

# AgriConnect

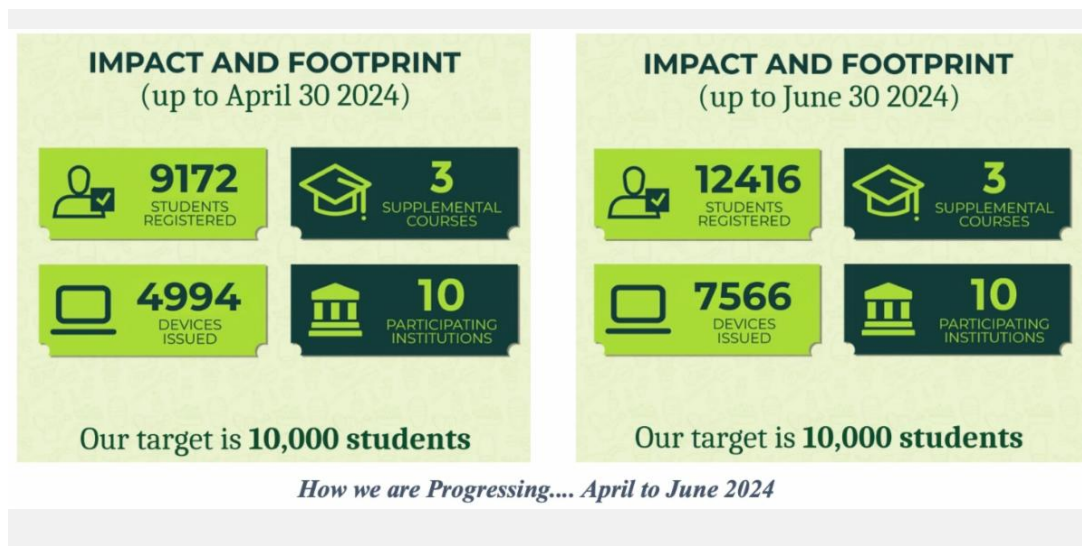
DIGITALLY EMPOWERING OUR YOUTH TO LEAD THE MODERNIZATION OF AGRICULTURE IN GHANA

## INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER

June 30 2024



### A Snapshot of our Progress Over the Last Quarter April to June 2024



Over the quarter April to June 2024, the AgriConnect Programme continued to make progress – additional computers were distributed, more students registered for the programme, and students started to diligently engage with the supplemental course content. The interest in the programme continues to increase, with more students registering and many more devices getting into the hands of students. AgriConnect has exceeded its target of enrolling 10,000 students into the programme. Up to the end of June, over 12,400 students were enrolled in AgriConnect, with 7,566 devices issued. Once students receive their devices, they must register to take the 3 supplemental courses developed by the programme.

The team believes that the three supplemental courses, including the learning and knowledge products for digital literacy, business and entrepreneurship, and value chain development, will serve as valuable resources beyond this phase of the programme. Beyond students accessing and consuming the content, the AgriConnect team believes that academic institutions, even those that are not part of the 10 participating colleges, would find the content useful and can incorporate aspects/components into their existing courses or use the content to create new courses. To this end, AgriConnect will make available all course materials to the professors, lecturers, and tutors of the 10 participating institutions. The knowledge products would also continue to play a role in inspiring students to explore their interests and consider various career paths within the agriculture value chain. The knowledge products contain not only new and cutting-edge information but also practical applications with valuable insights and best practices that have been contributed by top-tier value chain experts.

