Delivering Balanced Crop Nutrition to Small-Scale Farmers
Accra, Ghana
May 27-31, 2019
BACKGROUND

For decades, fertilizers available to African smallholder farmers have concentrated on the NPK macronutrients: nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. Over the past ten years, however, the importance of micronutrients has come to prominence. In this context, micronutrients also include the secondary nutrients calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), and sulfur (S), which are required by plants in the range of 5-40 kg/ha, and the true micronutrients zinc (Zn), boron (B), copper (Cu), iron (Fe), manganese (Mn), and molybdenum (Mo), which are required in much smaller quantities of usually less than 1 kg/ha. When micronutrients are lacking, response to the NPKs can be severely restricted. In some cases, yields can be doubled by micronutrient additions. Crops, like humans, need a full range of nutrients for healthy growth.

Balanced crop nutrition refers to feeding crops with a balanced suite of nutrients that are lacking in the soil. If more than one is in short supply, growth is limited by the nutrient that is in lowest supply. If several nutrients are deficient, all must be applied to obtain optimal yields. Soil acidity constraints may also need to be simultaneously addressed.

Soil analyses from several African countries indicate multiple micronutrient deficiencies appear to be common. Trial results from many countries confirm significant and widespread response to micronutrients. In response, fertilizer manufacturers and blenders are bringing a host of new fertilizer products to Africa. However, challenges still remain in developing and delivering balanced fertilizers to smallholders at the massive scale required.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this workshop is to assist participants, in their various roles, to bring balanced crop nutrition to smallholder farmers. Participants will have many opportunities to interact and understand the added value of the multiple stakeholders working together to bring balanced crop nutrition to farmers.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Government officials in ministries in charge of establishing and implementing fertilizer policy, regulations, and quality control systems.
- Soil scientists and agronomists from national and international research systems.
- Those involved in soil and plant analysis from both the public and private sector.
- Fertilizer manufacturers, blenders, and representatives of the fertilizer private sector.
- Donors interested in investments in increased crop productivity.

CONTENT

1. Soil-SMaRT: An overview of the step-wise pathway to bringing balanced fertilizers to smallholder farmers: Soil analysis, Mapping, Recommendations Development, and Transfer to Farmers
2. Soil analysis and mapping: Knowing the extent of nutrient deficiencies is crucial to informing blenders as to what products to produce and where to target. Progress of mapping efforts in sub-Saharan Africa and limitations to map accuracy will be discussed.
3. Recommendations development: The program will cover developing knowledge regarding which nutrients belong in specific fertilizers, and which do not; different nutrient sources available; nutrient rates appropriate for compounds and blends; and using trials and demonstrations to develop and evaluate better fertilizers.
4. Getting to the market quickly: Fertilizers based on crop demand
5. Policies and regulations: Policies and fertilizer regulations need to be adapted to a dynamic and evolving fertilizer market. How fertilizer registration, subsidy policy, and regulations can facilitate or hinder the process of bringing balanced fertilizers to farmers; implications for monitoring fertilizer quality, and creating a facilitating environment for new fertilizer products.
6. The fertilizer industry: Participants will learn about the processes for producing fertilizers, including manufacture and blending, the difference between compounds and blends; and which is best placed for specific circumstances.
7. The fertilizer market: The market has changed in the past five years, with many new international and domestic manufacturers and blenders participating. How do we create the enabling environment and leverage their expertise to realize rapid transition to balanced fertilizers?
8. The business of blending: The program will cover characteristics of the market and its impact on blender decisions; feasibility studies; ingredients procurement; developing markets and brand recognition; and what to blend.
9. Fertilizer platforms: The importance of national public-private sector platforms to developing and navigating roadmaps to appropriate fertilizer use will be discussed.
10. The donor community: Attendees will learn about investing in country-specific contexts.
FACULTY
The program faculty will include subject matter experts from IFDC and partner organizations.

VENUE
The African Regent Hotel is situated in one of the plushest suburban areas in the city less than five minutes from the Kotoka International Airport, the Accra Polo Club, and the Accra Mall. The hotel provides every traveler into the city, be it, business or pleasure, the opportunity to explore and experience Accra in the most convenient way possible.

Participants will be extended IFDC’s special negotiated, single occupancy room rate of US $130/night, inclusive of buffet breakfast, free Wi-Fi internet, and all taxes. This rate is valid for reservations made NO LATER THAN March 29, 2019. After this date, the hotel shall charge a rate of US $150/night up to May 17, 2019. Thereafter, reservations will be subject to hotel room availability and the best available rate.

Participants should arrive in Accra on Sunday, May 26, 2019.

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**ABOUT IFDC**

IFDC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing and sustaining food security and agricultural productivity in over 100 developing countries through the development and transfer of effective and environmentally sound crop nutrient technology and agribusiness expertise. Headquartered in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, U.S.A., IFDC is involved in capacity building, research, and technical assistance in collaboration with public, private, national, and international organizations throughout the world. IFDC has conducted more than 700 formal workshops, study tours, and training programs for nearly 11,000 participants from over 150 countries since 1974.

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**COST AND ENROLLMENT**

The program fee for this training course is US $1,700 per participant (inclusive of a US $250 non-refundable deposit) and should reach IFDC no later than April 29, 2019, four weeks before the program is scheduled. Those received thereafter will be accepted at IFDC’s discretion and incur a late fee. Participants will be given the opportunity to take advantage of an early bird rate if registration and payment are received by IFDC prior to March 29, 2019. Please refer to the table below for pricing:

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<tr>
<th>Early Bird: Registration and Payment by March 29, 2019</th>
<th>Regular: Registration and Payment by April 29, 2019</th>
<th>Late: After April 29, 2019</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$1,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,900</strong></td>
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The program fee, less the non-refundable deposit, will be refunded for cancellations made two weeks before the commencement of the program. Ninety percent of the paid fee will be returned and 10 percent, in addition to the deposit, will be charged to cover administrative costs for cancellations made between one and two weeks before the commencement of the program. Cancellations made less than one week before the commencement of the program will receive no refund.

Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Paid participants will receive priority. An organization wishing to enroll more than one participant should supply information and payment for each participant.

Payment of the program fee can be made by: (1) check or draft payable to IFDC; (2) wire transfer to IFDC’s account in the U.S.A. through First Metro Bank, 406 West Avalon Avenue, Muscle Shoals, Alabama, U.S.A., ABA number 062203955 for credit to IFDC account number 55281; or (3) major credit card – MasterCard, Visa or American Express.

The program fee covers registration, training and reference material, coffee/tea breaks, all lunches, and surface transportation on field trips. The fee does not include air travel, lodging and dinner expenses, or medical and communication expenses.