

# POLICY BRIEF

Vol Issue

## Crop Production Policy



Centre for Environmental  
Policy and Advocacy



**UTVIKLINGSFONDET**

This Policy Brief has been produced with the financial assistance from the Development Fund of Norway through the Sustainable Agriculture and the Lead Farmer Programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA) and can under no circumstance be regarded as reflecting the position of the Development Fund of Norway.

### **Background**

Despite having overall adequate food produced in the country, some households face food shortages due to the varying food distribution in the country. In addition high value crops are disproportionately spread in the country. Some crops are grown in the wrong agro-ecological areas, marginal lands, and steep slopes hence affecting overall production.

### **Policy Objectives**

There are two broad policy objectives for crop production namely:

1. Ensuring a balanced and diversified production of food and cash crops to meet the country's requirements for food, foreign exchange and sustaining rural livelihoods incomes; and
2. Improving and maintaining the productive potential of the land

### **Crop Specific Policy Objectives and Strategies**

#### **Maize**

The objective is to achieve and sustain self sufficiency through increased yields rather than expanded area. This objective will be achieved through,, promoting production in suitable agro ecological areas and replacement of low yielding maize with high yielding varieties. At the same time, irrigation development, use of suitable varieties and use of appropriate fertilizers are encouraged for marginal areas.

At the operational level, t the maize policy objective will be achieved through appropriate extension services, promotion of seed selection, encouraging mixed cropping, maximising use of organic fertilizers, demonstration of good storage techniques, and promoting improved crop varieties in areas of their suitability.

#### **Rice**

The policy goal is to increase production through expansion in hectareage and increase in yields for local and export requirements. This will be achieved through maximising the potential of traditionally rice growing areas and extending to other suitable areas, double cropping where irrigation water is available; and full utilisation of rice schemes.

Operational objectives for rice include growing high yielding varieties, promote good husbandry practices, good management of schemes and development of self help schemes, promote improved water management systems, suitable farm mechanisation, multi cropping, and production of high value accepted varieties.

#### **Sorghums and Bulrush Millet**

The policy aims to increase production of sorghum and millet in marginal rainfall areas. The strategy includes promoting production of these crops as security crops in areas with low rainfall and as cash crops. In addition, promoting acceptance of improved varieties, timely allocation of inputs to farmers, credit facilities and good storage facilities will aid in attaining the objective.

#### **Finger Millet**

The policy aim is to increase production through increasing yield and hectareage of finger millet through production in suitable areas using acceptable crop husbandry practices. The operational objectives include encouraging production in recommended cropping systems, seed bulking of improved varieties, appropriate conservation strategies and promotion of use of manure and fertilisers.

#### **Wheat**

The policy aims at increasing yield to reduce dependence on imports. The strategies include the use of irrigation in wheat production and promotion of wheat production in high altitude areas. The operational objectives include seed bulking, appropriate technologies, and intensifying extension efforts.

#### **Tobacco**

The policy aims at increasing yields and quality for trade requirements and for sustainable land use. This will be achieved through production in suitable agro-ecological areas, promote production of high quality and oriental tobacco, only western and oriental tobacco to be grown by smallholder farmers and good land management practices. The operational objectives include, promotion of suitable tobacco varieties, registration of tobacco growers, enforcement of the Tobacco Act, suitable crop husbandry practices, effective fuelwood management and soil conservation practices and appropriate application of pesticides.

#### **Groundnuts**

The policy aim is to promote production of groundnuts for local use and export purposes and to provide raw materials for the domestic oil industry. This will be achieved through the promotion of suitable varieties in suitable agro-ecological areas. Operational objectives for groundnut production in Malawi includes seed bulking programmes, effective crop husbandry practices, fungal disease control, application of pesticides, crop rotation, and increased hectareage.

