

COFFEE FARMING TOPIC 12: LIME APPLICATION



What is lime?

- Lime is natural mineral rich in calcium (a nutrient that strengthens bones and teeth). It has the special property of reducing soil acidity, **thereby improving soil pH, increasing the availability of essential nutrients, enhancing microbial activity, and promoting better root development and crop productivity.**

2 types of agricultural lime: (1) Agricultural lime containing calcium carbonate, **and (2) Dolomitic lime**, which contains both calcium and magnesium salts.

- Crops like humans, require **calcium**.
- **Calcium** is very important in the soil. When calcium is deficient, plants are unable to properly absorb nutrients from the soil, especially when the soil is highly acidic. Therefore, applying lime to the soil increases plants' ability to absorb nutrients, enabling coffee trees to access them easily and produce satisfactory yields.
- Most soils in Rwanda are **deficient in calcium and magnesium** because they are acidic; therefore, they require agricultural lime.
- It is advisable for farmers to **test their soil** before applying lime or fertilizer, so they can understand what nutrients the soil contains and what it lacks, based on the needs of their coffee. After soil testing, the farmer can determine whether to apply **0 g, 100 g, 200 g, or 300 g of lime per tree per year.**

Aproprate time for lime application

- lime is applied during dry season since July and August.



- If applied If planted during the rainy season, they may be washed away by rainwater.

How to apply lime

- Apply 100 g, 200 g, or 300 g (depending on the soil analysis results) near each coffee tree, distributing it evenly over the entire soil surface of the coffee plantation. Cover the lime with mulch

Example of coffee fertilizer program for Rwanda

