



INSIDE

A diversified TAMA

By: Sam Kalimba

In line with the 5-year Strategic Plan (2019-2023) that aims at promoting sustainability and progress the Tobacco Association of Malawi (TAMA) has rebranded to TAMA Farmers Trust. The official launch of the rebranding event took place on 19th December 2019 at its Head Office in Lilongwe. The rebranding led to changes in the corporate portfolio, business orientation, diversity and clientele. The constitution, the logo, and the website have also changed.

in other value chains, such as macadamia, coffee, soybeans, groundnuts, tea, sugarcane, horticultural crops, dairy, poultry, etc. value addition will be another area to explore.

TAMA Farmers Trust will work tirelessly with Government, other stakeholders and support agents to achieve its mission. Tobacco will continue to be the pillar of the country's economy for the foreseeable future.

TAMA has been and will continue to be one of the country's important social economic development partners.

Logo and Motto

The change of the corporate portfolio entails that we also change our organization's logo (as above) and motto 'Leading Farmers to Prosperity'.

Logo's Abstract

The inner white circle represents the holistic (360 degrees) coverage of the farmers in all aspects. The rising (gold) sun in the middle represents the envisaged bright future while the blossoming plant in front of the rising sun represents the new beginning. Green and gold are the Trust's corporate colours.

Legal Obligations

The rebranding does not affect the legal personality of the existing entity which retains its right and obligations in all existing relationships with all parties. We shall continue to be a focal institution in matters of representing the tobacco farmer in the country.

The Annual Congress (Annual General Meeting) of 2019 resolved that it was high time the institution diversified into other business ventures alongside tobacco. As intelligent as the farmer is – he/she has already been doing that, but lacked organizational support, especially for the small to medium scale farmers. We also need to look into the issue of value addition to the non – tobacco crops, so as to optimize revenue and not to end as just primary producers. Predictable markets for the non – tobacco crops have been a challenge. The new TAMA would work with interested institutions, and government to foster structured markets.

In the new setup, the Organisation has the TAMA Farmers Trust as the Apex body with TAMA Agriculture and TAMA Enterprise as the major operational branches.

Under the TAMA Agriculture there are the whole range of grower category sizes - large scale, Medium scale and small scale farmers growing tobacco. TAMA Enterprise includes Cooperatives, and other groupings or individual farmers



Solaris on the ground - Page 2



From 19 December 2019 to datePage 3

2020 Annual Area Meetings in Brief.....Page 3



Msika wa Mtedza w a p e z e k aPage 4



Corona VirusPage 8



EDITORIAL

2020 is a year that begun on a low note globally with the news of corona virus. The Covid19 has already claimed a lot of lives in Europe and Asia and gradually it has entered the African Region. Globally, business has slowed down. The directly highly impacted regions are where we rely on for our markets. This is why we all have to fight to ensure that the pandemic is quickly halted.

Back home, the economic situation also faces its own local challenges, but as farmers, we never stop having hope for a time when the factors that lead to business slowdown will be resolved. As we draw closer to opening of 2020 marketing season, we pray that the effects of the global pandemic and the local challenges will not affect our business. Let us support the authorities so that together we quell all obstacles standing on our way so that we have a smooth marketing season. Please read on.

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Solaris nursery in Kasungu

SOLARIS: A POTENTIAL ENERGY CROP FOR MALAWI

OBJECTIVE
 To create awareness

Known Facts

- Crop selected for Seed by SUNCHEM HOLDINGS; Italian R & D Co.
- Non GMO / Non Nicotine
- Annual crop with possibility of multiple harvests
- Seeds contain 39-41% oil on dry matter basis
- Oil extraction yields 33 % crude oil
- Has higher oil content than other known oil crops (Table 1)

Table 1: A comparison of average yields and oil potential in a selection of biodiesel feedstocks (international values)

Crop	Seed yield – international averages (ton/ha)	Oil content of seeds (%)	Extractable Oil yield (L/ha)
Canola (Rape Seed)	3.3	33.2-47.6	965-1250
Sunflower	1.9	32-45	534-742
Soybean	1.5-3.3	21-22	274-635
Jatropha curcas	1.5-2	25-40	540-680**
Tobacco Solaris	5.7	39-41	1930-2038

Source: C. Fagher, 2011 and Darr, 2007.

