



**Toros Agri**  
Educating women farmers in Turkey

3



**Malawi**  
Farmers' perspective on linking science to the field

4



New media and agricultural communications

8

## A producer's perspective on the fertilizer industry

by *Cherilyn Nagel*

Thank you for the invitation to speak at the Canadian Fertilizer Institute annual conference<sup>1</sup>. I have been looking forward to this opportunity to share with you a producer's perspective on the fertilizer industry. There is no doubt that most farmers recognize the value of crop nutrients. I do not have any hard numbers, but in my province of Saskatchewan I suspect over 95 per cent of farmers use commercial fertilizer in some form.

That said, there is no farmer that would not love to reduce that fertilizer bill. Many, too, are very suspicious that the instant grain prices rise, fertilizer prices are sure to follow. There was a tremendous spike in fertilizer prices in 2008 when we saw record grain prices.

However, I would be the last person to argue in favour of any form of price regulation in the fertilizer market. I certainly do not want anyone regulating the price for my grain, so I am not about to ask government to regulate fertilizer prices. What I can and will be asking is that governments ensure there is good competition within the fertilizer industry. As long as there is strong competition, I have less concern about fluctuations in fertilizer prices. I know then that prices are simply responding to supply and demand, and that the price I am paying for fertilizer is consistent with the price that competing farmers in other parts of the world are paying.

The key for us is competition. Whenever we hear about buyouts or threats of buyouts, we are highly concerned about concentration in the industry. I think your industry has a tremendous need to explain to farmers that the price spikes



*Cherilyn Nagel*

we see from time to time are the result of market forces.

I think your industry needs to do far more of this outreach to farmers. We fully appreciate the supply and demand factors that impact the price of grain. So telling your story to farmers in the same terms resonates well. There is no need to be apologetic or defensive. Give it to us straight up, and you will get a fair hearing. Yes, there will still be grumbling, but at least the grumbling will be about the forces impacting supply and demand, not about whether there are any uncompetitive practices in your industry.

*cont'd on page 2*

## Agriculture and the green economy

*Farming First wins 2011 EU Digital Communication Award for infographic on agriculture and the green economy.*



*More on page 7*

cont'd from page 1

## A producer's perspective on the fertilizer industry

We understand that you, too, have high transportation and storage costs and that inventory risk is an issue for you just as it is for us. I would prefer to see you building infrastructure instead of us building it on the farm. The bottom line is that farmers are prepared to pay fair prices for inputs, but these prices must be perceived as fair.

If you fail to tell your story, the calls for investigations and even price regulation will grow stronger. And neither one of us wants that.

One possible solution to farmer concerns about price discovery in the fertilizer market would be the establishment of futures markets for N P and K. Farmers often forward price their grain, but many of us want to hedge our fertilizer costs at the same time as we forward price our grain. We need to be able to better predict the pricing of fertilizer, and I believe a greater ability to do this would lead to more usage.

It is ridiculous from our perspective that the price can vary up or down by US\$ 200/ton almost overnight. There is simply a lack of hedging products. We often forward price fertilizer. But for tax, cash flow or other reasons we are not always able to forward price as much as we would like to. I am not exactly sure what it would take to get a good hedging mechanism off the ground, but it is something modern farmers would like to see. Stability and predictability is what we are looking for.

Another major concern farmers have regards shortages of supply. We do not believe supply actually fluctuates as much as you claim it does. Every year we hear that we must take delivery now or there will not be any fertilizer left, and every time these stories seem bogus or the crisis that was supposed to happen never does. We are left feeling aggravated, and your industry loses our trust. Farmers do not put on 250 pounds one year and none the next. In my part of the world usage is roughly the same each year. If anything, there is a steady increase given rising commodity prices

and generally wetter conditions.

I also want to talk about micronutrients and better nutrient efficiency. On our farm we have incorporated a micronutrient application system through years of experimenting with various companies. We use a software programme that, when matched with our soil nutrients from soil testing results, determines the yield potential. And we can watch the yield potential increase as Mother Nature showers us with rain throughout the growing season... or not. Some producers see this as a general "time waster". Admittedly, I have watched my husband's eyes strain at the computer screen as he "plays" the yield calculator game. But when you are striving to achieve record-breaking harvests each year, and when your goal is to beat your own personal best (and sometimes that of the neighbours), these tools prove to be valuable. I cannot say with much certainty that all the micronutrient prescriptions we have applied over the years did much more than aggravate those in the field during the seeding operation. However, I can say that through the use of research and technology in our equipment and our inputs we are managing yields that even ten years ago were beyond our expectations.

And to relate that back to fertilizer, we recognize that the bigger the yield, the more we have taken from the soil. Our concern is always for good stewardship of the land, and therefore we are looking for ways to replenish and even increase the fertility of the soil. I feel strongly that someone needs to be telling the good news stories about what fertilizers and micronutrients can offer the consumer. There have been several conferences around the world focusing on how to address zinc deficiency in the diets of people in developing countries. What a wonderful way to

Photos © C. Nagel



Cherilyn Nagel with her family in her field.

**“** I feel strongly that someone needs to be telling the good news stories about what fertilizers and micronutrients can offer the consumer. **”**

showcase the relationship between science, technology and agriculture.

