Developing Countries Farm Radio Network

Pack 14, Item 5

Type: Script

Date

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**Farming hint: A simple maize (corn) husking aid** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Special notes**

1. In this item we use the word "ear" of maize (corn) to refer to the part of the maize plant consisting of the cob (inner core), the grains on the cob, and the outside covering or husk(sheath). Please use whatever words your farmers are familiar with.

2. Also, you might modify the wording of the script somewhat depending on whether your farmers remove the husk at harvest time or later.

**Suggested introduction**

From all over the world, the Developing Countries Farm Radio Network collects ideas that you may be able to use. They've all been used successfully by farmers in their own areas—and they can also be used just as successfully by farmers in other areas or countries who are working under similar conditions. Here's Lorna Jackson.

**JACKSON:** If you grow maize (corn), we have a useful hint for you today from Stanislas Dike in Nigeria. It's a simple method he uses for pulling the outer husks (sheaths) off dry ears of maize at harvest time.

To begin with, here's a question that Stanislas has for you:

Have you paused to think about the pain you experience in the tips of your fingers during and after harvesting your maize? You may have been having this pain season after season at harvest time without knowing how to avoid it. Here's a simple method. All you need is a sharp nail or spike and a piece of cord or string 45 or 50 centimetres (18 or 20 inches) long. Tie one end of the cord to the nail just below the head, and the other end to the wrist of your right hand. This is so you won't lose the nail. Now you're ready to start harvesting your dry maize.

Take the nail in your right hand, and take hold of an ear of maize in your left hand. Use the pointed end of the nail to scratch a split in the upper (tip) end of the maize husk. Then with your two hands, you can easily tear down the husk following the split made by the nail. Doing it this way, you'll no longer feel the pain you used to have in your fingertips—the pain caused byremoving the husks from the many ears of maize that you harvest.

Stanislas Dike says "We are currently using this method on our 50 hectare (about 125 acre) maize farm in Ogun State in Nigeria. I thought of this method, I experimented with it; then I introduced it to my colleagues."

Serving Agriculture, the Basic Industry, this is Lorna Jackson for Stanislas Dike in Nigeria.

**Information source**

DCFRN participant Stanislas Ugochukwu Dike, Nigeria.