

Stories from the soil script vol 01/03



Dzimwe Community Radio 93.1 fm

Country: Malawi
Radio: Dzimwe Community Radio 93.1 FM
Program: Nkhani ya Nthaka (Stories from the soil)
Producer: Tony Gonani
Expert: Daudi Katoma
Topic: Benefits of soil conversation
Language: Chichewa
Duration: 10 minutes 55 seconds.
Airing Date: 02/11/2015, 13:30

Presenter's voice

Good afternoon dear listeners where ever you are, My name is Tony Gonani and I welcome you to yet another edition of a special program called stories from the soil right here on Dzimwe Community Radio station.

The core purpose of this program this year is to explore more ideas, skills and techniques on how best we can manage and utilize the soil resources as it is the prime sources of food production in the world.

Much have been said to improve agriculture but little have been discussed and considered to improve agriculture through the proper management of soils.

Among other things, we can improve soil fertility by adopting the new modern of agriculture techniques commonly known as conservation agriculture a method that do not needs much labor and helps soil to be used for decades.

With me in the program is Mr. Daudi Katoma an agricultural Expert from the Ministry of agriculture under Mbwazulu agriculture Extension Planning Area (EPA).

Welcome to the program.

Advisor Katoma.

Thanks so much. My name Daudi Katoma from Mbwazulu EPA and I too welcome you dear listerners.

Presenter: How do you define Conservation agriculture?

Advisor Katoma: *Conservation agriculture is an approach to managing agro-ecosystems for improved and sustained productivity, increased profits and food security.*

Presenter: Are there principles attached to conservation agriculture for the benefit of soil?

Advisor Katoma: *Yes! There are three linked principles. Namely, continuous minimum mechanical soil disturbances, permanent organic soil cover and diversification of crop species grown in sequences. And another method is that of planting crops in basins in length 30 cm and its depth is 30 cm there must be a space of 90 cms from one planting station to the other.*

This method helps farmers to re use the basins in the following growing seasons.

What are the advantages of conservation agriculture in the world of climate change in as far as soil management is concerned?

Advisor Katoma: *Conservation agriculture enhances biodiversity and natural biological processes above and below the ground surface; **this is a win-win situation for both farmer and the soil** unlike the conventional agriculture which has the negative impact on soil.*

This method helps farmers to realize more yields with less labor and fewer chemical inputs there by increases productivity.

And we can categorize the benefits as follows:

Land: *Conservation agriculture improves soil structure and protects the soil from erosion and nutrients losses by maintaining a permanent soil cover and minimizes soil disturbances.*

Labour: *Land under no till is not cleared before planting and involves less weeding and pest problems following the establishment of permanent soil cover /crop rotation. Farmers can save up to 22% labor associated with maize production.*

Water: *Conservation agriculture requires significantly less water use due to increased infiltration and enhances water holding capacity from crop residues left on the soil surface. Mulches also protect the soil from extreme temperature and reduce evaporation and this can help a farmer to harvest even during the times of dry spell and drought.*

Presenter: *Are there problems that are associated with Conversation agriculture?*

Advisor Katoma: *There are few problems that can be encountered, mainly if the farmers fails to comply with the recommended procedure when planting different seeds in the same soil, it is advisable that all targeted crops that needs to be planted in a particular garden must be planted on the same day to avoid planting other crops under the shade of each other that could creates competition for sun light.*

Presenter: *You have mentioned of intercropping, which crops are recommended for the method?*

The recommended crops for intercropping are grain legumes such as soy beans, cow peas and ground nuts, the above mentioned legumes fixes nitrogen and they also provide shade for soil.

Presenter: *Don't you think these mentioned crops can infect other crops when one has developed diseases and the like?*

Advisor Katoma: *No, there is no spreading of diseases from a different crop to the other.*

Presenter: *What is your advice to the farmers who wants to start practicing conservation agriculture as a way of conserving soils?*

Advisor Katoma: *We are advising farmers to start doing the preparation as earlier as possible particularly soon after the harvest so that they don't west the maize stalks that*

could be used to cover the soil for conservation agriculture and if they don't have the maize stalks we are advising them to use grasses without seeds to cover their soils as we are going towards the rainy season.

Lastly, farmers must know that climate is changing on an every day basis, so it is important to adopt the issue of soil conservation if at all we need to prolong the life span of our soils for sustainable use till in the decades to come.

Presenter:

That is the concluding remarks from our agriculture advisor from the Ministry of Agriculture Mr. Daudi Katoma from Mbwazulu Agriculture extension planning Area (EPA.)

He has explained the need of practicing the management of soil through the adaptation of conservation agriculture.

Listeners with that voice of Mr. Daudi Katoma we have come to the end of our today's edition of **Stories from the Soils**.

Remember that”**This segment is part of an audio series related to the International Year of Soils. It has been produced with the support of the World Association of Community Broadcasters, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2015.**“

If you have comments, contribution or questions please call or send SMS's to the producer on **0884469147** and talk to the producer and I will link you up with the agricultural advisor for your help.

Be there again on this coming Monday the 9th November from half past one in the afternoon when I will brings you another edition of the **Stories from the soil**.

From me the producer and presenter of the program Tony Gonani says take an initiative to conserve soil for the benefits of all.

Sigtune up.....sig down.....

The fruit of soil conservation a win-win situation where a farmer benefits the share that he contributed to the soil by practicing soil conservation for bumper yields.Mr.Dauglas Mawindo on his garden appreciates the benefits from the soil).



Soil is covered with some creeping plants that protects the soil from direct sun light there by moisture is maintained and helps to improve soil structure.



This picture below shows the neglected soils, which in return neglects to produce the yields.