CFI does reach out to work with forward-thinking farm groups like the Wheat Growers and the Grain Growers of Canada. Building that close relationship is important to give one another a

warning if we see challenges coming, such as hours of trucking or the need for more flexibility in the busy spring and fall application periods.

It is also important to share our thoughts with one another prior to meetings with government or testifying at the Standing Committee. Even if we have some disagreements, it is important to build on the many areas where we do agree. And it is important to have both farmers and industry on the same page when lobbying.

My key messages are :

- Competition ensures a good working marketplace, where prices are fair to farmers;
- Do a better job telling your stories;
- Play a role in advocating a prosperous future for agriculture and help to combat negative connotations regarding the necessary use of fertilizer and other crop inputs, so we can grow the production of which we are capable.

<sup>1</sup>Presentation given by Cherilyn Nagel at the Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI) annual conference in Victoria, British Columbia on 23 August 2011.

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# Toros Agri: Educating farmers in Turkey, with an emphasis on women

by Beril Gokan

**T**oros Agri organizes training activities to improve agricultural productivity and product quality in Turkey. In this way, it has been contributing to the well-being of Turkish farmers since the 1980s. Through regular training on the enhancement of agricultural techniques, the company aims to improve farmers' income levels – and consequently their standard of living. It has also disseminated information on accurate and balanced fertilization methods to hundreds of thousands of farmers in village coffee houses.

The Project for Education and Support of Women Farmers, initiated by Toros Agri in 2010, is educating women farmers on correct application methods for mineral fertilizers.

Toros provides, among others, financial support to women's organizations to guide women farmers in different regions on the fertilization of fruit trees and field crops, as well as on fertilizer use in the production of vegetables in fields and greenhouses.

Each of these training activities helps to obtain economical, consistent and high-quality agricultural products. Close contact between Toros Agri and women farmers results in better production, while increasing quality and yield makes a positive contribution to the incomes of producing families and to the country's economy.

Toros Agri conducted four seminars targeted at women farmers in 2010, together with 30 to 40 other seminars for general audiences. In 2011, it gave financial support to associations that help women farmers obtain an education with respect to both farming and marketing. In its largest project to date, concluded

“...increasing quality and yield makes a positive contribution to the incomes of producing families and to the country's economy.”



Photos © Toros Agri

2012 educational seminar for women farmers.



Wives and husbands in the classroom, during the theoretical part of the training.

in September of that year, 20 couples (wives and husbands) from very poor backgrounds, who had no formal education, were chosen to participate in a six-month training programme to become certified gardeners, specifically to work in fruit production. The aim of the project was to train and certify these couples and to find them jobs. Toros Agri was successful in achieving both objectives.

Toros Agri devotes part of the budget of its Social Responsibility Projects every year to support women farmers. In 2012, the company will sponsor another proj-

ect which aims to educate and certify 150 women farmers.

Looking forward to 2012 and the following three years, Toros Agri has embarked on another project that will provide data and results to help farmers implement good agricultural practices. Farmers believe what they see, so during the past two years Toros Agri has been participating in “field shows” where the impact of fertilizer use is demonstrated. This activity will be developed in the future for different regions and selected fields to demonstrate how to use fertilizers and how not to use them.

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## More information

■ [www.toros.com.tr/english/sosyal-sorumluluk.asp](http://www.toros.com.tr/english/sosyal-sorumluluk.asp)

# Farmers' perspective on linking science to the field

by Alice Kachere

I am Alice Kachere, a smallholder farmer from Malawi<sup>1</sup>. I am a single woman with children, and I also look after my 79-year-old mother. I started farming in 1999 when my husband passed away, and in 2005 I joined NASFAM (National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi). Ever since I joined NASFAM, things have changed for my family. I harvest more each season because I have gained knowledge on best farming practices. Before I joined NASFAM, I did not know any technology I could use on my farm. Now I am already benefiting from the use of planting techniques, farmyard manure, fertilizers and hybrid seeds.

I produced twenty 50 kg bags of maize in 2004 and one hundred bags in 2005. Now I am up to two hundred bags. All with only a few resources, as opposed to the past when resources were wasted due to poor knowledge. To tell the truth, we cannot do business without knowledge. Farming is a business, and farmers must know how to make a profit.

Training in technology is needed by smallholder farmers. It will be good for these farmers to have links to science. We need field-lab-field systems to bring this knowledge together.

Crop diversification in Malawi should provide a solution to the current crisis.



Photo © iStockphoto



Alice Kachere

This year a farmer relying on one cash crop is suffering because prices are low. At the same time, we want to pay our children's school fees and buy farm inputs, but we do not have the money. Climate change is a big challenge that has attracted the attention of international organizations in different ways. This year in Malawi, farmers are blaming unreliable and erratic rainfall on climate change. There has been a drought, with heavy rains in other parts of the country. The effects have been grave, resulting in lost production.

If farmers can start irrigating their fields, they will always plant in time – and harvest in time – because they will no longer have to wait for rain to plant as we are doing now. And this will help ensure that farmers have consistent harvests and a continuing flow of income.

