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POSITION PAPER

Recommendations for the 24-Hour Economy Agricultural Component

26 September 2025

INTRODUCTION

The UK-Ghana Chamber of Commerce (UKGCC) welcomes the Government of Ghana's vision for a 24-Hour Economy aimed at driving sustained productivity, job creation, and export diversification.

As a leading voice for UK and Ghana businesses, UKGCC recognises agriculture and agribusiness as a pivotal driver of this transformation with potential to enhance food security, support industrialisation, and stimulate rural livelihoods.

This paper outlines practical recommendations for consideration by the Government of Ghana, under the agricultural pillar of the 24-Hour Economy Programme, drawn from consultations with UKGCC members, partners, and sector experts.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

Soil Health and Sustainable Land Use

Crop Rotation and Soil Replenishment: Introduce and incentivise structured crop rotation systems (e.g., 5- or 7-year cycles) to prevent nutrient depletion and promote regenerative farming.

Soil Acidity Impact on Yields: Prioritise national awareness and correction of soil acidity - one of the largest but least-addressed yield constraints in Ghana. Promote the use of agricultural lime, calcium carbonate, and other soil-amelioration products to improve pH, nutrient availability, and fertiliser efficiency. Consider tax incentives to reduce the cost of these corrective inputs.

Biochar and Soil Enhancers: Encourage local production and use of high-grade biochar as a soil amendment and water retention tool. Exempting biochar and similar products from VAT and import duties could stimulate local manufacturing and exports.

Promotion of Organic Biostimulants: Incorporate effective organic biostimulants in national input strategies. These can increase productivity by 50–95%, improve soil health, and reduce the need for synthetic inputs.

Mechanisation and Land Preparation

Provide tax exemptions on agricultural machinery, implements, and spare parts to lower the cost of mechanisation.

Facilitate access to land preparation and destoning equipment to avoid costly damage to combine harvesters and other large-scale machinery.

Allow importation of high-quality, used 4x4 vehicles, tractors, and combines (with valid European or American MOT/DOT certificates) to enhance affordability and accessibility.

Contractor and Equipment Leasing Models

Promote agricultural contractor financing schemes to reduce the financial burden of machinery ownership for individual farmers.

Introduce cost-per-hectare contracting models, backed by concessional finance, to improve efficiency and ensure proper machinery maintenance.

Provide technical training for machinery operators to minimise equipment downtime and extend asset lifecycles.

Inclusive Production Models

Ensure smallholder farmers are integrated into the 24-hour agricultural production value chain alongside large-scale “anchor” farms.

Encourage block farming models where central farms provide land preparation, inputs, and harvesting support, while smallholders supply the labour to promote inclusivity and productivity.

Design extension programmes to improve smallholder knowledge of profitable and sustainable practices.

Support microfinance and rural banks to design agricultural working-capital products tailored for smallholders, input dealers, and aggregators - reducing dependency on informal credit.

Post-Harvest and Value Addition Infrastructure

Expand clean, secure post-harvest storage and logistics systems to prevent losses.

Invest in cold chain facilities to support perishable goods and enable crop diversification.

Provide time-of-use tariff incentives and subsidised access to reliable grid power, solar, or off-grid hybrid systems for cold chain, processing, and storage facilities. This will enable continuous night-time operations, reduce operating costs, and support the vision of a 24-Hour agricultural economy.

Establish standardised sales, loading, and weighing centres equipped with forklift access, scales, and articulated loading bays to streamline logistics and trade.

Prioritise all-year round farm access roads to prevent crop deterioration during rainy seasons.

Introduce grading systems for grains and horticultural products (e.g. moisture standards, size grading) to reduce rejection rates, support exports, and stabilise markets.

Environmental Management and Fire Prevention

Integrate fire mitigation plans into land use designs, including 8m external and 4m internal fire rides that double as access roads.

Regular maintenance and monitoring of these fire rides should be enforced at the community or district level.

FISCAL AND POLICY INCENTIVES

Tax Policy Initiatives

Exempt agricultural inputs, machinery, and renewable energy technologies for farming from VAT, import duties, and levies. Create impact-based tax incentives for investors and local manufacturers of organic and sustainable farming products.

Fiscal Policy Initiatives

Prioritise access to concessional and blended finance to scale mechanisation, processing and export-oriented production.

Credit Guarantees for Agribusinesses

Expand credit guarantee schemes (e.g. private guarantee funds) to reduce lending risk and encourage banks to finance input distribution, mechanisation, and commodity aggregation.

CONCLUSION

Ghana's 24-Hour Economy presents a bold opportunity to build a more resilient and inclusive agricultural sector. By incorporating sustainable soil management, affordable mechanisation, inclusive production models, and modern post-harvest systems, the programme can accelerate Ghana's path toward food self-sufficiency and industrial transformation.

The UKGCC and its members stand ready to collaborate with the Government of Ghana and relevant agencies to provide technical expertise, policy advice, and investment linkages in pursuit of these shared goals.

CONTACT

Adjoba Kyiamah

Executive Director

UK-Ghana Chamber of Commerce

Email: adjoba@ukgcc.com.gh

Tel: +233 54 012 6477

UKGCC
UK - GHANA CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

T. 233 (030) 221 3200
W. www.ukgcc.com.gh
E. tradeservices@ukgcc.com.gh

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