

Abstract

Small-holder farmers have indigenous knowledge on farm soil fertility status. However, the knowledge vary from one place to another and in most cases the information Is scantily documented. To address this problem we documented farmer knowledge on current status of soil fertility, types of inputs used, existing soil erosion control measures, household head education levels and farmer perception on causes of soil fertility decline in four selected site of Makueni County. Questionnaires were used to collect data from randomly from household heads. Results from farmers revealed that only 8% of the soils were fertile, 14% were poor and 78% were in the borderline. Further, about 90% of the farmers used farmyard manure erratically and without measure while only 2% used inorganic fertilizers. Between 60% and 67% of household heads had only primary school education and 85% of farmers terraced their farms. However, 64% of the farmers perceived that the main course of low soil fertility was soil erosion. In contrast to farmers' perception and based on results of this study we concluded that the most probable cause of soil fertility decline was soil nutrient mining by crops

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