

## AFAP partners with Mozambique soil science lab

The African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Instituto Superior Politecnico de Manica (ISPM) Soil laboratory to advance Mozambique's soil and fertilizer testing capabilities. The MoU will enable ISPM to provide tailored fertilizer recommendations, according to soil type and crop, to farmers across the country.

AFAP and ISPM consolidated their efforts towards improving fertilizer quality across the Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC), through the development and systematic fertilizer testing services targeting fertilizer blending companies, importers and agro-dealers in central Mozambique.

Jason Scarpone (President and CEO: AFAP) said the improved laboratories will enable blenders and fertilizer suppliers to distribute the right fertilizer blends to smallholder farmers as per the soil and crop needs. The facility is targeting the development of a system that allows for regular fertilizer quality control from the blending of fertilizer to its use.

Through the partnership, AFAP will provide the necessary financial support, technical backstop and monitor the implementation and management of the laboratory. "From beginning to end, this will be a collaborative effort. ISPM and AFAP are providing assistance to smallholder farmers who at times do not understand the nutrient needs of their farm soils. Through a better understanding of which fertilizers to use and which blends to purchase, we are optimistic that productivity and incomes from yields will skyrocket," Cecilia Khupe (Program Director: AFAP) said.

AFAP has in the past been working extensively to boost agriculture productivity in the central region of Mozambique by cheering strong decision support systems and services, which extended to the support.

"When we decided to open an office in Mozambique, we saw the potential of a country that would not only be a gateway to the southern region, but a country that could easily use its available resources to supply food to the rest of the continent," Khupe said. She added that although the country possesses all these resources (land and water) there needs to be plans in place on how we make the most of them.

"Partnering with a soil lab is imperative and a welcome partnership, because we get to find out which fertilizer combinations will work with which soils to get the most yields," Khupe said. A problem that Mozambique faces is that many smallholder farmers use one type of fertilizer (a blend of NPK 12:24:12) and consequently reaping very lower yields, which is the reason why many have decided to scrap the idea of using fertilizer altogether.

"AFAP is on the ground, in the policy rooms and now in the science labs to ensure that an African Green Revolution becomes a reality in the near future," Khupe said.