

Soil fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa and the effect thereof on human nutrition

Gerhard Nortjé


SUBTROP

for Michiel C. Laker, Emeritus-Professor
of Soil Science, University of Pretoria

The article mentioned here gives feedback on a paper that was published in June 2013 at the Fertiliser Society of South Africa's (FSSA) annual congress. The focus of the article is on human nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa, and we know that undernourishment and poor human health are major problems in Sub-Saharan Africa. Many articles in the international and local media in the last few years have indicated "Africa can feed the world" – referring here to agriculture in Africa. Even the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) have made similar comments.

However, is this true? The quality of the soil resources of Sub-Saharan Africa, as indeed the whole of Africa, is very poor compared with the soils of the rich, developed countries at the high latitudes in the northern hemisphere and Argentina. Africa's soils are considered to be even of lower quality than those of other developing areas like Latin America and Asia.

Read the full article on the SUBTROP website under the Events/News section: http://www.subtrop.net/Uploads/Vol8SoilFertilityinAfrica_Laker.pdf.

For more information, contact Gerhard Nortjé at gerhard@subtrop.co.za or 083 501 8680. 



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**Gerda Drewes - 082 721 7210 or
Peet Vorster - 082 805 8689
swiftlimpopo@gmail.com**