

STATUS OF CASSAVA PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND UTILIZATION IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria is the largest producer of Cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) in the world but production is declining with attendant increase in food insecurity. A state wide survey was conducted to document cassava production, distribution and utilization in Osun state, Nigeria. Production areas included the savannah, forest and forest/savannah agro ecological zones of the state with the highest yield (18.6tons/ha) occurring in the savannah zone and the lowest (11.1tons/ha) in the forest/savannah transition. Major sources of planting materials were farmer owned previous season's cuttings (56%) and collection of cuttings from friends within the neighbourhood (22%). Most farmers (68.7%) claimed that cassava production has reduced significantly within the last five years while some (0.7%) opined that the decline is negligible. Distribution and utilisation of cassava in Osun state is traditional; most of the produce is processed and consumed locally within the farming communities (91.3%) while only 1.3% gets into industries. The most important cassava production constraints were shortage of good planting materials, lack of standard marketing boards, pests and diseases. This study therefore indicates the necessity to improve on the distribution of healthy and high yielding varieties, the establishment of marketing boards and cassava flour processing centres to enhance production.

KEYWORDS: Cassava, Production, Distribution, Processing, Utilisation