

Successes, Lessons and Challenges from Inoculant Supply Chain Development in Ethiopia: An MBI Experience



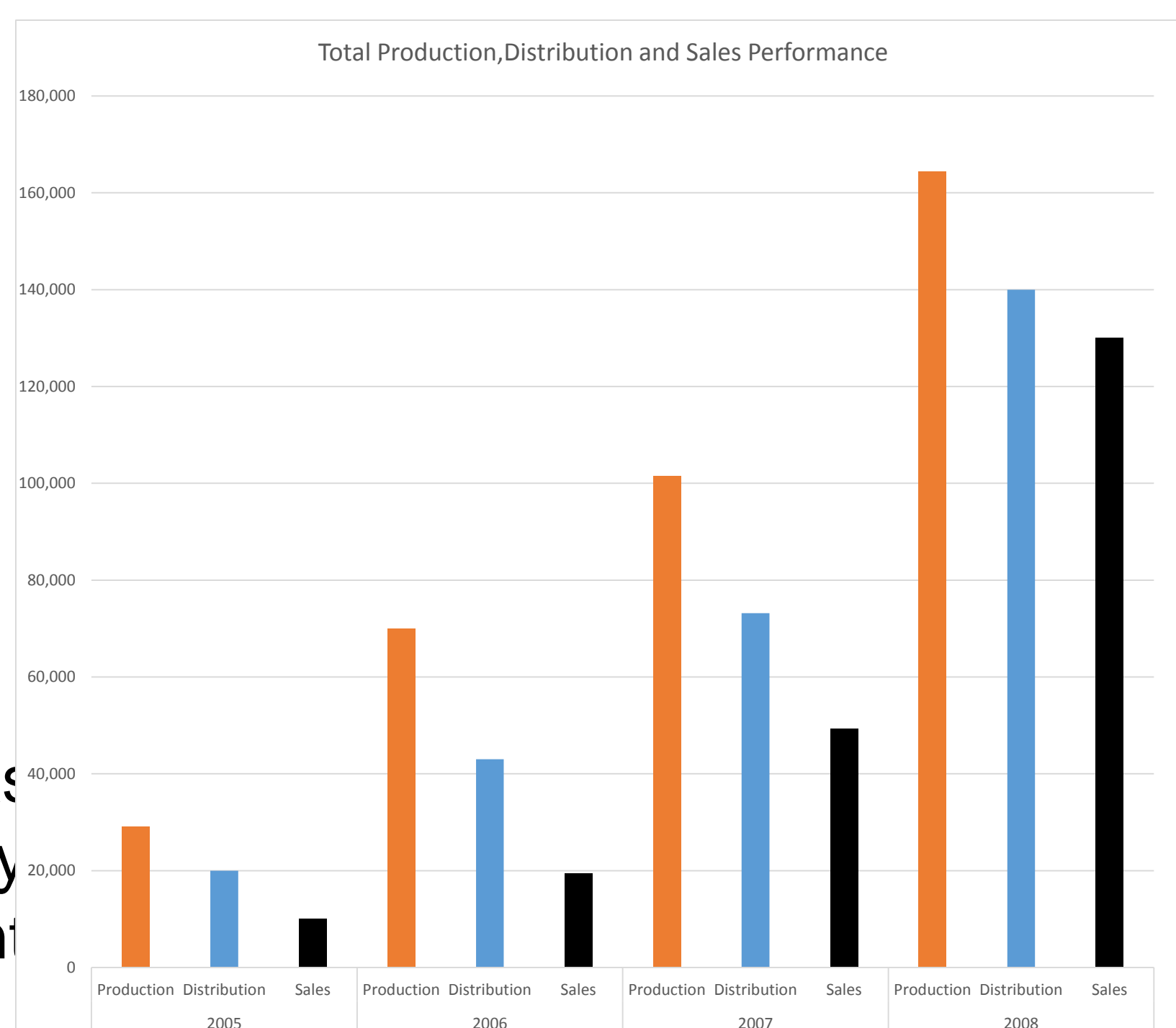
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Introduction

- Menagesha Biotech Industry P.L.C. (MBI) is a local business established with the aim of producing and distributing Rhizobium Bio-inoculants for major leguminous crops including
 - ✓ Faba Bean, field Pea, chickpea, lentil, haricot bean, grass pea, soybean, and mung bean
- Major distributions are made to Amhara, Oromia, South, Benishangul and Tigray regions
- For 2017 planned production volume of 250,000 packets, enough for 62,500 hectares of land.
- Major collaborations & partnerships:
 - ILRI-N2Africa, US Aid, AGRA, EIAR, OARI, ARARI, HwU, Tsehay Union, Becho Woliso, Agro dealers

Key achievements

- Production capacity increased on average by 42 % per year
- Sales performance also increased by 56% per year.
- Distribution outlets through private agro dealers is more efficient in terms of business performance
- The coordination of inoculants demand information and supply has shown progressive improvement by introducing proper sales agreement document
- For sustainable inoculant production, technology dissemination and marketing strongly follow PPPs strategy



Lessons learned

- Collaboration in partnership with different value chain actors has a vital role for promotion and marketing of inoculants
- The need to focus in further isolating and screening of best performing strains for further legume crops productivity
- The existence of agro dealers & government extension channels make effective in demand collection and distribution of inoculant.
- Along with the farmers or end users awareness about the product for agro dealers is crucial.
- Training should focused on equipping them with the skills on how to collect and asses demand from the end users or agricultural offices.
- Farmers observation and testimony on the yield advantage of inoculant Increase the demand for our product.

Challenges

- Global climate change –Erratic rain fall had a great impact on inoculant distribution
- Exaggerated demand data, made only to distribute 70% of the total produced.
- Political security problem in major distribution areas
- Less emphasis to inoculant technology as compared to other inputs such as DAP, Urea, improved seed

Opportunities

- Grants from AGRA for additional laboratory equipment including
 - ✓ Autoclave, laminar flow hood, water distiller, PH meter, Dispenser and micropipette sets, capacitate the production capacity by 40%.
- Establishment of a partnership with National and Regional Agricultural Research Institutes initiated by ILRI N2 Africa for major legumes crop to upgrade inoculants quality and create more awareness about the technology to the end users and
- Inoculant dissemination campaigns through field days on four legumes crops in different regions of the country created high demand
 - ✓ Facilitation made by N2 Africa and MBI-AGRA project

Way forward

- For sustainable quality inoculant production, focus on strengthening the existing partnership with research and higher institution.
- Strengthening partnership with Holeta Agri. Research Center, Hawassa University and Addis Ababa University in
 - ✓ Isolation of new strain,
 - ✓ Characterization,
 - ✓ Multi-locational test and make ready for inoculant production.
- Strengthening the research and marketing wing of our company,
- To ensure market sustainability strengthening the existing partner ship with agro dealers and FCU and establishing other distribution channel.
- Using the farm service center which are established by ATA.
- Using Input hubs established by LIFT

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