### Some Key Requirements of AgriConnect

#### AgriConnect Do's and Don'ts

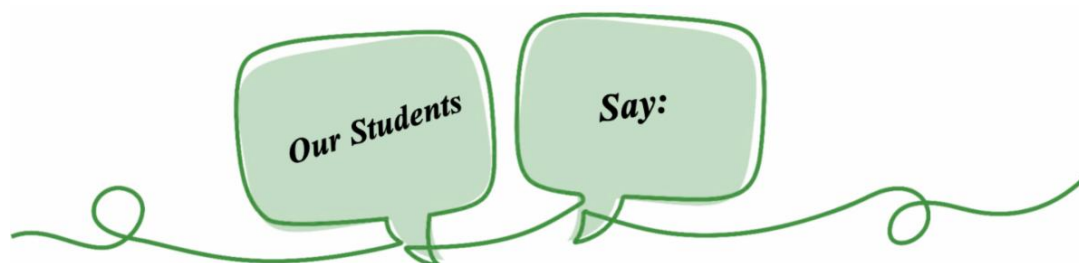


## Do:

- Enroll in AgriConnect and receive your device and monthly data.
- Enroll and take the 3 supplemental courses. This means reviewing and studying the information provided through the PowerPoint Slide Decks, training manuals and videos.
- Treat the learning on the supplemental courses as you would any other course that you are taking as part of your degree programme. Have a specific time/s each week when you do your AgriConnect course. In other words, put your AgriConnect course in your timetable and dedicate about 2 hours each week to take your course. It would be well worth it.
- Review the tips for taking online courses and engaging in self-paced learning. visit the AgriConnect webpage: <https://www.agriconnectghana.com/supplemental-courses>
- Remember that AgriConnect is not only about laptops and connectivity – it is about equipping you to enhance your knowledge and skills and fill learning gaps that are required by the labour market to assist you to get meaningful jobs on graduation.
- Recall that you signed an agreement (a legal document) in which you agreed to diligently and faithfully complete the 3 Supplemental courses.
- Take one course at a time so that it is more manageable with your existing workload.
- Do contact us if you face any issues or challenges. Remember there is a help desk designed specifically to address issues that you may have.

## Do Not

- Enroll in AgriConnect because you have been asked by someone not on the programme to enroll so they can buy the device from you.
- Be afraid to inform a member of the AgriConnect Team if you are being coerced or bullied into selling your device.
- Sell your device or give it away to a friend or family member.
- Take more than one course at a time so that you can manage your time properly. Cheat yourself by only watching the course videos as this is not the videos do not cover.



### An Interview with Enoch Tetteh of KNUST

During the quarter, we sat down with Enoch Tetteh of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and had a chat on his views on the AgriConnect programme. Enoch is in his final year and pursuing his Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture (Mechanization option).



*"It's my dream AgriConnect impacts a lot [of students] and I will be available to give any help of any kind I can afford"*

**Q: What inspired you to apply to the AgriConnect programme?**

**A:** *I was inspired to apply to the AgriConnect programme because I wanted to improve my knowledge and skills in agriculture and gain access to resources and support to help me succeed as a resourceful extension agent in the future.*

**Q: Have you started any of the supplemental courses offered by AgriConnect? If yes, please indicate which one?**

**A:** *Yes, I have started Digital Literacy.*

**Q: Tell us a bit about how you feel about the course that you are taking now?**

**A:** *The course [Digital Literacy] has been informative and engaging, and I'm enjoying learning new skills and perspectives that I can apply in my future career as an extension agent.*

**Q: Do you see the AgriConnect Programme preparing you to achieve some of your life goals?**

**A:** *Yes, I believe the AgriConnect Programme will help me achieve some of my life goals, such as becoming a resourceful extension agent who can support farmers and agricultural communities effectively.*

**Q: Is there any advice that you would like to give to your friends and colleagues about the AgriConnect Programme?**

**A:** *Response: My advice to friends and colleagues would be to take advantage of the programme's resources and community, and to be open to learning and growth, just like I am doing as a final-year student and future extension agent.*

**Q: How do you think the programme's focus on Agribusiness, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and value chain development will help you in the future?**

**A:** *I think the programme's focus on agribusiness, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and value chain development will help me in the future by giving me the skills and knowledge I need to support farmers in adopting innovative technologies and best practices.*

**Q: What do you think is the most valuable aspect of AgriConnect Programme so far - the supplemental courses, the community, the mentorship, or something else entirely?**

**A:** *So far, the most valuable aspect of AgriConnect Programme for me has been the supplemental courses. I'm looking forward to getting mentorship and tapping into the experience and expertise of industry professionals, which I believe will be a game-changer for my future career as an extension agent.*

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## Testimonials from Students