Market infrastructure is poor. For example, there is a lack of storage facilities and equipment such as drip irrigation kits, as well as of boreholes, dams and water con-

servation tanks. We do not have capital and, as you know, access to markets is still a big challenge, especially for smallholder farmers. Apart from irrigation, the use of manure is very important. We know how to make and use compost manure, and manure from livestock is very important. Livestock production is a source of income and of manure. It is not good for a farmer to rely only on crop production. Instead, both crop and livestock production should be promoted. If crop prices are not good or there is no stable market, we can use livestock. But how can smallholders manage to do that without capital? We need capital. Conservation agriculture will mitigate the effects of climate change and help

farmers to save labour. In Malawi we use a hand hoe, which is not easy. It is hard work. We need equipment for smallholder farmers. Not the big tractors commercial farmers use on their farms, but something for us – for such activities as land preparation and weeding. We must

improve soil fertility and structure by increasing the amount of organic matter in the soil, and also through nitrogen fixation with legume crops such as pigeon peas. Using these technologies, I know we can improve current productivity sustainably.

Training farmers and establishing links between science and farmers bring knowledge together. Regarding education, in Malawi 80 per cent of the population is made up of smallholder farmers

“In Malawi 80 per cent of the population is made up of smallholder farmers and 5 per cent of commercial farmers. Sixty per cent of the produce is grown by women, but they are illiterate.”



Founded in 1997, NASFAM is a farmer-directed business system based on the individual participation of over 100,000 Malawian smallholders, most of them farming on less than a hectare of land.

cont'd on page 5

cont'd from page 4

and 5 per cent of commercial farmers. Sixty per cent of the produce is grown by women, but they are illiterate. So how can we do business without knowledge and education? Please, think twice about that because this is a serious issue. Farmers need demonstration plots and field day visits – not just within the country, but outside it to help us share experiences. Farmers also need farmer-to-farmer trainers. NASFAM started farmer-to-farmer training five years ago as a pilot programme, and it is good. We need women-to-women farmer trainers because smallholder farmers, who are mostly women, have no voice. Such training can improve the uptake and dissemination of technology and best practices. This is about participatory extension systems.

Market access is a big challenge, mostly for women. That's why women farmers need market information. We produce more, and women are hard workers, but we lack capital, land ownership and so on... it makes us cry every day. I beg you all to be serious about women's challenges. We have children. We want to pay school fees for them. We do not want our children to be ignorant like



Photo © iStockphoto

us. We need capital to promote livestock and poultry production.

<sup>1</sup> Presentation given by Alice Kachere on behalf of the World Farmers' Organisation at the FAO/OECD Expert Meeting on Greening the Economy with Agriculture from 5 to 7 September 2011 in Paris, France.

#### More information

- NASFAM  
[www.nasfam.org](http://www.nasfam.org)
- World Farmers' Organisation  
[worldfarmersorganisation.com](http://worldfarmersorganisation.com)
- FAO/OECD Greening the economy  
[www.fao.org/rio20/fao-rio-20/gea/jp/](http://www.fao.org/rio20/fao-rio-20/gea/jp/)
- Conservation agriculture  
[www.fao.org/ag/ca](http://www.fao.org/ag/ca)

## International organizations focus on women's issues

### State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in Agriculture. Closing the Gender Gap for Development.

FAO, Rome, Italy, 2011

According to FAO "If women in rural areas had the same access to land, technology, financial services, education and markets as men, agricultural production could be increased and the number of hungry people reduced by 100-150 million..."

Yields on plots managed by women are lower than those managed by men. This is not because women are worse farmers than men but they simply do not have the same access to inputs..."

To download the full report:  
[www.fao.org/publications/sofa/en/](http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/en/)



### World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development.

World Bank, October 2011

Achieving gender equality and empowering women in agriculture is crucial for agricultural development and food security. To close the gender gap, some basic principles are universal: governments, the international community and civil society should work together to eliminate discrimination under the law, to promote equal access to resources and opportunities, to ensure that agricultural policies and programmes are gender-aware, and to make women's voices heard as equal partners for sustainable development.

To download the full report:  
[go.worldbank.org/CQCTMSFI40](http://go.worldbank.org/CQCTMSFI40)



## IFA news

### RIO+20 Conference in June



**RIO+20**  
United Nations Conference  
on Sustainable Development

In June 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development will take place in Rio de Janeiro, marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first conference on environment and development held there in 1992. The main theme of this conference, "Rio+20", will be the green economy. For the international community, Rio+20 will be the leading event in 2012.

IFA, the Brazilian fertilizer association (ANDA), the Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI), the Fertilizer Institute (TFI) and Fertilizers Europe have decided to launch a communications campaign in 2012 focusing on sustainable agriculture and the green economy in preparation for Rio+20. IFA will also participate in the conference itself.

### Commission on the Status of Women 2012

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) dedicated exclusively to promoting gender equality and the advancement of women.

The 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission will take place at UN headquarters in New York from 27 February to 9 March 2012. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and NGOs from all regions of the world that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council will attend. The two-week session will include a high-level round table, interactive panels and parallel events.

The 2012 session will focus on the following key areas:

- Empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development, and current challenges;
- Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- Engaging young women and men, girls and boys, to advance gender equality.

For more information: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/56sess.htm)

# Declaration for farmer choice

by Isabelle Coche

On 31 October the world population quietly passed the seven billion mark. It grew by nearly a billion in the past decade and has tripled since 1940. With the world at its largest, we are faced with the challenge of how to feed mankind: how can we provide farmers with the choice of innovative technologies that allow them to boost yields, protect natural resources and keep farming for future generations?

