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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Cassava is an important source of food in Africa as an important source of raw materials for the industries. More than any other crop in Africa, cassava has assumed great importance in Africa Agriculture and food supply. The reasons for this are because of the following features which cassava possesses.

Cassava is highly adaptable to wild Agro-ecological conditions and gives relatively high yield on poor soil. Cassava has high drought tolerance and can survive the long dry season characteristics of many parts of Africa.

Cassava has no fixed planting and harvesting time and its production require relatively low skill.

Cassava is relatively tolerant to common pest, which devastate other crops easily.

In spite of the above advantages, cassava has some limitations which affects its utilization and militates against its marketing beyond its region of propagation. These limiting factors include the following;

After harvesting, cassava deteriorates very fast than other roots and tuber i.e. it has poor post harvest keeping qualities.

Cassava is bulky to transport and storage.

Cassava, like some other crops e.g. sorghum contains some potentially toxic component, referred to as cyanogenic glucoside or linamarine

Cassava has low protein content.

Because of the above limitations, there are some myths that are being propagated by enemies of cassava. Some of these myths are

That cassava is an inferior food crops. This is lie being propagated about cassava. The propagation of this myth support their carat with the fact that cassava consume it for its high energy content therefore because cassava is an important source of carbohydrate and energy it is wrong to claim that it is an inferior food.

Another myth is that it is a woman's crop. The reason for this myth is the _____ believed that only women are involve in the cultivation and processing of cassava. It is known today however that men and women, children and adult are involved in cultivation and processing of cassava.

That cassava is a dangerous and toxic crop. This is a lie too because cassava contains no toxin. Cassava only contains some cyanogenic glucosides e.g. linamarine which when hydrolyzed yield the toxic hydrogen cyanide.

It should be noted that there are other crops apart from cassava e.g. sorghum which contain cyanogenic glucoside and these other crops are not been labeled as dangerous crop. within the past 30years, however and mostly through the effort of IITA, cassava cultivars with low cyanogenic glucoside content have now been popularized.

Consequently, this project is designed to achieve the following aim and objectives.

To collect samples of gari from Gari processing centres in Osun State.

To evaluate the nutritional and cyanogenic contents of Gari samples collected.

To compare the results of evaluation with the standard.

NUTRITIONAL COMPOSITION AND CYANOGENIC CONTENT OF GARI SAMPLES IN OSUN STATE

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