OIL USAGE

- Extracted oil can be processed into
 - a.) Bio-diesel
 - b.) Jet-A
- **OTHER BENEFITS**
 - I. Leaves into Livestock feed - Cake
 - II. Stems and Leaves into Briquettes
- **YIELD RANGE** -Seed 2500 – 3000 kg/ha in Malawi
- **EXPECTED GROSS PROFITS** \$1.33/kg Equivalent MK 971/kg

Solaris on the ground

By: Sam Kalimba

The research department of the Agricultural Research and Extension Trust (ARET) conducted a three-year study on Solaris and the Agricultural Technical Clearing Committee (ATCC) cleared it for production.

Four TAMA Farmers Trust Lead growers tested the planting of the Solaris in the 2019/2020 season in Kasungu and Dowa districts.

One such farmer is Mr. Anthony Kuleya Banda of Tilimbike Tobacco Estate in Kasungu. He grew about 0.45 acres of Solaris and his crop is doing well with an estimated volume of 0.81 tons of seed.

A total of 1.25 hectares of land was put to solaris out of the planned 3 hectares. According to the Trust's Officer responsible for the program, Chimwemwe Tembo, this reduction in land size was due to some unpredicted problems that forced some farmers to reduce.

Tembo attributed the challenges to late commencement of the program and marginal capital injection. "The program invested 450 grams of seed (sent by the Consultant) that was issued to farmers, and were not enough for the hectares targeted," said Tembo.

He further stated that some nurseries were not

well managed by growers themselves especially at the early growing stage.

However, Tembo was optimistic that the program will be a success.

Tembo said that the 2019/2020 Solaris production though on a small scale, has attracted attention of a number of farmers who have shown interest in the crop.

The initial 3 hectares were expected to have a potential yield of about 7.2 tones. With the reduction in land size it is expected that there is going to be a yield of about 2.25 tones with an average yield of 1.8 tons per hectare.





Directors and members of staff popped the champagne on a colourful evening on 19 December 2019 in the Boardroom at the Head Office to celebrate the launch of the new corporate name, FTama farmers Trust.



Tama Farmers Trust, a new corporate name for the formerly Tobacco Association of Malawi (TAMA) was launched on 19 December 2019. In the picture above, Mr. Felix Thole, Chief Executive Officer of the Trust outlined reasons for the change.



The Malawi National Dance Troupe added colour to the event. In the picture above a Malipenga Dance commonly practiced among the Tonga People of Nkhata Bay being performed.



Deep in the thick of things, Tama Farmers Trust President participated in the 2019/2020 Tree Planting exercise that saw the Trust and ARET working together in planting 5000 seedlings at Nsanga and Matiti Primary Schools in Machinga.



Tama Farmers Trust President, Mr. Abiel Kalima Banda and his counterpart, Board Chairperson for ARET Mr. Reuben Maigwa planting their symbolic trees at Nsanga Primary school on 23 January, 2020.



Director of Operations and Technical Services at the Trust, Mr. Nixon Lita made a presentation to farmers during the launch of the 2020 Annual Area Meetings at Mphomwa in Kasungu.



GVH Mphomwa thanked Tama Farmers Trust for choosing his area for the launch of grower meetings for the year 2020.



A cross-section of grower participants at Mphomwa growers meeting on 8 February 2020.

4 February 2020: The United States of America's delegation led by the Executive Assistant Commissioner for Customs and Boarder Protection, Brenda Smith visited Malawi, as promised by their Ambassador at a meeting called by the Ministry of Agriculture some time soon after the release of the WRO.

This is in connection with the issue of Withhold Release Order on our tobacco going into USA.

The team met tobacco stakeholders separately at the offices of the Tobacco Commission. Tama Farmers Trust and other associations had their

time on 4 Feb 2020

The Trust's President and CEO (Mr. Kalima Banda and Mr. Thole) attended .

