

Emerging soil fertility product : Mbeya fertilizer

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Background

- Mbeya is called fertilizer and manure because it involves use of fertilizer, manure and other soil nutritional additives to come up with one compound.
- Mbeya fertilizer or manure is rich in all nutrients required by the soil to improve and maintain soil structure, soil aeration, etc while improving and maintaining soil fertility

Raw materials for Mbeya

- 20 kgs of maize bran
- 20 kgs of animal manure
- 10 kgs of ash
- 10 kgs of fertilizer (NPK or UREA)
- 5-10 litres of water

Status of Mbeya production

- In operation for 4 months
- Sole proprietor

Key stakeholders: AEDOs, Lead Farmers, marketing professionals, suppliers (manure & maize bran)

Output: 250 bags sold to smallholder farmers around Lilongwe.

- **Revenue:** MK6million as of 30th Nov 2022
- **Employment:** 5 fulltime staff and 5 casual labourer

- **Several players across Malawi are producing Mbeya fertilizer**
 - Individuals, youth organizations, farmers, CBOs

What gap will Mbeya fertilizer fill?

- Provide alternative to farmers:
 - Soil fertility;
 - Increase access to fertilizers
 - Affordability

What differentiates Mbeya?

- Cheaper if done by farmers themselves
- Easy to make; most raw materials are locally found
- Improves soil fertility

Farming community reaction towards Mbeya fertilizer?

- Mixed reactions
 - Positive response following some published stories about Mbeya fertilizer
 - Mbeya cannot be as effective as chemical fertilizer
 - Prices are higher; NPK @ MK28,000 and UREA @ MK30,000 per 50Kg bag
- Adoption will increase following use/high yield???

What are the key policy and regulatory issues that are impacting the sub-sector - positively or negatively?

- Organic/other fertilizers regulatory framework does not exist??

What needs to be done to promote this industry and soil health more broadly

- Mapping of Mbeya/organic fertilizer producers
- Formulate a forum (association) where players can formally share experiences
- Work with Lead farmers in promoting adoption of these fertilizers
- Engage livestock farmers on good storage of animal manure

What provisions would you like to see included in the AUC 10-year Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan?

- Use of alternative fertilizers e.g Mbeya should be encouraged .