Lesson 6 — Post-Harvest Technology: First Lesson

Keeping the harvest the field produced

Prepared lesson notes — the Griphan Online School. Teacher: **Nji Griphan** · griphan.48hourrfprescue.com · info@griphan.48hourrfprescue.com. These notes match the teaching video of the same name on the school's Videos page; both are free to download.

A harvest is not food until it survives the store. Post-harvest technology — handling, drying, storage and processing — is a core subject of this school, matching Nji Griphan's research home at the Centre for Food Technology and Research in Makurdi. This lesson opens the Library's Post-Harvest Technology.

Losses happen at every step after harvest — drying, threshing, transport, storage, processing — and they are of two kinds: quantity lost outright, and quality lost inside full sacks, as mould, breakage and discolouration eat the value. The four enemies are moisture, pests, heat and time.

The first days decide: harvest at true maturity, handle gently — bruises are doors for decay — and dry promptly, thinly, on raised clean surfaces, never on bare earth. Maize grain stores safely at about 13 per cent moisture; the salt-bottle test can stand in for a meter where none exists.

In store: dry, raised, inspectable. Clean the store before the new harvest — the cheapest pest control is a broom. Hermetic bags and silos protect truly dry grain for months without insecticide, because insects cannot breathe in the sealed air.

Every tonne saved after harvest needed no new land, seed or rain. For food security, post-harvest work is the cheapest production there is.

Practise

1. Name the four enemies of stored produce.
2. Give one example each of quantity loss and quality loss.
3. Explain how hermetic storage protects grain without poison.

Next steps

Continue in the Library: download the book named in this lesson and read its first chapter. Then leave your name at the enrollment door on the Online School page — classes are taught online by Nji Griphan, and a class holds at most 30 learners.