The team was on a fact finding mission and also to explain what the WRO was about. It transpired that the WRO is not a ban per se but rather a step towards establishing whether the consignment at the border is child labour and forced labour free and good to proceed to the US market.

2020 Annual Area Meetings in Brief

From internal report and website



Pic by ITAMA Communications

A cross section photo of the 2020 AAM Launch

trict. The Guest of Honour was the Director of Extension Services in the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Jeromy Nkhoma, who represented the Principal Secretary. Dr. Jerome Chingonda Nkhoma, commended TAMA Farmers Trust for the continued efforts in taking along tobacco industry and value chain stakeholders when engaging farmers. “These Annual Area Meetings are very significant to the Ministry as well, because they provide both farmers and stakeholders along the value chain, a platform to review how they are performing. I have also noted that farmers have good ideas and they were able to provide suggestions on how best to address some of the challenges facing the industry. I urge you stakeholders to address the concerns raised by the farmers” said Dr. Nkhoma. After the national launch the meetings spread to 20 Council areas. General attendance was good at around 4,300.

Tama Farmers Trust Annual area meetings are conducted to give grower members an account of the activities that TAMA has carried out in the calendar year. In these meetings industry players are also invited to interact with growers and make their services explained

them. Growers also have a chance to take their complaints to industry players for solutions. The meetings take place in February in all the council areas. The national launch for the 2020 meetings took place on 8th February at Mphomwa Satellite Depot, in Area 15, Kasungu Dis-



Host Councillor: Area 15 Cllr Anthony Kuleya Banda at the 2020 AAM Launch



Dr. Jerome Chingonda Nkhoma, the Director of Extension Services in the Ministry of Agriculture.



Msika wa mtedza wapezeka

Kampani ya Pyxus kuno ku Malawi yati ndiyokonzeka kugula mtedza kuchokera kwa alimi omwe ali ma membala a TAMA Farmers Trust. Mkulu woyendetsa ntchito za malonda ku Bungwe la TAMA Farmers Trust, Mayi Chimwemwe Mandalazi anati ‘Kampani ya Pyxus yatipempha kuti ikufuna mtedza wa CG7 wochulukira kwambiri. Izi tipanga kudzera mu makoper-



Mtedza wa CG7: Ukufunika kwambiri

ativi komanso ngakhale mu ma kalabo a alimi. Sizitivuta ku-

peza alimi omwe alima mtedza wa CG7 ngakhale tapem-

idwa kwambiri mdziko muno.

phedwa mkati mwa ulimi wa 2019/2020,” anatero a Mandalazi.

Mtedzawu ndi-wopirira ku chilala komanso wosavuta kuzula pokolola. Uli ndi kuthekerera kotulutsa ma tani awiri pa hekitala imodzi ndipo ndiwomwe umalim-

Ulimi wa mbewu zina

Wolemba: Sam Kalimba

Ngati njira imodzi yokwaniritsira zolinga zake zofuna kuchulukitsa njira zopezera chuma, bungwe la alimi la Tama Farmers Trust latsekula munda wawukulu ku Ntchisi komwe kwalimidwa soya wochulukira wa malonda.

Malingana ndi amene akuyang’anira za malimidwe a mbeu zina ku bungweli a Chimwemwe Tembo akuti mundawu ndi wa mahekitala 40 ndipo mahekitala khumi alimidwa soya wa mbeu amene msika wake ndiwodziwikiratu.

“Tikulima soya mogwirizana ndi ulangizi wa makono ndipo tikutsatira chilichonse chofunika pa ulimi wa soya wa mbewu ngakhalenso wokonzera zakudya zina. Tagwiritsa ntchito mbewu yovomerezeka kuchokera ku Seed-Co komanso mankhwala ndi feteleza woyenerera,” anatero a Tembo.



Munda wa Soya ku Ntchisi



Munda wa Chimanga ku Kasungu

Pamene timalemba nkhanayi ndikuti mbewuyi itacha bwino kwambiri opanda matenda ena aliwonse.

