LEAD DEBATE ON THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION BILL, 2026

Sponsor: Senator Barau, Jibrin *(Kano North)*

Mr. President, Distinguished Colleagues, I rise to lead the debate on the general principles of the Agricultural Revolution Bill, 2026. This proposed legislation designed to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the transformation, modernisation and sustainable development of agriculture in Nigeria.

Distinguished colleagues, it is an established fact that agriculture remains one of the most important pillars of our national economy. It provides livelihoods for millions of Nigerians, contributing significantly to employment and rural development, and holds enormous potential for economic diversification, industrialisation and export growth. Yet, despite our abundant arable land, favourable climatic conditions and human resources, our agricultural sector continues to face persistent challenges, including low productivity, inadequate mechanisation, limited irrigation infrastructure, high post-harvest losses, insufficient access to affordable financing, insecurity in farming communities and weak agricultural value chains.

These challenges have serious implications for food security, inflation, poverty reduction and national economic stability. As such, it is therefore imperative that we move beyond fragmented interventions towards a coordinated and sustainable framework for agricultural transformation.

Mr. President, Distinguished Senators, the Agricultural Revolution Bill, 2026, seeks to establish a comprehensive framework for repositioning Nigerian agriculture from predominantly subsistence production to a modern, technology-driven, commercially viable and competitive sector.

The Bill also seeks to promote agricultural mechanisation, irrigation development, improved seeds and other agricultural inputs, research and innovation, extension services and the adoption of modern farming technologies. These measures are essential to increasing yields, reducing production costs and enabling our farmers to cultivate larger areas of land more efficiently.

Distinguished colleagues, another critical component of the proposed legislation is the development of agricultural value chains. This is against the backdrop that increasing production alone is insufficient if farmers cannot adequately store, process, transport and market their produce. Accordingly, the Bill seeks to promote

storage facilities, cold-chain infrastructure, agro-processing, commodity markets and linkages between producers and industrial consumers.

These interventions will help reduce post-harvest losses, improve farmers' incomes, stimulate rural industrialisation, create employment and strengthen Nigeria's capacity to process its agricultural products locally rather than export raw produce and import finished goods.

The Bill also places emphasis on the participation of young people and women in agriculture, support for smallholder farmers, climate-resilient farming practices, agricultural research, digital information systems and improved coordination among the different tiers of government.

Mr. President, Distinguished Colleagues, a productive agricultural sector can moderate food-price pressures, expand rural employment, strengthen domestic industries, conserve foreign exchange and provide sustainable opportunities for millions of Nigerians.

Distinguished colleagues, the passage of this Bill will demonstrate our collective commitment to building a resilient agricultural economy capable of meeting domestic food requirements, supporting industrial growth and contributing meaningfully to Nigeria's economic prosperity.

I therefore urge my distinguished colleagues to support the general principles of this proposed Bill, to scale through *Second Reading* for further legislative processes.

Thank you.