



## **INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE**

### **1. BRIEF HISTORY**

The Tobacco Research Board ('TRB') is a premier agricultural research institute reconstituted in 1950 by the Tobacco Research Act [Chapter 18:21]. However, its history dates back as far back as 1935 when its forebearer, the Tobacco Research Advisory Board was established. It had the mandate to supervise tobacco research work and provide advisory services. In 1938, the Tobacco Research Act was passed which created a statutory research institute whose function was to direct, control and carry out tobacco research. However, the outbreak of WWII only a year later disrupted tobacco research in the country and after the end of the war, the Department of Agriculture retook control of tobacco research. In 1950, the second Tobacco Research Act was passed which established the current TRB.



### **2. MANDATE**

TRB has the exclusive mandate to direct, control and carry out tobacco research in Zimbabwe. Its core functions are—

- (i) Conducting research and investigation work in connection with tobacco including the development of varieties, production and tobacco pests and diseases;
- (ii) Engineering experiments in the planting, handling and curing of tobacco; and
- (iii) Provision of advice and assistance to tobacco growers;

In 2021, TRB's mandate was expanded under the auspices of the National Developmental Strategy (NDS) and the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural



Resettlement's Agricultural Food Systems Transformation Strategy (AFSTS). Now in addition to its mandate to direct, control and carry out tobacco research in Zimbabwe, TRB is now also mandated to;

- (i) Establish, enhance and harness technologies for industrial applications, inclusive of biopharming;
- (ii) Research climate-proofing crops;
- (iii) Mainstream sustainable and environmentally benign crop production methods; and
- (iv) Ensure national self-sufficiency in potato and horticulture micro-propagation.





#### 4. MISSION STATEMENT

“To develop and provide elite varieties and innovative agro-based technical services and products to maximize economic value from sustainable tobacco production.”

#### 5. VALUES

These are critical in guiding behaviours and these were streamlined and fully defined to ensure a common understanding. The following are the values for TRB and their supporting definitions:

- ❖ **Innovation** - Our quest for novelty.
- ❖ **Integrity** - Our ethical, trustworthy, fair and transparent approach to business.
- ❖ **Accountability** - Our responsibility from idea and process to outcome and impact.
- ❖ **Commitment** - Our dedication to improved livelihoods of tobacco growers.
- ❖ **Actualisation** - Our accomplishment of business objectives through quality, efficiency, persistence, and creativity.

#### 6. LEADERSHIP

##### 6.1. Board of Directors

The TRB is governed by a board of directors appointed by the Minister of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Ministry’) in consultation with the President in terms of section 5(1) of the Tobacco Research Act [Chapter 18:21] and section 11(9) of the Public Entities Corporate

Governance Act [Chapter 10:31]. The Board comprises 8 members, 7 non-executive directors and one executive director. The current board members are;

- ❖ Mr Stanley Mutepfa (Chair)
- ❖ Professor Florence Mtambanengwe (Deputy Chair)
- ❖ Ms-Chenai-Garise-Nheta
- ❖ Air-Vice Marshall – Innocent Chiganze (Rtd)
- ❖ Dr-Dumisani Kutwayo
- ❖ Mr-Aaron-Denenga
- ❖ Mrs Florence Miti

## **6.2. Executive Management**

TRB's executive management;

- ❖ Mr Oswell Mharapara – Executive Director: Business Development & Marketing/ Acting CEO
- ❖ Dr Susan Dimbi – Executive Director: Research & Extension
- ❖ Mrs Theresa Madziva – Executive Director: Finance & Corporate Services

## **7. OUR STATIONS**

TRB conducts its operations from three main stations, Kutsaga, Banket and Oriental.

### **(i) Kutsaga Station**

This is the main station located in Harare along the Airport Ring Road that houses the institution's headquarters and farm. The following activities are conducted at Kutsaga station;

- ❖ hosting research experiments and trials;
- ❖ tobacco seedling production;
- ❖ growing flue-cured tobacco crop;
- ❖ tobacco seed production
- ❖ Grass seed production
- ❖ horticulture seedlings production;
- ❖ eucalyptus seedlings production;
- ❖ manufacturing of gromix plus and gromix ultra;
- ❖ manufacturing of floattrays.



### **(ii) Banket Station**

This station is situated in Banket. It supports TRB's research and commercial activities. The following activities are conducted at the station;

- ❖ Provision and management of sites for research trials;
- ❖ Commercial tobacco seedling production;
- ❖ Tobacco seed production;

- ❖ Grass seed production; and
- ❖ Training of Zimbabwe Prison and Correctional Services (ZPCS) inmates, officers and tobacco growers

### (iii) **Oriental Station**

This station is situated in Masvingo and conducts the following activities;

- ❖ Provision, preparation and management of sites for tobacco trials;
- ❖ Multiplication of tobacco varieties with limited seed stocks; and
- ❖ Multiplication of G HR1 seed for rotations.

