintained. General slashing must have been completed by December whiles cleaning of the intra row lines must commence as soon as possible. Again, fire belt must be created around rubber farms which share common boundaries with newly cleared farms in order that during burning of the newly cleared farms, the adjoining rubber farms would not be affected. As much as possible, farmers with newly cleared area must endeavour to inform other farmers whose farms share boundaries with them, when burning of the new farms would be carried out. As a result, the adjoining farmers could also prepare adequately to help in the event of fire outbreak.



Rubber farm completely burnt because there was no line cleaning



Slashing without line cleaning predisposes trees to destruction when there is fire outbreak



Rubber trees not burnt because line cleaning was done after slashing



RUBBER OUTGROWER UNIT (ROU)

PLAN YOUR FUTURE;
PLANT RUBBER TREES

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GREL, B-BOVID SIGN AGREEMENT



Mr. Issa Quedraego (L), CEO and Founder of B-Bovid exchanging agreement papers with Mr. Lionel Barre, MD of GREL.

As part of efforts to enhance food security in rubber growing areas in the Western and Central Regions, the Ghana Rubber Estates Limited, GREL, has in partnership with B-BOVID, an innovative and transformational agro-processing company in the Western Region, signed a partnership agreement to assist small holder farmers to produce more food. In this joint venture, GREL will use the premises of B-BOVID as a demonstration and training centre, where farmers in the Rubber Outgrower Plantations Project would be trained on livestock keeping and crop production. The expected outcomes are that farmers will acquire skills and adopt best agricultural practices which would lead to increased food production for farmers in and around rubber growing areas. The cost of facilities and structures for the project, excluding cost of training is GHC 170,000.00.

Since 1995, GREL has been the Technical Operator for Rubber Outgrower Projects and have had four phases since then. To date 5450 outgrowers have been assisted to develop 22000 hectares in the Western, Central and Parts of Ashanti Regions. In 2011, the total production from the Rubber Outgrower Projects was 6482 tons dry rubber content.

The Rubber Outgrower Projects V is expected to be launched in 2013 with a target of assisting 4500 farmers to plant 13500 hectares. This will bring the total number of farmers participating in the project to 10,000 with a total hecterage of 40,000 by 2015. The Managing Director of GREL, Mr. Lionel Barres says the collaboration with B-BOVID means a lot to the company because farmers need to have food crops for feeding aside growing rubber for money.

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PREPARATION TOWARDS PLANTING AND TAPPING



THE PROJECT DIRECTOR, MR. E. A. OWUSU

It would be recalled that in 2010, ROPP IV started with the aim of planting 10,500 hectares of rubber over three year period in both Western, Central and parts of Ashanti Regions. It is therefore anticipated that in 2012, the target would be completed.

It was observed that lining and pegging of outgrower farms in 2011 went beyond the scheduled period,

resulting in late planting of some outgrower fields. In 2012, planting is scheduled to commence from 7th May to 15th June. I urge outgrowers to begin their land preparation on time in order to have their farms planted before the rainy season is over. This would ensure low mortality and good density of their planted farms. Currently, because of defoliation of the rubber trees, all farms have been suspended from being tapped. This is the period the outgrower must use to carry out activities such as cleaning and replacement of their tapping inputs, fixing of inputs to newly opened trees, construction of platforms, greasing of wounds etc. The Mature Farms Coordination team has also been going round opening new trees which are due for tapping and also fixing rain guards on the trees. In March to April 2012, tapping training school would be organized for new tappers as well as refresher training for old tappers in various locations. Tapping resumption is scheduled for April, by which time it is hoped all the trees would have refoliated. Finally, it is my hope that outgrowers would follow all the field technical instructions and our programme of activities in order to increase productivity.

DIRECTION AND SLOPE OF TAPPING CUT

Latex flow through latex vessels found in the bark of the rubber tree. Latex vessels run spirally from low left to high right at an inclination of 3.7 to 5.0 degrees from the vertical. Latex will flow out of the bark, only if the latex vessels are severed or cut. The more latex vessels are severed, the more will be the flow of latex. Therefore, the tapping cut is made in the opposite direction of the latex vessels, that is, from high left to low right. The slope of the tapping cut is made at such an angle that gives maximum yield with minimum bark consumption and a fast flow of the latex along the tapping cut into the latex cup. The tapping cut angle of the slope influences the length and bark consumption, which in turn is related to yield. Basically, an increase in the angle of slope of the tapping cut gives higher yield. Based on experiments, for clonal materials, the slope of the cut is recommended at an angle of 30 to 35 degrees, while for the clonal seedlings is 25 degrees from the horizontal. This means that the slope of cut for clonal material is at least 5 degrees more than that for the clonal seedling. The bark of the clonal material is generally thinner due to less corky layer but contains more latex vessels. Its increased slope is to enable the latex to flow faster along the tapping cut, thus avoiding an overflow over the trunk. On the other hand, the bark of the seedling tree is thicker. The 25 degrees slope is therefore adequate to cause an efficient flow of its latex along the tapping cut.

