Ever since I started making farmer-to-farmer videos, my career has taken a new and interesting direction. I am gradually becoming a farmer.

Making a video requires a lot of work before the end product is ready for an audience. From the conception stage to the end product, I have to go through several steps, some more complex than others. Before making a video, I need to collect a lot of information on the topic.

As I collect this information I learn a lot and I ask many questions.

For example, while making a video on rabbits, I learned that to breed the bunnies, one has to know when the does are in heat.

The female’s vulva changes colour to indicate that she will accept a male. But rabbits are delicate, and handling the animals to check out their colour can harm the rabbits. I know a lot about raising and selling rabbits for profit now, because of the research I did to produce my videos.

I still remember one film shoot in the last quarter of 2013 on the cassava mosaic virus at a farm in Gankpétin, in the centre of Benin. I was a bit surprised to realise that after 40 years’ experience in growing cassava, farmer Firmin Atchédo saw the disease symptoms without realising that it was cassava mosaic virus.

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While doing the shots and discussing cassava, he managed to better understand this deadly crop disease. I would not have been able to enlighten him if I had not informed myself about cassava virus from researchers and specialised technicians before making the video.
When I am developing a video, my questions do not dry up until I understand the topic completely. This is a wonderful school that I am attending!

Not as the student of many years ago who would have to sit down every morning and evening in a classroom to learn, but rather by going from farm to farm, from livestock keeper to livestock keeper, and so on.

Today, thanks to all that I learned during my research, I can direct and advise my friend Michael who has just started rabbit farming, so that he can succeed and get better results.

All of these exercises in agriculture are turning me into a small-scale farmer, an agricultural entrepreneur. With the knowledge and the experience that I have acquired, today I am able to start a small farming initiative.

I helped my friend Michael with some information he needed, and he was kind enough to include me in his rabbit farming project, in which I invested some of my money. Now I am dreaming of the day when I will start my own farm.

I do not claim to have become a farmer yet, but I have started to plough my own furrows, so to speak, even though I am still a journalist.

Once a video is produced, I include it in the collection of training videos, along with those available on the Access Agriculture platform. These are shown at the centre where I work. Songhai. I also learn from watching these videos.

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