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*“AgriConnect has helped me gain more knowledge in computer and internet literacy. I have always wanted to be a digital marketer, but because most of these online courses are expensive, I am not able to enrol. But because of AgriConnect courses like digital literacy, I am able to learn without any boundaries. I also didn't have laptop then but because of AgriConnect, I have one now.*

*Lawer Desmond  
studying Agribusiness at University of Cape Coast*

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*“I applied for the MasterCard Foundation AgriConnect e-learning program to gain knowledge and skills in agribusiness, digital literacy, and value chain management. This program aligns with my life goal of becoming a successful entrepreneur and contributor to the agricultural sector's growth. The most valuable aspect of the program so far is the community. Interacting with like-minded entrepreneurs, sharing experiences, and learning from each other's challenges and successes has been incredibly enriching and motivating.”*

*Freda Kwakye Addo  
Diploma 3, Ohawu Agricultural College*

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**Coming this Summer:**





In July, AgriConnect will launch its paid summer Internship Programme. AgriConnect will secure several internships from agriculture industry players as well as information technology firms for students enrolled in AgriConnect to participate in. AgriConnect is a gender responsive programme and one of its objectives is to promote gender equality and ensure inclusivity; therefore, a percentage of internship placements will be reserved for female students and differently abled persons.

The checklist below provides a snapshot of the requirements of the internship programme. Aim to achieve all these so that you can be eligible to participate.

- Students must be currently enrolled in an agriculture or agriculture-related programme at one of the 10 AgriConnect participating tertiary institutions (Universities and TVETs).
- Students must have demonstrated excellence in the course of study they are currently undertaking at their university.
- Students must demonstrate a genuine interest and commitment to pursuing a career in agriculture or related fields through a letter of intent that they will be required to write as part of the application process,
- Students must have basic digital literacy skills and be proficient in using common software applications such as Microsoft Word. Preference will be given to students that have completed the AgriConnect Digital Literacy Course and have achieved a passing grade. Experience with or interest in agricultural technologies and digital tools will be an added advantage.

## **What is an internship?**

- An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional/work setting.
- Internships give students/young graduates the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for their career paths.
- Internships give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

## **What are some benefits of internship programmes to students?**

- Internships promote academic, career and/or personal development.
- Internships provide experiential learning thereby ensuring that students and young graduates gain vital skills and experience that they will be able to use throughout their professional career.
- Internship expose young persons to the work being undertaken in their area of study.

## **What are some benefits of internship programmes to host organizations/companies?**

- Internships provide host organizations with young persons who hold the unique position of looking at the world with new and fresh perspectives.
- Internships assist with organizations' work towards achieving their targets.

- Internships support organizations to find high-quality knowledge, skills and talent for its future workforce.
- Internships allow experienced professionals in organizations the opportunity to share their skills and cultivate the next generation of leaders in their field.
- Internships help host organizations fulfil their corporate social responsibility requirements.



## AgriConnect Snapshots... A Visit to KNUST



*During the quarter, the AgriConnect Team made a courtesy call on Vice-Chancellor, Rita Akosua Dickson of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). VC Rita Akosua Dickson is the first female Vice-Chancellor of KNUST, and she is also an alumna of KNUST.*

*In photo from l-r Prof Chris Antwi, Head of Department, Animal Science; David Bolton, Technical Director of theSOFTTribes, the AgriConnect implementing partner in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation; Prof Rita Akosua Dickson; Prof. Enoch Osekere, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture; and Sheila Assibey-Yeboah, Managing Partner, Knox Consulting Ltd – one of the partners in the implementation of AgriConnect.*



*The AgriConnect Team also took the opportunity to tour the KNUST e-library mall that is currently under construction. As part of the University's vision to make e-resources readily available to students, the e-library mall will be open 24/7. The e-library mall has been designed to aid in teaching, learning and research. It is located at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. KNUST has a student population of over 85,000 which the e-library will serve.*

## AgriConnect Delivers Agriculture and the Environment Webinar in Celebration of Earth Day 2024






In recognition of Earth Day 2024, AgriConnect held a webinar focused on Agriculture and the Environment in June. World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated each year on June 5. World Environment Day was established in 1972 by the United Nations at the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment (5–16 June 1972), which resulted from discussions on the integration of human interactions and the environment. One year later, in 1973, the first WED was held with the theme "Only One Earth". WED has been held every since then, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.