Last month CropLife International launched the Declaration for Farmer Choice, which urges empowerment of farmers so they can choose the sustainable agricultural practices that best meet their unique farming situations and needs. By letting farmers — the stewards of our food and land — choose the tools that best improve yields, increase farm livelihoods and protect natural resources for today and tomorrow's generations, we can achieve green agricultural practices.

Green agriculture is a mosaic of sustainable agricultural solutions and practices. Kenyan maize and dairy farmer Gilbert Bor introduced the Declaration for Farmer Choice at the 2011 World Food Prize in October, stating that the declaration provides a foundation that all organizations should embrace — ensur-



The Declaration for Farmer Choice calls for:

- sustainable, productive and environmentally responsible technologies;
- enhanced access to agricultural technologies;
- science-based regulatory schemes;
- increased agricultural investment;
- improved agricultural knowledge.

ing farmers have the ability to produce enough for our growing world while ensuring economic livelihoods. Farmers need technology to achieve sustainability, so they can survive as farmers and preserve our planet. He urges individuals, organizations and governments to sign on to the Declaration for Farmer Choice today.

Several organizations, all committed to farmers and their fight for increased productivity and environmental protection, support the Declaration for Farmer Choice. In addition to IFA, they are the International Seed Federation, Truth about Trade and Technology and the Pan African Agribusiness and Agro-Industry Consortium.

To learn more about the Declaration for Farmer Choice, or to support farmer choice, visit: [www.ActionForAg.org](http://www.ActionForAg.org)

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## Outcome of the First General Assembly of the World Farmers' Organization – South Africa, September 2011

The World Farmers' Organization (WFO) represents over 50 national farmers' and agricultural cooperative organizations from all over the world.

The mission of the organization is to bring together national agricultural producer organizations and agricultural producer cooperative organizations to create policies and advocate on world farmers' behalf, in order to improve the economic situation and livelihood of producers, their families and rural communities. The improvement of farmers' livelihoods and the economic viability of rural communities around the world is vital given that farmers' incomes are often much less than average incomes. The second main objective is to contribute to world food security by facilitating cooperation between member organizations. It is crucial given that world food demand is expected to increase by at least 70 per cent by 2050 and market volatility is on the increase.

Other objectives include facilitating the organization of agricultural producers and enabling them to improve their positioning within the food supply chain, ensuring coherence with other agriculture related activities, such as forestry, aquaculture, environment, trade, research and education. Finally, the Organization aims to encourage farmers' involvement in sustainable rural development, the environment and new arising challenges, such as climate change and the renewal of generations.

The newly elected President, Robert Carlson (USA), and members of the board will represent the WFO in upcoming events concerning world food security, climate change and sustainability. They will also continue the work on establishing links with international organizations, such as FAO, IFAD, WFP and OIE.

More information: [worldfarmersorganisation.com](http://worldfarmersorganisation.com)

# Agriculture and the green economy

## Farming First's new video and award-winning infographic



The Farming First coalition has launched an animated video called *The Story of Agriculture and the Green Economy*. The video explains the importance of agriculture in building a global green economy through increased food production, more efficient water use, improved livelihoods, and greater resources to benefit women smallholder farmers.

The transition to a green economy will be of fundamental importance in tackling sustainable development issues. In view of the predicted world population of 9 billion people by 2050, agricultural production needs to increase by 70 per cent to meet new demands for food, feed, fuel and fibre. Agriculture plays a key role in stimulating economic growth, securing rural livelihoods and reducing poverty in ways that are environmentally sustainable.

Luc Maene, Director General of IFA says that the Farming First video "uses the creative technique of animation to highlight how agriculture can help address the many challenges the world

faces today. These include the need to invest in training, knowledge sharing, and research and development to help farmers sustainably improve the quantity and quality of the crops they grow." Howard Minigh, CEO and President of CropLife International, emphasizes that "public sector investment in agriculture has been in decline for 30 years, yet it is a crucial element in addressing food security and coping with resource shortages. More transparent and coordinated policies can help deliver the continued improvements needed to support the agricultural sector."

On Farming First's web site a new section has been introduced that focuses on the green economy. It includes a guide to green economy initiatives on agriculture, Farming First's policy paper on agriculture and the green economy, and a six-part online infographic. The infographic is made up of 17 visually appealing graphics, which can be embedded or shared individually on Twitter. It has received several awards, including a 2011 EU Digital Communication Award.

Following the launch of the infographic, many conversations were generated (both on- and off-line) about the messages it contains and Farming First experienced a significant rise in web traffic (see also article on page 8).

To view the video and the infographic: [www.farmingfirst.org/green-economy/](http://www.farmingfirst.org/green-economy/)

For information about the awards won by the infographic: [www.digital-awards.eu/\\_files/winners.pdf](http://www.digital-awards.eu/_files/winners.pdf)

[www.glasshousepartnership.com/blog/glasshouse-partnership-shortlisted-for-international-green-award/](http://www.glasshousepartnership.com/blog/glasshouse-partnership-shortlisted-for-international-green-award/)



## IFA news

### Global Phosphate Rock Production Trends from 1961 to 2010. Reasons for the Temporary Set-Back in 1988-1994

IFA, Paris, France, 24 October 2011.

