



TOBACCO INDUSTRY & MARKETING BOARD

TOBACCO INDUSTRY INITIATIVES
TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT
CAUSED BY TOBACCO PRODUCTION



Preamble

The tobacco industry creates value for the communities and government through revenue to growers, job creation, and contribution to taxes and building skills in the country. This demonstrates that tobacco is very important to the Zimbabwean economy. However, the economic benefits derived from tobacco production should never be allowed to sacrifice the associated environmental concerns. The Tobacco industry is working towards making tobacco production and sustainable development to be mutually reinforcing rather than to be in conflict.

In simplest terms, sustainable in agriculture generally refers to the production of food, fibre, or other plant or animal products using farming techniques that protect the environment, public health, human communities, and animal welfare. This form of agriculture enables us to produce without compromising future generations' ability to do the same.

The primary elements of sustainable agriculture are environmental preservation, good labour practises, good agricultural practises and product integrity. Preservation of water, vegetation and soils are at the cornerstone of sustainability in tobacco production.

Ideally, sustainable farms produce crops and raise animals without relying on toxic chemical pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, genetically modified seeds, or practices that degrade soil, water, or other natural resources.

The tobacco industry has put in place some initiatives to produce tobacco in a sustainable way in order to protect biodiversity and foster the development and maintenance of healthy ecosystems.

The ongoing initiatives include:

1. Sustainable Afforestation

Afforestation is a proven solution in major tobacco producing countries such as Brazil. In the case of Zimbabwe, there are many afforestation initiatives that are being pursued.

One such initiative is through Sustainable Afforestation Association (SAA). This is a local Association initiated in 2012 by the tobacco merchant companies in Zimbabwe and supported by Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB) and Ministry of Agriculture.

The members currently self-levy at the rate of 0.5% of gross purchase value for 2013 season and will increase progressively, based on demand, to reach 1.5% of gross value from 2014.

The revenue raised from the levies is used to fund afforestation programmes, research into the use of alternative energies for curing tobacco and also funding the development of appropriate technologies for curing tobacco.

On the afforestation programme, SAA has started to grow large scale forests. The target is to establish up to 4 500 hectares of trees annually. A total of 600Ha of gum trees were established during 2013/14 season. Each hectare has 2200 trees. This will be expanded to the small scale sector as the programme progresses.

This model promises to be a viable foundation to the growth of sustainable large scale forestry. It is founded on inclusiveness – where communities, schools, churches, government bodies and private individuals participate actively in the processes.

Apart for efforts by SAA, re-afforestation efforts are also being championed by individual contracting companies, some grower associations and TIMB. Already Zimbabwe Tobacco Association is working together with TIMB to supply gum tree seedlings to the growers. TRB is also complementing the afforestation initiative by issuing out gum tree seeds to all those growers purchasing tobacco seed.

2. Development and Promotion of Fuel-Efficient Curing Facilities

Some contractors provided resources to the Tobacco Research Board to carry out further research, development and perfection of the rocket barn. This exercise has since been completed and a more efficient rocket barn has since been commissioned. (A plan for this new rocket barn is attached to this flyer). The rocket barns are known to use 50% less fire wood as compared to the conventional barns.

Efforts are currently being made by some contractors and TIMB to facilitate tobacco growers to construct these rocket barns. TIMB has already rolled out a revolving fund for the construction of rocket barns and will avail resources to

build 200 of these barns in 2014. Different contracting companies are also issuing out loans to contracted growers to build these barns.

3. Use of Alternative Sources of Energies for Curing Tobacco

Research and development is at an advanced stage to facilitate use of other renewable sources of energy for curing tobacco. These include use of biogas and solar hybrid barns. Research is also being done to evaluate the suitability of other species of trees as sources of fuel especially the giant bamboo.

4. Facilitating Tobacco Growers to Use Coal for curing Tobacco

There are partnerships between TIMB, District Councils and the private sector to supply coal to growers. The coal is issued on terms and growers will pay through the stop order facility at the point of selling tobacco. The coal is also being re-packaged in 50 kg bags to simplify handling and making it affordable to many growers.

