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African farmers turn to Chinese grass for prosperity

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HUYE, Rwanda, July 21 – African farmers and agricultural experts are embracing China's Juncao technology to improve mushroom cultivation, livestock feed, and rural livelihoods across the continent.

Juncao, a hybrid grass developed in China, was originally introduced for mushroom production

but is now proving highly effective in addressing food security, income generation, and environmental sustainability.

"This technology is changing lives in Zimbabwe's rural areas," said Innocent Shayamano, chief agriculture extension specialist from Zimbabwe's Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development. "It aligns with our Vision 2030 goals to boost household incomes."

Shayamano spoke during a regional workshop held July 16–23 at the China-Rwanda Agriculture Technology Demonstration Center in Huye District, southern Rwanda. Co-hosted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Rwanda's Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, and Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University of China, the workshop focused on the benefits of Juncao for mushroom farming, livestock fodder, and environmental protection.

Attendees included experts and farmers from across Africa, including a delegation of Zimbabwean farmers who hope to expand Juncao cultivation in their home communities. "Unlike cotton waste, which is becoming expensive and scarce, Juncao is abundant and can yield over 200 tonnes per hectare," Shayamano noted.

Juncao is also emerging as a reliable livestock feed, especially in drought-prone regions. "It offers a solution to the growing fodder crisis caused by climate change," he added.

First-time participant Abbas Ahmad Umar, a Nigerian farmer, called Juncao a "grass of grace" for

its many uses. “It grows mushrooms, feeds animals, and fights soil erosion. I want to promote it among youth and women in Nigeria.”

Participants will return home to serve as trainers, accelerating the spread of Juncao technology across the continent.