This year’s World Environment Day focused on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience under the slogan “Our land. Our future.


**We are #GenerationRestoration.**


The AgriConnect webinar explored:


Key topics to be discussed :

Environmental services vital to agriculture

Agricultural practices, population and food security

The impacts of climate change on agriculture

Implications of agriculture on land and water resources

Pesticide use and the impacts on agriculture resources and human health

Sustainable agriculture - organic agriculture, conservation agriculture, and their benefits

Learn more about the linkages between agriculture and the environment, sustainable agriculture and other topics as well as additional resources by visiting our webpage at:

*<https://www.agriconnectghana.com/webinars/webinar-agriculture-and-environment-june-2024>*

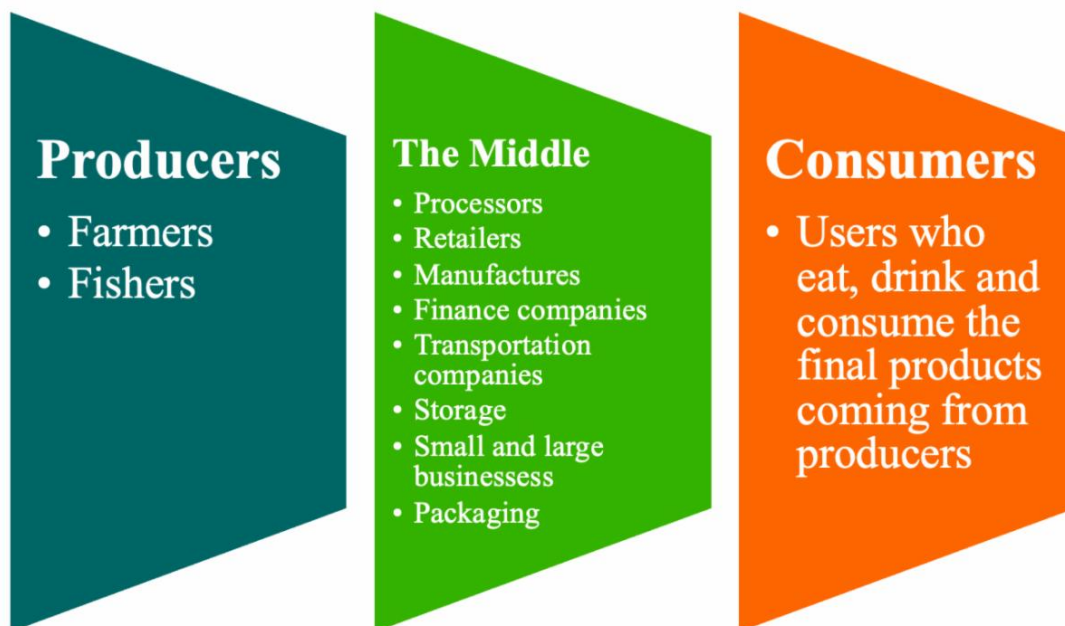
**A Preview of Value Chain Development  
An AgriConnect Supplemental Course**

*The 3 AgriConnect supplemental courses have been designed to help*

*students upgrade their knowledge and skills with new, engaging and innovative course content that will meet the needs of employers – thereby increasing the chances of graduates to obtain fulfilling work and access new and emerging job opportunities in the agriculture sector.*

## Did you know that we are all part of the agriculture value chain?

Yes, we are, we are linked to many parts of the value chain. The agriculture value chain is a system of people working in various stages, such as producers, processors, retailers, manufacturers, millers, finance companies, small and large businesses, and finally consumers, those of us that eat and drink and use the final products coming from producers. Each person or business performs one small step in the chain, and each adds value along the way – by growing, buying, selling, processing, transporting, storing, checking, and packaging, etc.



Every individual and organization along the value chain is important, with all actors playing different but important roles. All players in the value chain are interconnected. This means that if one player in the value chain is negatively impacted by an event, say flooding or drought, all other players in the value chain are impacted as well, including consumers.

