

## Review Form 1.7

Journal Name:	<b>International Journal of Plant &amp; Soil Science</b>
Manuscript Number:	<b>Ms_IJPSS_103609</b>
Title of the Manuscript:	<b>Effect of inorganic fertilizers and manures on yield and soil nutrient status of Maize in calcareous Inceptisol over five decades of intensive farming</b>
Type of the Article	<b>Original Research Article</b>

### **General guideline for Peer Review process:**

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<https://www.journalijpss.com/index.php/IJPSS/editorial-policy> )

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**PART 1: Review Comments**

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<p><b><u>Compulsory</u></b> REVISION comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Is the manuscript important for scientific community?</b> (Please write few sentences on this manuscript)</li> <li>2. <b>Is the title of the article suitable?</b> (If not please suggest an alternative title)</li> <li>3. <b>Is the abstract of the article comprehensive?</b></li> <li>4. <b>Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?</b></li> <li>5. <b>Do you think the manuscript is scientifically correct?</b></li> <li>6. <b>Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestion of additional references, please mention in the review form.</b></li> </ol> <p><b><u>(Apart from above mentioned 6 points, reviewers are free to provide additional suggestions/comments)</u></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The manuscript is of importance to the scientific community as it can help in bringing in interventions that may lead to effective management of the soils nutrients and how crop production could be improved to ensure food security of the nation.</b></li> <li>2. <b>The title appears to be in order as it appears to be sound and catchy though it appears to be long. I would, recommend to include the country where this study was conducted as proposed in the main document.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Encouraging efforts have been made to come up with the Abstract that appears to outline some facts but I feel the Author could still include some tangible facts like objective(s), challenges and proposed way forward and again in line with the aim of the study.</b></li> <li>4. <b>The structure of the Manuscript appears to be a traditional one and is in order but the author appeared to be too brief regarding especially in the Abstract, Introduction, Methods and Material and Conclusion sections.</b></li> <li>5. <b>Basing on some data and facts presented, I feel it's scientifically correct. Some facts presented were observed to be difficult to tell/establish the message and data to make an informed judgement due to lack of comparison with the national or standards set if available. Avoid including statements that are not making much sense and connecting very well. Comments in track changes of the document may help the Author in some cases.</b></li> <li>6. <b>Note that some of the facts presented in the document need to be backed up by references and this has been mentioned in the track changes of the document. There is also need to review the years as there is a mismatch in some references.</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Manuscript has a total of 20 references and only 3 (Numbers 1, 13 and 17) of the total appear to be missing in the Manuscript. A total of 8 References have been used in the Manuscript but are not there in the list of References.</b></p> <p><b>Consider putting the references in the alphabetical order</b></p> <p><b>The list is as follows: 1. Asija and Subbaiah, 1956; 2. DACNET, 2020; 3. Jackson, 1973; 4. Olsen et al, 1954; 5. Standford and English, 1949; 6. Walkley and Black, 1934; 7. Gomez and Gomez, 1985; and 8. Muneshwar et al. 2014.</b></p> <p>All the abbreviations/acronyms/symbols should be written in full followed by the abbreviations/acronyms themselves when they appear in the document for the first time, thereafter, the abbreviations/acronyms/symbols can be used.</p> <p>The conclusion part needs to be reviewed and it should be consistent with what has been provided for in the whole document. While some facts have been presented, I feel on the other hand it's not giving a response to the aim and hypothesis of the study.</p> <p>Avoid making sentences that are not connecting very well as observed in some Sections and sub-sections (see my comments in track changes).</p> <p>. Consider numbering all the Sections including the reference Section or adding page numbers for easy referencing.</p>	

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	<p>Tables and Figures need to be properly introduced and allocated closer to where the discussion is in the sections or sub-sections.</p> <p>Consider rephrasing the Titles of the Tables as well as sub-section 3.2 and 3.3 as they are long and confusing</p> <p>Consider numbering all the Sections including the reference Section or adding page numbers for easy referencing.</p>	
<p><b>Minor</b> REVISION comments</p> <p><b>1. Is language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</b></p>	<p>The answer could be no as well as yes and comments have been made to this regard. Please refer to the comments in track changes. Consider using words or phrases that are scientifically and professionally correct in some cases.</p> <p>Proofreading of the whole document to correct the grammar, typos, tenses etc including rephrasing/reconstruction need to be enhanced.</p>	
<p><b>Optional/General</b> comments</p>	<p>The Section on Results and Discussions need to be looked into seriously as one could have so many questions to the results and that the Discussion part should try to address those obvious questions that a reader would have.</p> <p>The title of the study could be revisited as per the remark made to the main document if in order with the author</p> <p>The manuscript could benefit from language editing.</p> <p>I have made a number of comments have been made in all the sections and basing on that, I feel the manuscript could be under the major revision range if considered to be making sense to the Author. All in all, the manuscript needs to be repaired basing on the deficiencies, some of which have been mentioned in addition to the track changes provided in the attached document. It should be appreciated that the study is looking at the data generated for 5 decades and detailed information and data may be required. Let the readers appreciate the amount of data generated, how it was analysed, challenges came across in the process and proposed way forward.</p> <p>It is a good study that can help the Government, Development Partners as well as the community in making informed decision when it comes to soils and nutrients management in crops production. However, there is a need to provide more details to the study and this should include well spelled out problems/challenges as well as the proposed way forward based on the experience generated from the study and other studies done in the region and beyond as evidenced by the references included.</p>	

**PART 2:**

	<b>Reviewer's comment</b>	<b>Author's comment</b> (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<b>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</b>	<i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i>	

**Reviewer Details:**

Name:	<b>James Peaches Phiri</b>
Department, University & Country	<b>Malawi</b>