5. Farmer Awareness and Education programmes

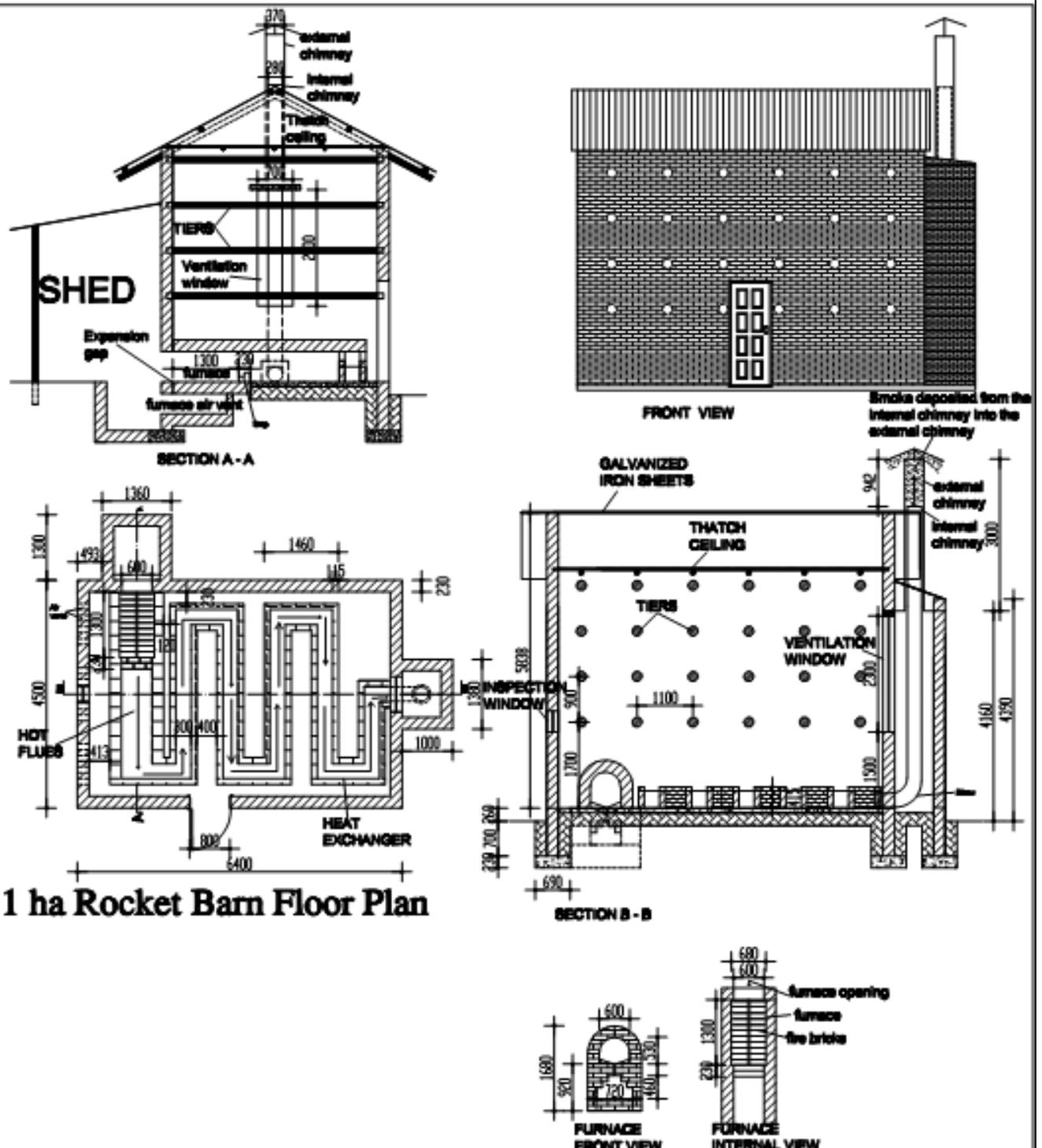
Farmers have to participate actively in the process of tackling deforestation. As a result, TIMB, AGRITEX and other organisations offer training to growers in the keeping and management of forest resources.

Conclusion

The industry will continue to pursue both afforestation measures and technological mix to address issues of sustainability in tobacco production. This should be complemented by the effective implementation of existing regulations such as Statutory Instrument 116 of 2012 that requires all growers intending to use firewood for curing tobacco to be authorised to do so by the Forestry Commission before cutting the firewood. Over and above all, tobacco growers should desist from sourcing firewood from natural woodlands or indigenous trees.

For any additional information, please contact TIMB on telephone numbers 0772145166/9 or 0279-22082/21982 or 025-3439 or 067-24268/29246 or 0277-2700 or 064-7280 or 0271-6772 or E-mail: timb@timb.co.zw

ANNEXTURE: ROCKET BARN DESIGNS



1 Ha ROCKET BARN

**DESIGNED
DRAWN**

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YEAR DRAWN: 2013
FOR THE TOBACCO
INDUSTRY BOARD