## **8. OUR SERVICES**

### **8.1. Training and Extension**

TRB runs a training and extension programme tailor-made to align with tobacco production activities in the tobacco production cycle. The programme emphasizes adopting a hands-on learning approach on the production processes through the farmer-field school concept to foster Best Management Practices (BMP) in the tobacco production business.





## **8.2. Soil Testing and Lime and Fertilizer Recommendations**

This service is provided by our ISO 17025 accredited analytical chemistry laboratory. Soil tests measure available nutrients in the soil and serve as the best guide to the profitable use of commercial liming and fertilizing materials. Without a sound soil testing programme, crop yield potential can be reduced and low crop productivity can occur due to improper liming and fertilization.

## **8.3. GMO Screening**

We have a state of the art ISO 17025 accredited molecular biology laboratory that offers testing services for Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The GMO testing service makes use of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) method which allows direct analysis of DNA. It is cost-effective, accurate and allows rapid detection and identification of GMO events in tobacco, food and feed, and other plant and animal products. The laboratory is connected to a global network of laboratories for standardization of testing methods and consistency of results.

## **8.4. Molecular Diagnostics**

Our molecular technologies laboratory also offers rapid and accurate diagnoses of plant health problems. We perform a wide range of diagnostic nucleic acid-based tests for selected pathogens affecting crops. Through appropriate use of high throughput technology, we can provide faster turnaround times ensuring the quality of the result.

## **8.5. DNA fingerprinting**

We also offer DNA fingerprinting services which are critical in detecting and preventing the fraudulent commerce of plant material and in protecting plant breeder's rights and sole grower rights.

## **8.6. Pesticide Approval Scheme Service**

We are mandated in terms of section 65(1) of the Tobacco Industry and Marketing Act [Chapter 18:20] as read with the Fertilizers, Farmfeeds And Remedies Act [Chapter 18:12] to test for the suitability of crop protection agents (CPAs) used or proposed to be used in the tobacco production chain. We make recommendations to the Ministry as to which (CPAs) should be registered for use, which CPAs should not be used and those that should be withdrawn for use in the tobacco production chain. Our recommendations are informed by the need for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in tobacco production to minimise the harmful environmental and health effects of agrochemicals and to reduce residues in the cured leaf. We strategically and proactively recommend to Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB) and the Ministry on the phasing out and substitution of highly toxic CPAs with greener and safer alternatives. Currently, 84% of the CPAs used on tobacco in Zimbabwe are in the safer green and amber categories while only 16% are still in the harmful red and purple categories.

## 9. PRODUCTS

### 9.1. Kutsaga seeds

We produce high-quality tobacco, grass seed through a gazetted seed certifying agency (Kutsaga Seed Association). The association is accredited to the National Seed Authority, and is a member of the Zimbabwe Seed Association. and is affiliated to the International Seed Testing Association. Kutsaga tobacco seed is screened for genetic modification, seed dressed with fungicides and pesticides for protection against soil-borne diseases and seedbed pests respectively. These attributes give growers a competitive advantage.

### 9.2. Kutsaga Float Bed System Inputs

We provide an exclusive complete package for raising seedlings using the environmentally friendly and water-conserving float tray seedbed system. The system comprises the following;

- ❖ Kutsaga float trays® (242, 200 and 128 celled for tobacco, horticultural and Eucalyptus seedlings),
- ❖ Kutsaga floatfert® (a liquid basal fertilizer),
- ❖ Kutsaga Gromix<sup>Plus</sup>® or Gromix<sup>Ultra</sup>® (an inert disease and pest free growing media),
- ❖ Kutsaga dibble board,
- ❖ Kutsaga seeder, and
- ❖ Kutsaga gnatbuster.



### 9.3. Kutsaga Tissue Culture Plantlets

Our plant tissue culture facilities offer high-quality disease-free planting material for the following crops:

- ❖ Seed potatoe,
- ❖ Sweet potato seedlings,
- ❖ Cassava,
- ❖ Bananas,
- ❖ Blueberries, and
- ❖ The option of client-driven tissue culture material.

## **10. DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR ROLES**

TRB has four sectors that work to fulfil and support the core functions. The functions of these sectors are detailed below:

### **a) General Management**

The sector comprises the Chief Executive Officer's office, Human Resources, Internal Audit, Legal and Administration, and the Procurement Management Unit. The functions of the sector are:

- ❖ To oversee the daily operations of TRB; apply and cascade the mandate for TRB, as well as the implementation of Board input
- ❖ To articulate and direct the strategy and vision of the organisation
- ❖ Human resources management
- ❖ Internal audit
- ❖ Institutional procurement and disposal of assets
- ❖ Corporate governance
- ❖ Risk management
- ❖ Materials and Services

### **b) Finance and Corporate Services**

The sector consists of Finance, Information Technology and Security departments and is responsible for;

- ❖ Financial accountability;
- ❖ Provision of security services;
- ❖ Cash-flow management;
- ❖ Production of accurate financial statements;
- ❖ Budget and budgetary control;
- ❖ Company secretarial services;
- ❖ Investments portfolio management;
- ❖ Managing external auditors and bankers;
- ❖ Management of the legal issues of the Board;
- ❖ Managing insurance portfolio; and
- ❖ Provision of a robust management information system.