#### **Cotton**

The policy's goal is to increase production and improve quality for export. Strategies to achieve this goal include promoting smallholder involvement, and use of appropriate pest and disease control measures. Operational objectives for cotton include production in suitable agro-ecological areas, increasing hectareage, good management, enforcement of cotton legislation and intensifying extension efforts.

#### **Pulses**

The goal of the policy is to increase production for local consumption to improve the nutritional status of rural communities. Strategies to achieve this include production of pulses in suitable agro-ecological areas, promoting appropriate varieties and canning beans. Operational objectives include bulking of improved seeds, promotion of mixed cropping and encouraging pure stands and double or relay cropping where appropriate.

#### **Coffee**

The policy aims to increase production and yield according to trade requirements. Strategies to attain this include exploiting full potential of coffee in suitable areas and promoting recommended soil conservation measures. Operational objectives include encouraging farmers to raise their own seedlings and providing pulperies in areas with a potential for coffee production.

#### **Cassava**

The policy aims at increasing the production of cassava in all areas through the promotion on cassava production in traditional growing areas for food and sale and all other areas as a security crop. Operational nobjectives include the promotion of disease resistant varieties, promotion of bitter varieties (where cassava is used as a staple), following appropriate land husbandry practices and early planting.

#### **Sweet Potatoes**

The policy aims to increase the production of cassava in all areas for food and sale through the production of high yielding cultivars. The operational objectives include promoting improved varieties, improving storage, early planting and encouraging selection and multiplication of varieties.

#### **Irish Potatoes**

The policy aims to increase the production to meet domestic demand through increased production of quality tubers in traditional growing areas and extending production to other areas. Operational objectives include introducing high yielding disease resistant crops, promoting production in suitable areas, encouraging good practices in selection, harvesting and storage.

### **Citrus Foods**

The policy aims at increasing the production of citrus production to meet domestic needs by exploiting production in all areas and improving fruit quality. Operational objectives for citrus fruits includes encourage production by smallholder farmers, provision of appropriate extension services, encouraging farmer associations, production of improved varieties and establishment of nurseries of at Agriculture Development Divisions.

### **Pineapples**

The policy aims at increasing production in suitable areas through improved fruit quality and organising formation of farmer associations. The operational objectives includes promoting production in warm to cool areas, good husbandry practices and promoting production in urban areas.

### **Deciduous Fruits**

The policy aims at increasing production to meet local demands through increased production in suitable areas and improved fruit quality and availability. The operational objectives include production of improved varieties, good crop husbandry practices, establishing control centres and encouraging farmers to establish nurseries.

### **Cashewnuts**

The goal of the policy is to encourage production of cashewnuts for local use and export by promoting its production in all suitable areas. The operational objectives include good seed selection and nursery management, promoting production in suitable areas, and planting more trees.

### **Sunflower**

The policy aims at increasing production for meeting the raw material requirement for edible oils. Objectives include expansion of hectarage, making available improved seeds and encouraging good husbandry practices.

### **Bananas**

The policy aims at increasing banana production in all suitable areas to satisfy domestic demand. Operational objectives include promoting good crop husbandry practices including planting of high quality varieties and promoting commercial production in high rainfall areas.

### **Chillies**

The policy aims at increasing production to meet local and export demands by promoting production in suitable areas (under 1,500m altitude). This will be achieved through good selection of seeds and promoting recommended cropping systems.

### **Vegetables**

The policy aims at increasing domestic production of vegetables to improve the nutritional status of Malawians. This will be achieved by promoting production of vegetables in all areas and organising farmer associations. Operational objectives for achieving this includes promoting use of local and improved varieties, appropriate crop husbandry practices, promoting preservation and processing of vegetables and supporting commercial farmers.

### **Mangoes**

The policy aims at improving production of selected varieties to meet local demand through the introduction of improved varieties. This will be achieved through establishment of nurseries for improved varieties and promoting processing and preservation of mangoes. The operational objectives include distribution of seedlings to farmers, and promoting farmers to grow their seedlings, provision of relevant extension services, conducting farmer training management, and promoting marketing.

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