Ntchitoyi sikungophunzitsa alimi ozungulira mundawu kalimidwe kabwino ka mbewuyi komanso ikupereka mwayi wa ntchito kwa anthu ozungulira.

Bungweli lalimanso chimanga chambewu pamunda wina ku Kasungu womwe ndi wokwana ma hekitala 10 ndipo ntchitoyi ikugwiridwa mu mgwirizano ndi kampani yokonza mbewu ya Bayer Mosanto Malawi.

Ulimiwu waperekanso mwayi wa kuphunzira ulimi wamakono ndi ntchito kwa alimi ndi anthu ozungulira mundawu.

Ku minda yonseyi alimi akuphunzirakonso za ufulu wa ogwira ntchito pamene akupatsidwa madzi a ukhondo, kusagwiritsa ana ang’ono ntchito, ndi zina zambiri.

Tama Farmers Trust drives the ITGA



Mr. Kalima Banda: leading ITGA

Tama Farmers Trust leader, Cllr. Abiel Masache Kalima Banda was elected President of the world's tobacco grower's body, International Tobacco Growers Association (ITGA) at an indaba that took place in the Dominican Republic in October 2019. We ask him what it is all about in this one on one interview with Business Focus:

BF: What was your initial reaction to the results of the vote?

KB: Well, it was an obvious outcome because our constitution is well constructed in way that we rotate the leadership among the 6 co-founding countries. In the previ-

ous term we were the Vice President, which is a step to the Presidency. So we can't talk of an emotional reaction.

BF: What benefit does Malawi get as a producing country with this status?

KB: Most importantly, our being at the helm of this body proves the recognition the world at large has on Malawi, in as far as tobacco production is concerned. This recognition goes a long way to having the world not proceeding with most decisions on tobacco without Malawi's position. This is critical as you are aware that tobacco means Malawi and Malawi is tobacco.

BF: What mark would want to leave behind when your term ends?

KB: The issue of the USA's Withhold Release Order is a big thorn in our fresh. We are on it day in day out as growers to ensure that the market for our produce is available. If we do our part, we expect the US also to do its part and lift the order. Lo-

cally we are doing our part but globally via our ITGA we are leaving no stone unturned. We know Malawi is not the first country on this and would not be the last one. It is our duty to prepare other countries to avert this predicament.

BF: What is the future of tobacco globally?

KB: The future is still bright despite the fact that the demand is declining with the coming in of the New Generation Products. The fact is that there are people who still want to use tobacco in some Eastern and Western countries. All growers know this fact.



A group photo for ITGA global meeting participants in Dominican Republic

Tama Farmers Trust on the road

Months have gone since the Trust launched its rebranding drive. Business Focus talks to the Company Secretary of Tama Farmers Trust, Mr. Andrew Mfuné who is also the Director of Finance and Administration to shed more light on what has happened so far and other issues.

BF: What do we have on the cards to show as major strides in implementing the rebranding drive?

AM: Three months down the line, we believe that diversification alongside tobacco is on the right track, some of the diversification initiatives implemented this far include commercial farming, crop seed production and identification of profitable markets for our cooperatives.

BF: How does this move assist grower members both tobacco and non-tobacco?

AM: Our members are well represented both locally and internationally, we offer transport services at affordable rates therefore assisting them to transport their produce to the markets and identification of profitable markets will assist them in earning a good return on their sweat.

BF: Four years down the line, where would Tama Farmers Trust

be?

AM: Our vision is to make sure that our organization is a Trust of choice to the farmer. We want to ensure that there are structured markets for the non – tobacco crops. We will endeavor to invest in value addition initiatives in order to ensure that our members realize value for money and hence improve on their wellbeing.

BF: Any additional information?

It has to be noted that following the rebranding, we now have four entities; Tama Farmers Trust, a member based entity for both tobacco and non-tobacco farmers; Tama Enterprises Limited, a company registered in the unlimited business category which acts as a commercial vessel, currently it is operating Agro shops, commercial farming and crop seed production; Tama Hessian Services Ltd, this is a company which deals in hessian services for tobacco farmers; and Tama Grading & Rehandling Company, which offers grading and rehandling services to tobacco farmers.



