

PDF - THE PROBLEM AND PROSPECTS OF COCOYAM PRODUCTION - researchcub.infoABSTRACT

It is a common practice in Nigeria and other West Africa Countries especially in area lying within the rainforest belt, with thick vegetation cover, the aim of management should be to avoid excessive and inadequate level of farming system and maintains sufficient for planting of cocoyam. The study therefore seeks to examine and appraise the problems and prospects of cocoyam production in our society, a case study of Ovia North East Local Government Area.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Cocoyam (*colocasia* spp and *xanthosoma* spp) is grown in the tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world particularly in Africa for human nutrition, animal feed, and cash income for both farmers and traders (Onwueme and Chales, 1994). Cocoyam is vegetative propagated using the corms and to a lesser extent the cormels. As food for human consumption, the nutritional value parts of cocoyam is primarily caloric (Davis et al, 1992). The underground cormels provides easily digested starch; and the leaves are nutritious spinach like vegetable, which give a lot of minerals, vitamins and thiamine (Tambong et al, 1997).

There are two major types commonly grown in Nigeria namely; *colocasia* spp and *xanthosoma* spp. In Nigeria,

it is regarded as a major crop especially in X2 female headed household. Nigeria is one of the largest producers of cocoyam in the world contributing about 40% of total annual production okinpshectares of land out of the total arable land of 27,900.00hectares under cocoyam production.

Cocoyam grows in association with other food and tree crops a system mostly practiced by subsistence farmers in Nigeria. The bulk of the production of cocoyam is in South East, Nigeria (Enyinnia, 2001).

Cocoyam is regarded as a major food crop in Nigeria especially in female headed households. Nwabuzor (2001) noted that cocoyam can be consumed in various forms when boiled, fried, pounded or roasted. It can also be processed into chips ("achicha") which has a long shelf and provides food all year round especially during lean planting season (Asadu, 2006). Cocoyam leaves are also used as vegetable for preparing soup in various part of the world. There is a decline in the yields of cocoyam on the past few years. As population pressure on land continues to increase, the importance of cocoyam in ensuring household food security is given adequate recognition even though the present yield are still below expectation. This could be attributed to a lot of factors such as climate variation, drought, poor cultural practices among cocoyam growers, pest and diseases infestation (Ezenwu, 2010).

Despite the usefulness of cocoyam corms and leaves in human nutrition, its production and processing in Nigeria is faced with a lot of challenges. Some of these challenges are the alarming rate of land degradation and lack of improved varieties for commercial cocoyam and leaf production. Decreasing rainfall and poor soil have also been identified as some of the challenges processing of cocoyam in Nigeria (Osagoe, 2006). Therefore, this study was carried out with the broad objective of ascertaining strategies for improving cocoyam production and processing among women farmers in Edo State, Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In any human endeavour, there are bound to be some obstacle or hindrance in any of achieving exception to this general rule. Hence this research is designed to find out the problem and prospects of cocoyam production in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to examine and appraise the problem and prospects of cocoyam production in our society, a case study of Ovia North East Local Government Area.

To know the number of farmer producing cocoyam in the local government area.

To know the type of production system.

Identifying problem of cocoyam production

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is a common practice in Nigeria and other West African countries especially in area lying within the rainforest belt with thick vegetation cover, the aim of management should be avoid excessive and inadequate level of farming system and maintains enough stock raw materials in period of short supply and anticipate price changes.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is centred on planning of cocoyam in our local government council (Ovia North East) with more emphasis on cocoyam production. Survey is a broad discipline that cannot be treated in full in this study. The researcher while trying to obtain information from respondents encountered certain drawback which hindered on farming system.

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limited the work.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is centered on planting of cocoyam in our local government council (Ovia North East) with more emphasis on cocoyam production. Survey is a broad discipline that cannot be treated in full in this study. The researcher while trying to obtain information from respondents encountered certain drawback which hindered on farming system.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cocoyam: Cocoyam are herbaceous perennial plants belonging to the family araceae and are grown primarily of their edible roots, although all parts of the plant are edible. Cocoyam that are cultivated as food crops belong to either the genus colocasia or the genus xanthosoma and are generally comprised of a large spherical corm (swollen underground storage stem), from which a few large leaves emerge.

Problem: A problem is a road block in a situation, something that sets up a conflict and forces you to find a resolution.

Prospect: A prospect is the possibility that something fabulous will happen. After you graduate top of your class at Harvard, for example, your job prospects look great.

Production: The process of making or growing something for scale or use.

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