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## YOU WANT TO FILM ME? GIVE ME MONEY!

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In 2014, I decided to make a video on cowpea thrips. Thrips are the first insects that attack cowpeas at the flowering stage.

I started my literature review and proceeded to choose my site and the farmers that might help me to produce the video. I chose a village in the region of Ségou in Mali, where farmers were working with an agricultural research station on cowpea production.

These farmers are major cowpea producers and they are known for having problems with thrips. After identifying the village, I went there for a first contact visit and to discuss my purpose with researchers and farmers.



*Most farmers are happy to share their experiences without being paid.*

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**After the usual traditional greetings, I asked to start the filming. However, the farmer asked me, “How much are you paying me?”**

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I explained to them that I wished to develop and produce a farmer-to-farmer training video.

They agreed to work with me to produce the video. I then started meeting with them to be able to write the technical details of the video script. This allowed me to progress greatly in setting the scenes.

I decided that two scenes are essential to this subject: the first dealt with the use of chemical pesticides and the second with the use of non-chemical pesticides such as neem and ash.

Having finalised the two scenes, I planned the filming with the farmers. The shots on using chemical pesticides took place without problems. However, filming the non-chemical pesticides was another story altogether.

After having travelled 170 km, I arrived for the second shooting at the appointed hour with my driver, my assistant and all my equipment.

After the usual traditional greetings, I asked to start the filming. However, the farmer asked me, “How much are you paying me?”



*Farmers can have unrealistic expectations about appearing in a video.*

Puzzled, I tried to repeat the context and purpose of this video, and provided all the explanations I had given at our first encounter. For example, I explained that I am working for a development NGO and that the videos will be used to train other farmers who do not know the technology yet.

Despite all my explanations, he refused to be filmed without being paid. The farmer replied that he understood our intentions very well. However, he stated that his image is not free because an image is very expensive.

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I was shocked by his answer, and he told me that a few months earlier, the village farmers had organised a major event at which they invited national television to cover it. The filming and broadcasting of this event cost the farmers about 500,000 CFA francs (about \$820). He added: "I'll do whatever you want me to do in the film, but you will have to pay me at least 300,000 CFA (\$490)."

Despite all of my efforts, it was not possible to find a friendly solution and I was obliged to return without shooting. Since it would take too long to organise other producers to take his place before the winter arrived, the shooting of the video had to be suspended until next season.

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I probably could have avoided this uncomfortable situation had I given the producer a farmer-to-farmer training DVD at the beginning of our contact to trigger his interest.

Another idea is to involve competent village authorities, and to explain at the beginning that we are not able to pay the farmers we film.

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