Source: www.lgm.gov.my

Jokes! Jokes!! Jokes!!!

Your Lawyer is Dead

A man called his law firm and asked the receptionist if he could speak to his lawyer, Mr. Smith. She replied that she was sorry, but his lawyer was dead. The next day the man called again wanting to speak with Mr. Smith. The receptionist again said that she was sorry, but he was dead. The next day, the man rang again and asked if he could talk to his lawyer Mr. Smith. The receptionist said that she was sorry but she had already told him a hundred times that he was dead. The man replied, I know that, I just like hearing it!

Which to Shoot?

Jill: You are in a room with a mass murderer, a terrorist and a lawyer. You have a gun with only two bullets. What do you do?

Sampson: Shoot the lawyer twice.

SUCCESSFUL PATHWAY TO BECOMING A 'PARADEE'

In one of the previous publications, a 'Paradee' was identified to be a wealthy rubber farmer. Though rubber cultivation is a lucrative business which can financially empower farmers, there are certain factors which have to be considered in the establishment of a rubber plantation to realizing your dream of becoming a 'Paradee'. First of all, the type of planting materials and the clones must have known characteristics. Robust planting materials (i.e. high yielding, resistant to diseases and wind damage, good response to stimulation etc.) should be used for planting. You must avoid the use of illegitimate and volunteer planting materials if profit making is your goal of establishing the plantation. Secondly, the proposed sites for the rubber farm must also be considered. In Ghana, areas of suitability for rubber cultivation include the forest zones of the Western, Central, Eastern and Ashanti Regions with minimum rainfall of 1200mm per annum. The slope of the land should not be more than 20%. Rocky and swampy lands should be avoided. The soils should be well-drained and deep enough to enhance good rooting. Another factor is the timeliness of operations which are undertaken on rubber plantations. All the important activities in a rubber farm are time bound. For instance, land preparation should be completed by end of March for lining and pegging and holing to be done in April before planting of the materials in May/June. Continuous maintenance of the planted materials would also guarantee low mortality and early maturity of the rubber trees. Schedule of fertilizer and chemical application must be strictly adhered to. At maturity, tapping must commence before 6:00 am and end by 10:00 am every day. It must also be emphasized that all operations should be executed to specification. Again, in order to reduce the cost of operations, the operational norms of every activity such as line cleaning, inter-row slashing and pruning should be adhered to. It is important to state that production depends on the number of trees in the farm. It is worth noting that a smallholder with an average of 10 acres (4 hectares) can become a 'paradee' if these factors are taken into consideration.

GREL, B-BOVID SIGN AGREEMENT

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Mr. Barres however denied suggestions that GREL has taken over all arable lands for rubber plantations at the expense of food cropping, which threatens food security. He explained that rubber plantations in the Western and Central regions cover less than 2% of arable lands. He noted that GREL aside this collaboration aimed at enhancing food security instituted a food crop program to assist farmers in producing enough and quality food per unit area in its operational areas in the year 2011. Thirteen demonstration farms were established in various locations with a variety of crops. The objective of these farms, he said, was to train farmers in Good Agricultural Practice to enhance farmers' crop productivity per unit area. This activity he said has now become a permanent feature in GREL's operations. According to him, farmers trained last year realized significant improvement in their crop yield per unit area. In 2012, farmers will be trained and assisted technically with

input support to establish demonstration farms on their own field. This will focus on terrace farming, organic farming vis-a-vis inorganic farming and the practice of crop rotation as well. GREL, as part of its corporate social responsibility has also donated 15 computers to B-BOVID's ICT in Agriculture training centre. B-BOVID Limited is a Ghanaian agro-business company that is promoting a new model of social inclusive commercial farming, which combines innovative agricultural practices, ecological farming and social entrepreneurship to deliver high quality organic products, conserve the environment, promote sustainable lifestyle, create jobs and reduce poverty in rural communities. The company works with rural people and the poor to create sustainable jobs and opportunities for sustainable development. It is based on these social commitments that the company has partnered with GREL to secure the future against food insecurity.