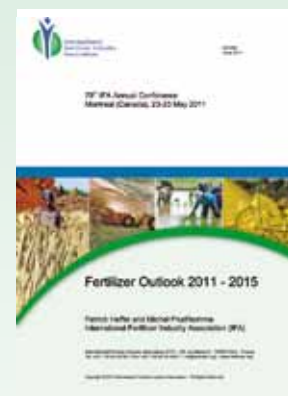


According to a number of researchers, a phosphate rock production peak occurred in 1988. This argument has led to the "peak phosphate" theory. However, IFA (which represents the largest phosphate producers worldwide) does not support this argument.

To read the full document, download the pdf: [www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/LIBRARY/Our-selection2/Issue-briefs](http://www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/LIBRARY/Our-selection2/Issue-briefs)

### Short-Term Fertilizer Outlook 2011-2012

P. Heffer and M. Prud'homme. 37th IFA Enlarged Council Meeting, Mayakoba, Mexico, 29 November-1 December 2011.



This report presents an overview of short-term prospects for world agriculture and fertilizer demand, as well as the global fertilizer supply and trade situation in 2011 and 2012.

To download the report: [www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/FERTILIZERS-THE-INDUSTRY/Market-outlooks.html](http://www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/FERTILIZERS-THE-INDUSTRY/Market-outlooks.html)

# Unlocking the value of new media in agricultural communications

by Michael Hoevel



The agricultural sector is waking up to the value of new media. Yet there is still a lot of confusion and trepidation about where and when to engage meaningfully, as well as how to quantify the value of an investment in new media.

For instance, which new media platforms are most commonly used by target audiences? Who is most active and most influential (not always the same thing)? Which issues or keywords are most frequently discussed, and which ones are gaining or losing momentum as a subject of conversation? Most importantly, how can new media be incorporated into communications activities already being undertaken?

As web-based technologies continue to redefine the way the world communicates, organizations that embrace new media as part of their outreach efforts can reach new audiences, deliver their messages more effectively, and gain valuable insights into market trends, risks and opportunities.

Many organizations (and farmers themselves) are already using new media. For instance, mobile phones deliver fertilizer advice via text messages<sup>1</sup> to Filipino farmers, provide real-time crop pricing information<sup>2</sup> to Rwandan farmers, and offer micro-insurance policies<sup>3</sup> to farmers in Kenya to cover them when weather conditions impact their harvests.

Commodity traders are scouring Twitter for updates<sup>4</sup> from farmers on expected crop quality and yields. Farmers are targeting food consumers and retailers directly on Twitter<sup>5</sup> to sell specialist crops in niche markets

Agricultural groups are posting photos from farm visits and global policy events on Flickr<sup>6</sup>, uploading expert presentations on SlideShare<sup>7</sup>, communicating directly with thousands of followers and "live tweeting" from events on Twitter<sup>8</sup>,

uploading expert video interviews on YouTube<sup>9</sup>, debating best-practice approaches to sustainable agriculture on LinkedIn<sup>10</sup> and sharing interactive, creative content<sup>11</sup> produced within organizations. In short, the opportunities are endless if new media are used effectively (see the short YouTube video<sup>12</sup>).

Organizations often make two mistakes when they first delve into making new media part of their broader communications activities. Firstly, whether to engage in new media is not a "yes or no" decision. Not all new media platforms and networks speak to relevant audiences or leverage an organization's existing strengths. Secondly, it is important to remember that new media are



a means to an end. They are a way to reach out to target audiences and deliver on business or policy objectives. It does not necessarily matter how many times you have been "liked" or how many Twitter followers you have if these do not translate into material outcomes with respect to the bottom line.

Therefore, it is important to develop purposeful new media strategies and a

clear accountability structure indicating which team members are responsible for executing the work. These efforts can also be measured over time with increasingly sophisticated tools, from free services such as Google Analytics<sup>13</sup>, Google Insights for Search<sup>14</sup> or Twitter's search function<sup>15</sup> to more powerful paid-for services such as Radian6<sup>16</sup>.

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\*The agency works closely with IFA on Farming First and is helping the industry set up a communication campaign for Rio+20.

<sup>1</sup> [www.farmingfirst.org/2011/02/filipino-farmers-given-fertilizer-advice-via-text-message/](http://www.farmingfirst.org/2011/02/filipino-farmers-given-fertilizer-advice-via-text-message/)

<sup>2</sup> [www.bbc.co.uk/news/10131793](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10131793)

<sup>3</sup> [opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/09/doing-more-than-praying-for-rain/](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/09/doing-more-than-praying-for-rain/)

<sup>4</sup> [www.forbes.com/2010/08/05/twitter-commodity-traders-personal-finance-farmer-crop-yield.html](http://www.forbes.com/2010/08/05/twitter-commodity-traders-personal-finance-farmer-crop-yield.html)

<sup>5</sup> [www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/agriculture/farming/8929132/The-fresh-face-of-farming.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/agriculture/farming/8929132/The-fresh-face-of-farming.html)

<sup>6</sup> [www.flickr.com/photos/ciat/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ciat/)

<sup>7</sup> [www.slideshare.net/cgiarclimate](http://www.slideshare.net/cgiarclimate)

<sup>8</sup> [twitter.com/farmingfirst](http://twitter.com/farmingfirst)

