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FUEL BRIQUETTE MAKING

A USERS MANUAL



Technology, Management,
Training and Media Services
for Sustainable Development

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INTRODUCTION

Fuel Briquettes – made from everyday agricultural and commercial residues such as weeds, leaves, sawdust, rice husks, carton board and scrap paper – are a unique, yet well proven technology.

In many parts of the world, people are making this new and modern fuel and saving time, saving energy, saving our environment and creating income. Fuel briquettes are unique because they provide a fuel-wood alternative from resources that are right under your feet or in your wastebasket! Fuel briquettes can be made relatively quickly at a low cost to the manufacturer or consumer and can be adapted and applied in a wide variety of settings, making the resource appropriate, sustainable and renewable.

The Legacy Foundation and its partners have tested the fuel briquette-making process over ten years in a wide variety of environments and conditions – in urban and suburban and rural areas in Malawi, Haiti, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nicaragua, Peru, Mali and the United States. The producers who have participated in fuel briquette training have become expert in the process and able to adapt their own conditions, materials and environment to the fuel briquette production process.

This manual provides all that is required to make a fuel briquette press kit. Other manuals in our series include *Fuel Briquette Press Kit: A Construction Manual* – a step by step guide in making fuel briquettes, *Fuel Briquettes: A Trainers Manual* a guide to expand fuel briquette making into a community project and *Fuel Briquettes: Theory and Applications From Around the World* which includes a recipe book for the experienced fuel briquette maker to expand the variety and types of fuel briquettes made and their applications.

The Art of Making Fuel Briquettes

What are fuel briquettes? Fuel briquettes are a low cost, locally made fuel for cooking or heating that offer an alternative to the use of firewood. Fuel briquettes are made from grass leaves, straw or other agricultural waste products. The basic process that will be described in detail in this manual involves collecting the dry materials, pounding or grinding them to a certain consistency, mixing the materials with water, allowing the 'mash' to sit for a period of time, pressing the mash into a fuel briquette using a specially designed press, allowing the briquettes to dry and finally burning the fuel briquettes exactly as one would burn firewood.

Over the years of experience in fuel briquette making on Legacy Foundation sponsored projects, there have evolved about 100 different fuel briquette 'recipes'. Each offers a slightly different texture, aroma and benefit according to the need and application

The variety of fuel briquette materials is as diverse as the communities where fuel briquettes can be made. Some producers use eucalyptus leaves (blue gum) to drive out mosquitoes with minimal smoke. Others use cedar needles to provide a nice aroma in their hearth while others make cedar fuel briquettes just to store in the closet to preserve clothes during the rainy season. Still others make fuel briquettes out of paper to provide an extended use for junk mail and other waste paper. Neem leaves offer the benefits of the Neem tree while the use of Water