Under AgriConnect, course content for nine value chains has been developed:

1. Agri-Journalism
2. Greenhouse
3. Mango
7. Poultry
8. Rice

4. Nursery
5. Piggery
6. Pineapple
9. Vegetables



The course content for each of the 9 value chains take a deep dive into several areas including among others:

- The economic contribution of the value chain to the agriculture sector



- Markets and new approaches to marketing
- New and emerging trends in the value chain
- Issues and challenges
- Environmental sustainability issues
- Key issues related to the management of the value chain
- New and emerging opportunities in the value chain for youth, women and persons with disabilities.

Students will have access to training manuals and knowledge products for each of the 9 value chains. Some of the knowledge products include PowerPoint slide decks and several supporting videos.



*A snippet from one of the pineapple value chain videos. Videos for demonstration and illustration were developed to support learning. The videos were shot from the field using companies in the value chains to further explain and expatiate upon the various topics that are included in the training manuals and PowerPoint slide decks. Experts from various value chains are featured in these videos and they share their experiences and encourage young persons to actively consider working in the agriculture space.*

The AgriConnect value chain development course benefitted from the knowledge, experience and expertise of industry players, academia and students

### **Start the Value Chain Development course today!**

- Under AgriConnect, you are required to study 5 of the 9 value chains.
- You can also study all.
- Once you have studied 5, sit your exams and pass, and you will be awarded a Value Chain Development Certificate.
- For each additional value chain you study, you will be awarded an additional certificate.

## **AgriConnect Introduces Podcast on Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship**



*Scenes from the AgriConnect Podcast in Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship*

The AgriConnect Team has developed a podcast in 4 different languages - English, Twi, Dagbani, and Ewe - around the Agribusiness and *Entrepreneurship* supplemental course. This multilingual approach makes the content more accessible to a broader audience. The podcast makes the content available in both audio and visual formats. The podcast introduces some of the content of the 4 modules of the Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship training course.



## WHAT IS A PODCAST?

A podcast is a series of spoken-word audio episodes focused on a particular topic or theme. In this case it is agribusiness and entrepreneurship. Podcasts are similar to radio shows. They are a digital medium consisting of audio (or video) episodes that relate to a specific theme. The hosts of a podcast are referred to as "podcasters."

Some podcasts, like this one on agribusiness and entrepreneurship are designed to help persons increase their knowledge or better understand a specific topic in a simple manner. Podcasts can explore complex topics but break them down into simple language to enable everyone to understand. Podcasts can be powerful tools for education both in the formal and non-formal sectors.

The Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship podcast is designed around the 4 modules of the training manual as follows:

- Module 1: Soil Preparation for Agribusiness Success
- Module 2: Planting Seeds of Success in Agribusiness
- Module 3: Crop Management for Agribusiness Success
- Module 4: Harvesting the Fruits of Agribusiness

The Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship course has been designed to provide students with the tools they need to succeed in the agribusiness sector. The podcast will make it easier for students to interact with the material while also accommodating different learning styles. The podcast will be especially beneficial to auditory learners.

The production of the podcast was undertaken by the University of Ghana School of Performing Arts and includes student and lecturer participation from the 10 AgriConnect participating institutions.



The production crew included students from several agricultural colleges, including Ejura Agricultural College, Kwadaso Agricultural College, the University of Ghana, Ohawu Agricultural College, and Damongo Agricultural College. These students provided practical examples and personal views, which enriched the podcast with real-world perspectives and examples. The podcast also involved academia from the University for Development Studies, Kwadaso Agricultural College, and Ohawu Agricultural College.

**Listen out for the launch of the Podcast in July.  
Sign up and attend the launch**

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## AgriConnect Hosts Girls in ICT Day Webinar

*As a gender responsive programme, AgriConnect is focused on fostering gender equality and women's empowerment through ICT skills development.*

*AgriConnect is not only about enhancing employment and business opportunities for women, but also about empowering them to engage confidently in entrepreneurial activities.*

On April 25, more than 300 young women participated in a Girls in ICT Day 2024 webinar titled "Empowering Leadership in the Digitalization of the Agriculture Sector". The event saw young women joining online via Zoom and through organized group sessions in lecture rooms and computer labs at various AgriConnect

participating institutions.