<sup>9</sup> [www.youtube.com/farmingfirst](http://www.youtube.com/farmingfirst)

<sup>10</sup> [www.linkedin.com/groups?viewMembers=&gid=68088&sik=1323895278011](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?viewMembers=&gid=68088&sik=1323895278011)

<sup>11</sup> [www.farmingfirst.org/greeneconomy](http://www.farmingfirst.org/greeneconomy)

<sup>12</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SuNx0UrnEo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SuNx0UrnEo)

<sup>13</sup> [www.google.com/analytics/](http://www.google.com/analytics/)

<sup>14</sup> [www.google.com/insights/search/](http://www.google.com/insights/search/)

<sup>15</sup> [www.twitter.com/twittersearch](http://www.twitter.com/twittersearch)

<sup>16</sup> [www.radian6.com/](http://www.radian6.com/)

# The A2A toolkit for energy reduction

by Julia Reinaud

Consider for a moment how energy is used throughout your company's supply chain, from raw materials to the final product. Energy is critical to operations, but it is also a major cost. In addition to a company's direct cost for purchasing energy, energy has environmental and societal costs: it depletes resources and contributes to climate change.

Governments are setting long-term objectives to mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase energy efficiency levels. Forward-thinking companies are recognizing that a reassessment of their energy strategy is both vital and unavoidable. They are looking for ways to use energy more efficiently.

The Assessment to Action (A2A) Toolkit is the key.

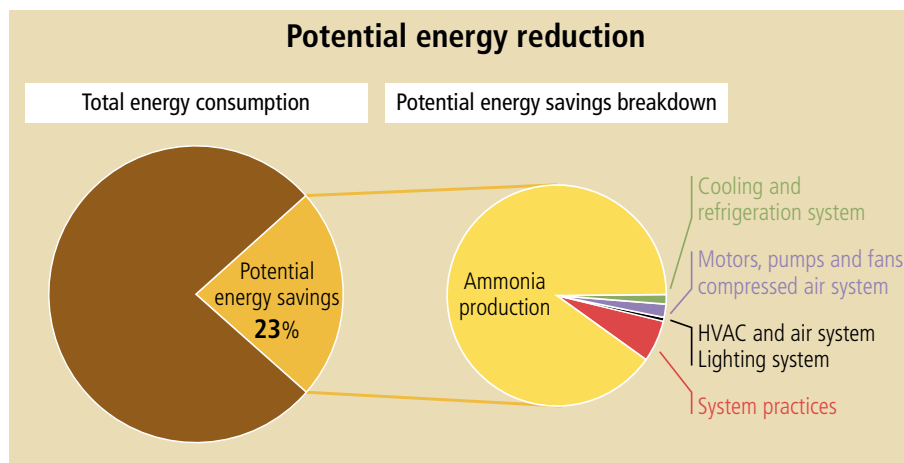
## What is the A2A Toolkit?

The A2A Toolkit provides clear and relevant solutions for leaders, managers and staff in order to help companies cut down on energy consumption, reduce GHG emissions and save on energy bills. Companies can also use it to communicate their own sustainability initiatives to their markets and to the wider community.

The Toolkit was developed by the Institute for Industrial Productivity (IIP), along with ICF Marbek, IFA and a team of experts in China. It is available at no cost on the web sites whose links are given at the end of this article.

## How does the A2A Toolkit work?

The A2A Toolkit is a suite of resources developed in cooperation with IFA's ammonia experts of the Technical Committee. It provides ammonia producers with access to global energy management and technology best practices. These are the right tools for a first-order, high-level assessment to identify and prioritize energy efficiency opportunities. To take advantage of opportunities identified using the Toolkit, more detailed energy audits and feasibility studies may be required.



## The Toolkit is organized in three parts:

### 1. Assessment Modules

- i. Energy Use and Technical Best Practices Assessment
- ii. Energy Management System Assessment (based on the ISO 50001 standards)
- iii. Productivity Improvement Assessment

### 2. Measure Libraries

- i. Generic Measure Library
- ii. Ammonia Specific Measure Library

### 3. Reporting and Planning

- i. Report Card and Opportunity Identification
- ii. Energy Efficiency and Management (EE&M) Plan Checklist
- iii. Energy Efficiency and Management (EE&M) Action Plan

Through continuous benchmarking of individual processes, the Toolkit ensures that data are consistent and comparable with the performance of industry peers. The Toolkit also allows a company to track the benefits of implemented changes over a certain period. Results generated through the assessments are intended to assist in short- and long-term strategic planning. To obtain the guidance and resources needed to conduct assessments, and implement the

action plan effectively so as to meet business goals, the support of senior management is essential.

## Results

Four pilot companies in China have tested the A2A Toolkit. Several others have received training in its use.

"The Toolkit carried out a realistic assessment of our company's current energy use and management. The report card fully affirms the good practices, points out the problems, and lists the improving measures." — Pilot Company

Company X, a Chinese natural gas based ammonia-producing company, used the A2A Toolkit in May 2010 and found that it had an energy saving potential of USD 2,274,938 (or 23% of the company's total energy use) (see graph).

