

Brazilians Search Foreign Partner for Ground-Stone Fertilizer Venture

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
Friday, 22 December 2006

Established by two geologists from the midwestern Brazilian state of Mato Grosso, RockAll Fertilizantes para Orgânicos is the first and only Brazilian company their owners say to produce natural fertilizers made of minerals found in rocks.

With a small industrial unit in the city of Chapada dos Guimarães, in the mid-western Brazilian state of Mato Grosso, the company produces 30,000 kilograms (66,000 lbs) of the fertilizer per month.

Only countries in which research on productivity in organic agriculture is more advanced, such as the United States, Japan, and Australia, develop organo-mineral fertilizers and soil correctives.

The experience in research of development of the product started over 10 years ago. Prudêncio Rodrigues de Castro Júnior and José Carlos Alves Ferreira, geologists and partners at RockAll, began working based on the demands of small organic producers in the municipality of Chapada dos Guimarães.

After running a few tests, they started a small-scale production of fertilizers and natural correctives. To inaugurate the factory in Chapada dos Guimarães, in March 2006, 30,000 reais (US\$ 13,900) were invested in equipments.

With its recently earned international certification, granted by French company Ecocert, the fertilizer is now ready for the international market. Now, the RockAll researchers and partners are betting on the growth of organic culture in Brazil and on the perspectives for international partnerships in order to make the company grow.

"We are very much interested in establishing partnerships with foreign investors. I believe this is the right time for investing in organics. We have 2,500 square metres (27,000 square feet) of roofed area, located strategically at the heart of a region that is a large agricultural producer," he explains.

"Here we work with the red gold of the earth. If we join it with the black gold of petroleum, good business is guaranteed," said the geologist, who claims to be interested in establishing partnerships with the Arab businessmen.

"Up until now, what we have in terms of the foreign market is a contact with an importer from Germany, via a trading company from the city of São Paulo, in southeastern Brazil. But we are open for negotiation with any market," he assures.

The initial goal for RockAll is to cater to the gardening and city planning sector. "Being able to cater to the demands of the 7,000 Brazilian organics producers, plus foreign customers, would be a great dream come true," he underscores.

Ferreira explains that soil originates from stones that provide a foundation for Earth's crust, and that fertility depends, most of all, on the mineral content inherited from the Mother Stone.

"Based on that principle, we formulated the Rockall fertilizer. The product is comprised of a set of eight different rocks, scientifically selected for their richness in mineral composition, and ground down to the appropriate granulometry, with the objective of remineralizing soils that had their mineral contents impoverished," he explains.

"Considering the richness of the set of stones that exists in Brazil, we can safely say that it is unique in the world," claims the geologist.

According to Ferreira, the bioactive fertilizer, that is, its mineral content associated with organic matter, fosters the development of microorganisms in the soil, and is ready for assimilation through the roots of plants.

"It is important to highlight the fact that eventual surpluses remain in the soil, and are not dissolved or transported by rain waters to the hydrographic network," he says.

The Rockall fertilizer is appropriate for all types of cultures, from flower vases, vegetable beds, gardens, landscaping, soccer fields and golf courses to large soy, corn, rice and cotton plantations.

The geologist assures that the product does not cause any harm to the soil, the environment, to animals or people, even in the case of applications larger than those recommended. It only adds up to the contents in the mineral composition of the soil, providing plants with rich, diversified nutrition.

"Any culture, even organic, that does not use fertilizers or chemical pesticides, causes a certain loss to the soil, which requires a recomposition of nutrients. The challenge, therefore, was to develop an effective product that met the

principles of organic production," says José Carlos.

"And the sustainability of organic production is connected to its productivity, which can be ensured through soil fertilizing and correction," he explains.

Contact

RockAll Fertilizantes para Orgânicos

Website: www.rockall.com.br

Anba - www.anba.com.br