The webinar allowed participants to:

- Explore opportunities for women in digital agriculture.
- Foster networking with like-minded women who are passionate about agriculture.
- Acquire new ideas to support their career goals.
- Gain insights into specific digital applications, tools, and apps used in agriculture, such as precision farming tools, weather forecasting apps, and crop monitoring software.
- Learn about the 4th Industrial Revolution, a period characterized by the fusion of technologies, blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres, and its impact on digital transformation in agriculture.
- Understand how digital platforms support women in leading the agriculture sector.

### About Girls in ICT Day

- In 2024, International Girls in ICT Day will be celebrated on 25 April.
- Girls in ICT events are targeted at girls aged 12-24 years old.
- This year's theme for the Girls in ICT day celebrations was "Leadership", to underscore the critical need for strong female role models in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers.
- To celebrate this Day, AgriConnect hosted a 2-hour webinar titled "EmpowHering Leadership in the Digitalization of the Agriculture Sector".

Presenters at the webinar were:

- Maame Serwaa Dzamesi, Program Partner, Digital Economy, Mastercard Foundation and she spoke on the topic "**Why ICT Matters for Women and Girls**".
- Prof. Irene Egyir, Dean (Agriculture) University of Ghana, who spoke on the topic "**Her Story of "Empowherment and Leadership" Women in Agriculture and capitalizing on the 4th Agricultural Revolution with ICTs**".
- Mildred Akotsi, Chief Executive Officer, Akwaaba Fine Foods, who spoke about her entrepreneurial journey and how ICTs are key to her business success.
- Elizabeth Emanuel, Deputy Programme Manager, AgriConnect, who led a lecturette on the **Digitalization of the Agriculture Sector**.

The webinar's impact was evident,

- 70% of participants reported being inspired by the event and the speakers
- 82% expressed an interest in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities.

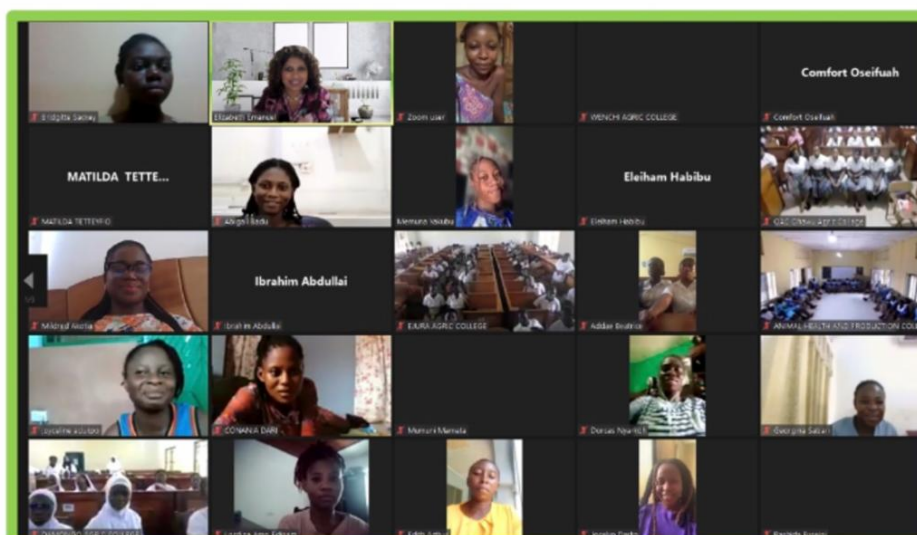
For more information on this webinar visit our webpage at:

<https://www.agriconnectghana.com/stories/agriconnect-girls-ict-day-2024-webinar-held-under-theme-empowhering-leadership>





*Students at Owahu Agricultural College attending the webinar*



*Snapshot of the webinar*



*Girls at Ejura that attended the webinar take a photo at the end of the webinar.*

### Learn more About AgriConnect

- View the AgriConnect video on our YouTube Channel at:  
<https://youtu.be/1EzmadYMqxE>
- Visit our website at:  
<https://www.agriconnectghana.com/>
- Download our Featured Publication – AgriConnect FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) at:  
<https://www.agriconnectghana.com/publications>
- AgriConnect help desk information: Contact our help desk for troubleshooting device issues that you may have.



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