To start assessing your company's potential energy savings, [download the A2A Toolkit at www.iipnetwork.org/tool.php](http://www.iipnetwork.org/tool.php) and [www.protectandsustain.org/](http://www.protectandsustain.org/)

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## IFA news

### IFA set to survey its global membership on SHE performance

The 2012 benchmarking surveys will be in the following areas:

- Energy efficiency and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in ammonia production;
- Emissions to the environment;
- Safety total recordable incidents (TRI).

For more details, or to participate in these surveys, contact Sophie Palmie: [spalmie@fertilizer.org](mailto:spalmie@fertilizer.org)

### Harmonization of fertilizer sampling and analysis methods

The IFA expert working group on the harmonization of fertilizer sampling and analysis methods is forging ahead with the development of recommended methods for use in international fertilizer trade. All guidelines and publications are accessible on the IFA web site. They are available to the general public and to all trading parties.

Through participating in the review process, company representatives increase their shared understanding of the most accurate, consistent and effective means of determining product quality. For example, the working group recently initiated a review of current methods to determine the nutrient release characteristics of slow- and controlled-release fertilizers.

The next meeting of the working group's steering committee will take place in Orlando, Florida, USA on 15 and 16 February 2012. For more details, contact Sophie Palmie: [spalmie@fertilizer.org](mailto:spalmie@fertilizer.org)

### IFA Green Leaf Award 2013 Invitation to nominate candidate production sites

Excellence in safety, health and environment (SHE) is not only a must within the global fertilizer industry but it has also become a top priority of the industry's senior leadership. In this light, excellent SHE performance within the IFA membership should be globally recognized and duly rewarded, which is exactly why IFA grants the "Green Leaf Award" every two years to a deserving IFA member company. For more information and to submit an application form: [www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage-Member/TECHNICAL-COMMITTEE/The-IFA-Green-Leaf-Award](http://www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage-Member/TECHNICAL-COMMITTEE/The-IFA-Green-Leaf-Award)

## 3<sup>RD</sup> INTERNATIONAL ZINC SYMPOSIUM Main outcomes and key messages

by *Ismail Cakmak*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Zinc Symposium took place in Hyderabad, India, from 10 to 14 October 2011. It was organized jointly by IFA, the International Zinc Association (IZA), the Fertiliser Association of India (FAI) and HarvestPlus. There were 195 participants from 30 countries. The symposium opened with a welcoming speech by the chairman, Dr. Ismail Cakmak, and introductory remarks by Mr. Gurbachan Singh, Agriculture Commissioner, Government of India. Sessions during the symposium were devoted to: human nutrition and health; soil and crop management; zinc fertilizers and crop nutrition; plant physiology; plant breeding and molecular biology; and environmental issues.

The speakers highlighted the impacts of zinc deficiency on global crop production and on human health. They also addressed the importance of plant physiology and molecular biology for producing food crops that have increased zinc density and zinc deficiency tolerance. Special attention was given to environmental issues associated with zinc. The keynote address in the human nutrition and health session was given by Prof. Rosalind Gibson of the University of Otago, New Zealand. Her presentation included the contribution of soil zinc deficiency to low zinc concentrations in food crops and to high incidences of zinc deficiency in human populations.

The keynote speaker in the soil and crop management session was Prof. Volker Römheld, formerly from the University of Hohenheim in Germany. One of the points he made is that zinc has a stress-mitigating role, especially in plants under drought and heat stress.

In the session on zinc fertilizers and crop nutrition the keynote speaker was Dr. M.V. Singh, former coordinator of the Micronutrient Project at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Dr. Singh emphasized the importance of adequate and balanced NPK fertilization



Photo © Cakmak

*Zinc deficiencies in wheat in Turkey.*

with zinc in order to obtain optimum yield and better nutritional quality. He also presented experimental results demonstrating that an improvement in the zinc nutritional status of major food crops contributes very significantly to zinc concentrations in human blood plasma samples collected in India.

The keynote speaker in the session on plant physiology, Prof. Ross Welch of Cornell University in the USA, described a number of zinc's critical functions, including in biological membranes, protein synthesis, and detoxification of highly toxic oxygen free radicals. He emphasized that the root cause of zinc deficiencies in many food systems is too little available zinc in the soil.

In the plant breeding and molecular biology session, the keynote address was presented by Prof. Jan Schjoerring of the University of Copenhagen. He stressed that successful biofortification of food crops with zinc should target not only total concentrations of zinc, but also its bioavailability and localization in grain.

The keynote address in the environmental issues session was given by Prof. Steve McGrath of Rothamsted Research in the United Kingdom. He discussed issues related to heavy metal (e.g. cadmium) impurities in zinc fertilizers. He underlined the importance of using good quality zinc fertilizers in agriculture.

The next (4<sup>th</sup>) International Zinc Symposium will be held in Brazil in 2014.

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Photo © Ian Terry

## 2012 Regional Conference

Uzbekistan, on the historical Silk Road, has long been a crossroads for trade, learning and culture. April's IFA regional conference in Tashkent, will provide an opportunity for fertilizer executives to discuss market and supply trends, safety in production, and other topics at the "crossroads" represented by the three IFA standing committees (Production and International Trade, Agriculture, and Technical). During the conference, the Association's focus on promoting a "safety first" mentality - globally as well as in regional markets - will be emphasized.

The conference programme is structured under the theme "Broadening Your Horizon". Discussions will explore:

- the global supply and demand outlook;
- regional and national market forecasts;
- agricultural developments;



- key energy and logistical developments in the region;
- safety leadership in fertilizer production.