### **c) Business Development and Marketing**

This sector consists of Business Development, Marketing and Liaison with the following responsibilities;

- ❖ Information dissemination through training, extension and liaison;
- ❖ Provision of value-adding business strategies;
- ❖ Production and marketing of Board products and services;
- ❖ Maintaining a positive corporate image through public relations; and
- ❖ Commercialisation of research outputs



#### **d) Research and Extension Services**

The sector comprises the following divisions:

- ❖ Plant Breeding, Plant Health Services, C Plant Breeding;
- ❖ Crop Production & Molecular Technologies;
- ❖ Plant Health Services;
- ❖ Agricultural Engineering;
- ❖ Analytical Chemistry Services;
- ❖ Statistical Services;
- ❖ Seed Production; and
- ❖ Field Services.

##### **(i) Plant Breeding**

The primary function of the Plant Breeding division is to develop high-quality and multi-disease resistant tobacco varieties that reduce production costs and require limited use of chemicals.



##### **(ii) Crop Production and Molecular Technologies:**

The Crop Production and Molecular Technologies Division comprises the Crop Production, Molecular Biology and Tissue Culture Sections. The major activities of the division are;

- ❖ The provision of information relating to efficient, effective and sustainable crop best management practice;
- ❖ Rapid and accurate molecular diagnostics and characterisation services for pests, disease and plant genotypes;
- ❖ Commercial tissue-culture micropropagation;
- ❖ Horticulture seedling production;
- ❖ GMO screening;

- ❖ DNA fingerprinting;
- ❖ Lime and fertiliser recommendations; and
- ❖ Agrochemical contract research.

### **(iii) Plant Health Services**

To provide timely, cost-effective, environmentally benign and sustainable integrated plant protection solutions.



### **(iv) Seed Production**

To produce quality tobacco seed for local tobacco growers, merchants and the export market. In addition to producing tobacco seed, the division also enhances seed (through film-coating and pelleting) and provides seed testing services.





The Field Services Division provides support services to all research Divisions and the Seed Production Division which, inter alia, include land preparation and maintenance of the established crops through to curing, grading and storage, as necessary. In addition Field services also commercially produces flue-cured tobacco, hay, eucalyptus and tobacco seedlings.

#### **(vi) Statistical Services**

The division provides efficient and innovative experimental designs that ensure that Growers are provided with accurate research results. The activities of the division, inter alia, include;

- ❖ Designing Surveys and Experiments;
- ❖ Data Management;
- ❖ Projects tracking (Status of experiments Database and list of outstanding write-ups);
- ❖ Data analysis, interpretation and presentation of results; and
- ❖ Data warehousing of tobacco-related statistical data and information. (Internal and External).

#### **(vii) Analytical Chemistry Services**

The division, through its ISO 17025 accredited laboratory, provides premier chemical analytical services. In particular, it provides the following services;

- ❖ Soil testing service;
- ❖ Plant and foliar analysis service;
- ❖ Water testing service;
- ❖ Pesticide residue testing service; and
- ❖ Product analysis service.

### **11. ACCOLADES**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>AWARD</b>
2016	Best Parastatal and State Enterprise Stand Display at the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show
	Best Public Sector Research Institution at the Public Sector Management Awards
2017	Best Parastatal and State Enterprise Stand Display at the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show
	First Runner Up Overall Stand Display – Makoni Agricultural Show
	Best Agriculture Related Display – Makoni Agricultural Show
	Fourth Prize for Overall Stand Display – Makonde District Agricultural Show
	Best Overall Stand Display in the Agriculture Category – Mazowe Valley Agricultural Show
	Best Parastatal Stand Display – Mazowe Valley Agricultural Show



YEAR	AWARD
	Second Runner Up in the Debt Administration and Management Category of the Public Sector Finance Management Awards
2018	Best Parastatal and State Enterprise Stand Display at the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show
	Winner in the Agricultural Input Sector at the ZIMTRADE Exporter of the Year Awards
2019	Best Parastatal and State Enterprise Stand Display at the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show
	Runner up in the Agricultural Input Sector at the ZIMTRADE Exporter of the Year Awards
	Recognition Award by the BAT Zimbabwe Tobacco Empowerment Trust
2020	Runner up in the Agricultural Input Sector at the ZIMTRADE Exporter of the Year Awards
2021	Best Research Institute Stand Display – Manicaland Agricultural Show
	Dr Dahlia Garwe honoured as one of the 50 most Inspirational Women in Zimbabwe by the Institute of Corporate Directors
2021	Woman Corporate Director of the Year Public Enterprises/Parastatals Category – Institute of Directors
	Dr Dahlia Garwe was the 1 <sup>st</sup> runner-up

