

An Evaluation of the Level of Fertilizer Utilization for Cocoa Production in Nigeria

M. O. Ogunlade, K. A. Oluyole* and P. O. Aikpokpodion

Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria, P.M.B. 5244, Idi-Ayunre, Ibadan, Nigeria

KEYWORDS Cocoa Farms. Soil Fertility. Cocoa Production. Descriptive Statistics

ABSTRACT Low soil fertility has been identified as one of the major causes of decline in yield of cocoa. The importance of fertilizer in ameliorating this problem will go a long way to boost cocoa production. This study therefore assessed the level at which fertilizer is being utilized in cocoa production in Nigeria. The study was carried out between May and June 2008 in five cocoa producing states in Nigeria. These were Ondo, Ekiti, Cross Rivers, Osun and Oyo States. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and ten respondents from the study area and the information was collected from the respondents with the aid of structured questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed with descriptive statistics and ordinary least square regression analysis. The result showed that majority of the respondents (78.2%) did not use fertilizer on their cocoa farms. It was also found that the major factors that determined the quantity of fertilizer used were farm size as well as price of fertilizer ($P < 0.01$). It was therefore recommended that organized efforts should be put in place by the government and other stakeholders to educate, encourage and assist Nigerian cocoa farmers to urgently consider the option of guided fertilizer usage to boost the productivity of cocoa on their farms. Also, government should strive to make fertilizer available as at when due at subsidized rate, this would make it possible for the farmers to have access to the commodity anytime they want to use it.