

Discover Newsletter for colleagues in Africa

November 2025



Tree Nurseries and Fertiliser Trees

Thank you for your responses to my July newsletter “Create a tree nursery”.

Nelson Moyo wrote from Dedza, Malawi:

1. It is good to fence your nursery to keep animals away. I know this from our experience with chickens, pigs and goats, and even some people. A living fence can also be effective.
2. It is good to label each tree species with the name in different languages and perhaps also their main uses.
3. Having one's own tree nursery provides a platform for teaching visitors especially from schools and environmental clubs.
4. A nursery can also provide employment to some community members who do day to day work like watering, weeding and sorting out those seeds that haven't germinated.

Robert Bwambale visited Makabuli Yusuf in Mbale, Uganda. Yusuf advised him on how to collect seeds from the forest, how to prepare them for planting and how to prepare the soils in which to plant the seeds. Robert said that Yusuf emphasised the need for the area to be big enough to produce seedlings or a variety of trees and to have a shed for storing the necessary tools. It is important to have a source of water all year round.

Fertiliser trees

Robert Okuda wrote from Karamoja, northern Uganda: “Thanks Keith for reminding us about fertiliser trees. Chemical fertilisers are like energy drinks that boost your performance quickly but also disappear quickly. They have no regard for the health of the microorganisms. Fertiliser trees are a low-cost fertiliser for small scale farmers in the rural areas. My favourite tree is *Faidherbia albida*.”

For more information about this tree, see <https://discover-src.net/de/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Info-Faidherbia-albida.pdf>

Keep your feedback coming!

Keith Lindsey



This photo was taken by my late friend Bob Mann in a dry year with erratic rainfall in Gwembe Valley South, Zambia. It shows maize thriving under a *Faidherbia albida* tree. Maize had failed in the open spaces beyond the spread of the tree's canopy. On the far right of the picture is another *F. albida* tree under which sorghum or millet is growing.