

Mechanization helps farmers and climate

Using machinery for rice harvesting and threshing prevents food waste among small-scale rice farmers in Nigeria. It lets farmers increase their incomes and also prevents greenhouse gas emissions. These findings come from trials at the company Olam International.

In the study, rice yields using mechanized harvesting and threshing were compared with yields with harvesting and threshing done by hand. Local youngsters were trained to operate the machinery by Olam, a global food producer.

Mechanized harvesting and threshing prevents food waste of half a ton (479 kg) per hectare, giving yields that are around 14 per cent higher compared with working manually. This approach increases farmers' incomes by about 200 dollars per hectare. Thanks to the reduction in food waste, mechaniza-



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tion prevents emissions equivalent to 1.7 tons of CO₂ per hectare even after fuel usage by harvesters and threshing machines is taken into account. So mechanization helps

combat climate change. The researchers conclude that mechanization should therefore be part of agricultural policy. Info: heike.axmann@wur.nl