

## **Advocacy visit to Federal Ministry of Agric & Rural Development by the Regional Steering Committee of Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in West Africa**

As part of the on-going Regional Steering Committee meeting of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in West Africa at ECOWAS Commission Headquarters at Abuja (May 3 – 4, 2018), the delegates of the meeting visited the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbeh on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. The delegate led by Mr Ernest Aubee, who is the Chairman of Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in West Africa and the Head of Agriculture, Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development of the ECOWAS Commission, Abuja. Other members of the delegate came from Benin Republic, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal, among which Prof. Victor I.O. Olowe (the President of Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria) and Dr Olugbenga AdeOluwa (Country Coordinator of Ecological Organic Agriculture in Nigeria) represented Nigeria.

The delegate was received by Engr. M. O. Owolabi (one of the Directors at the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) on behalf of the minister, who unavoidably couldn't attend the meeting. Among other discussions, the ECOWAS led delegate raised the awareness of Ecological Organic Agriculture in Nigeria and West Africa, laying emphasis on its benefits of food security and healthy food production for healthy living. The delegate requested the Minister of Agriculture to be one of the Organic Agriculture Champions in West Africa and also used the opportunity to announce the forthcoming National Organic Agriculture Business Summit (NAOBS) on July 10 – 13 at Lagos Airport Hotel, Ikeja. The ministry also used the opportunity to present some issues on organic inputs (herbicide, pesticide and fungicide) and adequate research confronting development of organic agriculture in Nigeria. According to the representative of the minister, the forthcoming National Organic Agriculture Business Summit should address these challenges.



Picture above: The rep of the minister receiving promotional materials from the leader of the ECOWAS led delegate.