The day before the conference begins, the Technical Committee will organize an international workshop for IFA member companies on safety and sustainability practices in phosphate fertilizer production (with the participation of the FIPR Institute and the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA). The Committee's annual meeting will also take place that day.

### Who should attend?

The conference is being organized under the guidance of the Regional Vice President, for all IFA members with an interest in Eastern Europe and Central Asia as well as for newcomers who would like to learn more about IFA with a view of joining the Association.

## IFA events



**2012 Regional Conference**  
3 – 4 April 2012  
Tashkent, Uzbekistan



**IFA Crossroads Asia-Pacific**  
30 October – 1 November 2012



**80th IFA Annual Conference\***  
21 – 23 May 2012  
Doha, Qatar



**38th IFA Enlarged Council Meeting\***  
27 – 29 November 2012  
Rome, Italy



**Production and International Trade Conference\***  
First week in October 2012



### More conference information

To access general and registration information about these events click on "Events" at: [www.fertilizer.org/ifa/Home-Page/EVENTS](http://www.fertilizer.org/ifa/Home-Page/EVENTS)  
A pocket-size events brochure can also be downloaded.

\*Restricted to IFA member companies

# Publications

## 2011 Global Hunger Index The challenge of hunger: taming price spikes and excessive food price volatility

IFPRI, Washington, DC, USA, October 2011.

This year's Global Hunger Index (GHI) shows that global hunger has declined since 1990, but not dramatically, and remains at a level characterized as "serious."



Across regions and countries, GHI scores vary greatly. The highest GHI scores occur in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. South Asia reduced its GHI score substantially between 1990 and 1996, but this fast progress could not be maintained. Though Sub-Saharan Africa made less progress than South Asia after 1990, it has caught up since the turn of the millennium.

### Contact

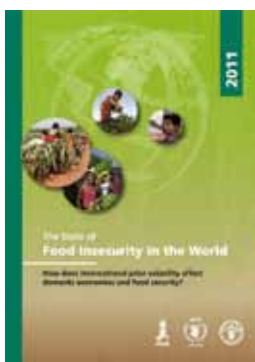
To download the report and view the video or infographics:  
[www.ifpri.org/publication/2011-global-hunger-index](http://www.ifpri.org/publication/2011-global-hunger-index)

## The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011

### How does international price volatility affect domestic economies and food security?

FAO, Rome, Italy, October 2011.

This year's report focuses on high and volatile food prices, identified as major contributing factors in food insecurity at global level and a source of grave concern to the international community. Food price volatility featuring high prices is likely to contin-



ue, making poor farmers, consumers and countries more vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity.

Such crises, including in the Horn of Africa, "are challenging our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by half in 2015," warned Jacques Diouf of FAO, Kanayo F. Nwanze of IFAD and Joesette Sheeran of WFP, in the preface.

### Contact

To download the report in six languages:  
[www.fao.org/publications/sofi](http://www.fao.org/publications/sofi).

## A green growth strategy for food and agriculture

OECD, Paris, France, 2011.

The agriculture sector contributes to greener growth, in particular through facilitating the uptake of green technologies and management practices and reducing waste in the food chain. This will involve a range of policies, including: the reform of environmentally harmful subsidies that distort efficient resource use; freer international trade; shifting towards targeted policies that will support poor and vulnerable farmers; rewarding the provision of ecosystem services; and encouraging management practices that improve the productivity of resource use. Framing appropriate "greening" policies is also a major governance issue, which requires examining the incentives and disincentives generated by policies, as well as the regulatory and institutional framework, more broadly.

### Contact

To download the report:  
[www.oecd.org/dataoecd/38/10/48224529.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/38/10/48224529.pdf)

For more information on OECD and green growth:

[www.oecd.org/document/10/0,3746,en\\_2649\\_37465\\_44076170\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_37465,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/10/0,3746,en_2649_37465_44076170_1_1_1_37465,00.html)



## High Level Panel of Experts, UN Committee on World Food Security consultation on land tenure and international investment in agriculture

Proceedings of discussion, No. 66. FAO, February 2011.

### Contact

To download the report:  
[http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/fsn/docs/HLPE/SUMMARY\\_66\\_Land\\_Tenure.pdf](http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/HLPE/SUMMARY_66_Land_Tenure.pdf)

## Governing land for women and men. Gender and voluntary guidelines on responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources.

Land Tenure Working Paper 19, E. Daley, C. Mi-Young Park, FAO, February 2011.

### Contact

To download the report:  
[www.fao.org/docrep/014/ma811e/ma811e00.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/ma811e/ma811e00.pdf)

FAO land tenure homepage:  
[www.fao.org/nr/tenure/lt-home/en/?no\\_cache=1](http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/lt-home/en/?no_cache=1)



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Fertilizers & Agriculture is a quarterly newsletter published by IFA covering issues in relation to fertilizers and sustainable agriculture.

### Mailing list

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To consult current and past issues of Fertilizers & Agriculture: [www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/LIBRARY/Our-selection2/Fertilizers-Agriculture-Contributions](http://www.fertilizer.org/ifa/HomePage/LIBRARY/Our-selection2/Fertilizers-Agriculture-Contributions)

We invite your contributions of letters, documents, articles, photographs, etc.

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