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African Fertilizer and
Agribusiness Partnership



Partnerships. Productivity. Prosperity.

BOOSTING farmer productivity



Promoting the adoption of fertilizers in rural Africa

Africa is home to millions of smallholder farmers who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Despite this, the agricultural sector in Africa has faced numerous challenges, including low productivity and low yields, caused by a lack of access to inputs such as fertilizers. However, the use of fertilizers has been shown to significantly increase yields and boost agricultural productivity, making fertilizer an important tool for smallholder farmers looking to improve their yields and the income derived from their labour as farmers and important actors in Africa's food system.



One of the main benefits of fertilizer is that it helps to replenish the soil nutrients that are depleted by continuous cropping. This results in higher yields and improved quality, which is particularly important for smallholder farmers who historically were subsistence farmers but increasingly are relying on their crops for income and to develop agriculture based small businesses. By using fertilizer, smallholder farmers can also increase the overall productivity of their land and reduce the amount of time required to produce crops.

Another benefit of the use of fertilizers is that it can help to reduce the risk of crop failure due to weather-related factors such as drought or heavy rainfall. This is because fertilizer can help to improve the water-holding capacity of the soil, making it easier for crops to survive in challenging conditions. Additionally, fertilizer can also help to reduce soil erosion, improve soil health and when combined with additives like lime and bio-char, improve soil-fertility over the long-term.

Despite the many benefits of fertilizer, smallholder farmers in Africa often face barriers in accessing fertilizer and other agro-inputs. One of the main challenges is a lack of access to financing, which can make it difficult for farmers to purchase fertilizer and other inputs. This is where organizations like the African Fertilizer Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) come in.

AFAP is a social enterprise that aims to increase access to fertilizer and other inputs for farmers in Africa, particularly smallholder farmers. The organization works with a range of stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, and international organizations, to provide capacity

development support, market entry and market access support, financing and other support to agri-SMES, including farmers. While most of AFAP's work in the value chain is with hub agro-dealers (input wholesalers), through the hub and spoke model of working with hub agro-dealers and their retail networks, AFAP works to help farmers better understand the benefits of, and to adopt, inputs, to gain better access to credit, and to help groups of farmers to negotiate better prices for inputs. Through, community based agents that AFAP employs when introducing new products, AFAP also provides extension services and provides basic technical assistance to help farmers increase their productivity.

In conclusion, fertilizer is a vital input for smallholder farmers in Africa, helping to increase yields, reduce the risk of crop failure, and improve the overall productivity of their land. While there are challenges to accessing agro-inputs, organizations like AFAP are working to help to strengthen inputs value chains and through its work with hub agro-dealers and their networks, supports farmers in their efforts to overcome these barriers and derive greater economic benefit from farming. Through this work, AFAP believes that it can help to boost the agricultural sector in Africa and contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

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