



CROP NUTRITION

Area of Focus: Soil testing

How it Works: Crop Nutrition is an agribusiness company providing soil testing and fertilizer advisory services for farmers. Farmers collect soil samples from their field in a specimen bag provided by Crop Nutrition. They are trained how to collect their samples properly by Crop Nutrition field advisors. These soil samples are delivered by the farmer to their local agro dealer who sends the samples to Crop Nutrition via courier. Crop Nutrition's state of the art equipment processes the samples quickly, keeping costs low (due to high volumes) and getting results back to farmers much faster than traditional soil testing services. Results and recommendations are then sent via SMS directly to the farmer once they have been analyzed, further decreasing the time needed for the entire process. Crop Nutrition works on the expectation that if the results and recommendations are unclear to the farmers, they will be interpreted for the farmers by the agro dealer or field advisor. Soil testing is important for any farmer to know what minerals their soil is deficient in and what type of fertilizer or other inputs may be used to increase soil health and fertility, yields, and resistance to pests and disease.

Technology Used: SMS

Implementer/Funder: This initiative is fully paid for by Crop Nutrition out of its operating expenses.

Fees: Cost of the soil sample testing, which ranges from USD\$18 for basic analysis to USD\$50 per sample for detailed reports for larger-scale commercial farmers.

Primary Markets: Kenya

Users: There are approximately 1,500 farmers using Crop Nutrition's services, 100 of which have received soil fertility recommendations by SMS so far.

Business Model: Crop Nutrition charges farmers for individual soil tests and also contracts with outgrowing companies who pay for this service on behalf of their contracted farmers. There is a strong incentive for outgrowing companies to invest in and encourage soil testing services for their outgrowers to improve productivity and ensure that they receive higher quality products from their farmers. Crop Nutrition is independent of any input brands or dealers and does not sell fertilizer or other agricultural inputs for crops. This fact preserves their neutrality and ability to offer unbiased recommendations to farmers.

Impact: Crop Nutrition lab reports include technical recommendations so that farmers apply the correct fertilizers, lime or other inputs to reduce production costs and improve yields. When correctly used by farmers, this information can contribute to larger crop yields. Agro dealers also receive a small commission for facilitating the service.

For more information visit: www.cropnuts.com

Source: Information provided by Crop Nutrition in May 2012

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