Andrew Mfuné

Tama Farmers Trust President, Mr. Abiel Masache Kalima Banda early this year engaged in a snap crop inspection. We take you through in this pictorial focus as captured by Sam Kalimba.



Mr. Snoden of Sharpe Valley expects his contracted tobacco to be ferried timely from Nanyangu Depot.

The Chikafa's of Sharpe Valley form Mpala and Tanganyika clubs and expect make good returns from their sweat.



Thorncroft Senior of Chimpeni Estate in Zomba is training his son to take over from his management.



Mr. Mustafa Kaunda of Kachubu 1 Club has 2.5 hectares of flue but had no reg. number.



January view on burley field in Machinga

Corona Virus with Dr. Cecilia Kanyama

NAME OF THE VIRUS; CORONA VIRUS, or COVID-19, SARS

The name of the virus is SARS COV 2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2). It is a type of coronavirus. Delivering its name from the appearance on Electron Microscope, with spikes which look like a crown on its viral envelope. There are 4 major types of coronaviruses which have been shown to cause disease in humans. SARS COV 2 is the new virus added to the previous list. In February 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) designated the disease caused by SARS COV 2, COVID-19, which stands for coronavirus disease 2019

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CORONA VIRUS – IS IT NEW?

Coronavirus has been well described for many years and has been known to cause disease in both humans and animals. There are 7 major types of which 4 are known to cause disease in humans. The one many can remember is the SARS COV which caused pandemic in 2002-2003. The origin was Bart/rodents and transmitted to humans. Started in China. The COVID-19 caused by SARS 2 similarly started in China, in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province. This was on 27dec 2019 when doctors noted atypical pneumonias which started amongst family members then appeared in clusters. The patients had some contacts with an open seafood wholesaler market in this city. World Health organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 on 30 January 2020. We know have a global threat from this disease.

IS IT CREATED, AS OTHERS ARE SAYING?

The SARS COV 2 virus was not created by anyone. However, it is a self-altered variation of SARS COV which actually caused another pandemic in 2003. This is because the characteristics of

SARS COV2 are very similar to SARS COV and we know viruses lack fidelity in multiplication. Errors happen, different variations occur. This can either lead to a useless virus but at times to a more virulent virus. If we have a more virulent virus this can lead to a new pandemic. This is the case with COVID 19. There is a consensus that they must have

been reservoirs of SARS COV in the community either in Bart or CIVETS as intermediate host. These reservoir viruses self-mutated or just changed its genetic composition slightly as viruses do when replicating, resulting in a novel coronavirus with more virulence in terms of spread and infectivity. However, the reservoir is yet to be identified as these are early days in the pandemic. All we say for sure is the human to



Dr Cecilia Kanyama: UNC Project, KCH.

human rapid spread. From 3 patients to more than 234,000 as of 20 march 2020.

DRUGS FOR THE DISEASE CAUSED BY THE VIRUS?

The drugs available are for supportive treatment only so that the person sick gets through the illness with ease. For example, if patient has fever, we can give antipyretics. If they need fluid, we do, we can also cover with appropriate antibiotics to cover for other causes if patient has a pneumonia. If they need oxygen we can also supplement.



TAMA FARMERS TRUST
CORONA VIRUS RESPONSE

Regular hand wash with soap/sanitizers
Avoid physical communication where possible

- Make use of phone calls
- Alternatively, WhatsApp may be of great assistance
- Encourage talking to stakeholders via emails and phone

Avoid handshakes completely (alternatives for greetings: wave, salute, elbow bump, bow, foot bump etc.)

Reduce number of visitors meeting you in your office

Maintain the recommended seating capacity of Company vehicles, do not overcrowd.

Cover mouth and nose when sneezing
Drink warm water regularly





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TAMA MISSION STATEMENT

To provide visible and compelling services to the grower members and perpetuate sustainable balance in the generation of wealth in a manner that ascertains wider income diversification and value.

TAMA's NEW VISION

To be the most effective and successful farmer organisation in advancing members' business interests.