

FERTASA SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

In 2012 committee members of the Fertilizer Society of South Africa (FSSA) identified 15 services and activities that were considered essential to the future and existence of the society.

In 2016 the importance of each of these 15 activities and Fertasa's overall performance was rated. The result of this survey is on the Fertasa website.

Almost 4 years have elapsed since the 2016 survey and the membership of Fertasa has since then doubled. It was therefore decided that a further survey should be done.

Four tables have been compiled and committee members were requested to complete them. The survey was made available online to all 78 member companies. The response reflected the opinions of 48 member companies.

Fertasa's first priority is liaising with the Registrar and his people (DALRRD) regarding the new Fertilizer Bill and Fertilizer Regulations (Table 1).

The value of the Basos-Facts course, the *Fertilizer Handbook* and Fertasa events as well as the importance of the Fertasa Code of Compliance System, was seen as very important.

It is also important to note that all 23 services on the list were regarded as important, with the lowest ranking being 62.5%.

The results of the survey are shown in Tables 1 to 4.

Table 1: Importance of services

Ranking	Services Provided by Fertasa	Rating
1	Liaison with the Registrar (DALRRD) regarding the new Fertilizer Bill	95.84%
2	Liaison with the Registrar (DALRRD) regarding fertilizer Regulations	93.75%
3	Be the recognised official body as the representative of the fertilizer industry	91.67%
4	Industry in Southern Africa – to speak with one voice	91.67%
5	Liaise with government, research institutions, universities and organised agriculture	89.58%
6	Manage and offer the Basos-Facts course	89.58%
7	Organise and present the Soil Fertility & Plant Nutrition Symposium	89.58%
8	Manage and offer the Fertasa Code of Conduct Compliance System	87.50%
9	Organise and present the Fertasa Congress	87.50%
10	Publish and review the <i>Fertilizer Handbook</i> / Bemestingshandleiding	87.50%
11	Promote the image of the fertilizer industry and the importance of fertilizer use	85.41%
12	Liaise with development organisations such as IFDC, AFAP and FAO	83.34%
13	Maintain a fertilizer market statistics model	81.81%
14	Maintain membership of AIF (Agricultural Inputs Forum)	81.25%
15	Share knowledge that will improve the agro-economic justifiable use of fertilizer and agricultural lime	80.85%
16	Maintain membership of IFA	79.17%
17	Manage and offer the PRAS course (Product Registration Application System)	77.08%
18	CPD points for Fertasa activities	70.83%
19	Certification by Afri Compliance or SGS	66.67%
20	Fertasa visibility on social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram	66.67%
21	Quarterly Fertasa newsletter	64.58%
22	Maintain the Fertilizer Quality Monitoring Scheme	62.50%
23	Represent the fertilizer industry at NAMPO	62.50%

The importance of Fertasa's committees to members is shown in Table 2. The majority prefer to be represented on the Regulatory and Technical Committees and least of all the Educational Committee.

Table 2: Importance for members to be represented on Fertasa's committees

Ranking	Fertasa Committee	Rating
1	Regulatory Committee	73.00%
2	Technical Committee	73.00%
3	Board of Directors	70.00%
4	Members Meetings	69.00%
5	Educational Committee	59.00%

The benefits of Fertasa membership are shown in Table 3. Free publishing of company names in the *Fertilizer Handbook / Bemestingshandleiding* was rated as the main benefit.

Table 3: Benefits of Fertasa membership

Ranking	Fertasa Membership Benefits	Rating
1	Free publishing of the company name in the <i>Fertilizer Handbook / Bemestingshandleiding</i>	93.75%
2	Voting rights	85.42%
3	Promoting the image of Fertasa members	83.34%
4	Assistance with fertilizer-related queries	83.33%
5	Free access to Fertasa's Interactive Webpage, e.g statistics	81.25%
6	Assistance with the registration of products	79.17%
7	Free access to Fertasa's publications on the website, e.g. Symposium proceedings	79.17%
8	Sponsorship opportunities at Fertasa events	75.00%
9	Special rates for attending Fertasa's Congress and Symposium	72.92%
10	Discount on Fertasa service fee for product registrations	68.75%
11	Discount on annual membership fees when certified	68.18%
12	Referral of sales prospects to your company	66.67%
13	Free corporate advertising on Fertasa's website	64.58%
14	Discount on registration fees for the Basos-Facts course	60.41%

Fertasa's overall performance is shown in Table 4. The majority of members rated the service as good (58.33%) and very good (18.75%), giving a total of 77.08% of members reporting a positive experience with Fertasa's performance. The challenge is to reduce the number of members rating Fertasa's performance as neutral or poor (22.91%).

Table 4: Overall performance of Fertasa

Category	Rating
Very poor	0.00%
Poor	8.33%
Neutral	14.58%
Good	58.33%
Very good	18.75%

Comments or suggestions

Table 1: Important Services

1	Get more involved with maintaining ethics and quality assurance of fertilizer industry
2	Database of product registration information which can be accessed by members to upload / edit / download information = 5
3	Harmonization and simplification of quality testing procedures for various types of fertilizer ingredients = 4

Table 2: Importance for members to be represented on Fertasa's committees

1	Members should be active in matter of the related committee (e.g. members should not have a marketing representative in a Regulatory Committee) = 100
2	5 = Members should be urged to act responsible through participation, replace 'like minded' with 'different minded' approach
3	Harmonization to improved security procedures/communications regarding the theft of fertilizer/bags/etc. as well as its disposal/dumping of these products, including the importation of illegal/banned/out of spec fertilizer products = 4
4	People serving as committee chairs must be professionally active in that type of discipline (e.g. the chair of the Regulatory committee must work in a regulatory field).
5	Current to manage the relationship with DALRRD. It is up to FERTASA to ensure that DALRRD functions more efficiently, and if DALRRD do not respond appropriately then it must be taken to another level that will result in positive change

Table 3: Benefits of Fertasa membership

1	Benefits for customers doing business with Fertasa member organisations as appose to doing business with non-member organisations should be promoted more (ie. peace of mind, assurance, Fertasa back-up for the customer etc.) = 4
2	5 = ALL members of Fertasa should have voting rights, proportionate of course

Table 4: Overall performance of Fertasa

1	Need to take more action and less discussion. Board members should be more representative regarding the industry.
2	Fertasa could be more involved with addressing "hoax operators" in the industry, ie. Box fertilisers, "magic" fertilizers etc.
3	Fertasa would manifest the difference for new fertilizer submitted through fertasa. I mean there is not difference in terms of approval time with those who submitted their dossier directly to DALRRD. There should be a differences.
4	Fertasa should / must 'claim' its place of importance and responsibility to act as voice of Plant Nutrition industry both towards Government and other industries. Fertasa, responsible for its industry - It should be allowed to act as Representative and Regulatory body
5	The management of the relationship with DALRRD has been very poor and can be improved.
6	The Fertilizer Industry doesn't speak with one voice. Everybody has their own opinions. We don't work together as a team for the common good of the Industry. Take for instance the Gr 3 Guidelines - it was supposed to help with the registration process, but instead has complicated it and led to more expensive applications.
7	Less talk and more action
8	Webinars
9	Improve and maintain relationship with DALRRD