

By Patience Lunda

Agriculture stakeholders from Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda have shared notes on how organic agriculture can help shore up food production at a time prices of farm inputs continue rocketing.

The interface was organised after research findings revealed that there is slow uptake of organic agriculture as most countries rely on inorganic inputs such as synthetic fertiliser, among others.

Speaking at a workshop which Soils, Food and Health Communities Organisation organised in Mzimba District on Tuesday, Rachel Bezner Kerr, principal researcher from the University of Cornell in the United States, said agriculture underpins the development of countries.

Kerr added that there is a need for the government to set up policies that support organic agriculture since research has shown that countries such as Tanzania and Uganda are benefitting from such type of agriculture.

"There is a need for more policy support towards efforts aimed at promoting organic agriculture and we have invited guests from

MW, TZ, Uganda share notes on organic agriculture



KERR—Our colleagues from France have studied the processes

Tanzania and Uganda as they have experience in developing strategic policies and bills that support organic agriculture and agroecology in their countries. Our colleagues from France have studied the processes of these bills," she said.

On his part, Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement Advocacy Programme Coordinator Paul Chilewa said his

country has registered tangible results by practising organic agriculture in the cotton and coffee industry.

He suggested the need to train farmers in organic agriculture.

"We have seen farmers benefitting from producing organic cotton and, in our case in Tanzania, we managed to increase production of organic cotton such that farmers



CHILEWA—We managed to increase production of organic cotton—Pictures by Patience Lunda

get two times profit as compared to conventional cotton production," he said.

Mzimba North Crop Protection Officer Mwiza Munthali said the interventions being spearheaded will go a long way in improving food production in the country.

About 15,000 farmers in Mzimba and Dedza have been engaged in organic agriculture activities.

DISTRICT NEWS

Kasungu woman dies due to excessive beer drinking

A woman identified as Judith Zidikha has lost her life due to what Kasungu Police Station officers have described as excessive beer drinking.

She was found lying unconscious in her room at Teja 1 Resthouse in Kasungu District.

A report by Kasungu Police Station shows that Zidikha drank beer for three consecutive days without eating anything.

The report further says, on January 16 2023, a resthouse attendant saw Zidikha lying lifeless in her room.

The attendant, who was doing morning chores, informed Zidikha's ex-husband, who took her to Kasungu District Hospital for medical assistance.

Zidikha was pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital.

Kasungu Police Station spokesperson Joseph Kachikho confirmed receiving the report.

Meanwhile, police in Kasungu are advising people to refrain from taking beer on an empty stomach to avoid similar incidents.

Zidikha, who is suspected to be in her late 30s, came from James Village, Traditional Authority Mwase, in Kasungu District.—Esnath Kalawe, Mana

Paramount Chief