IITA Cassava Value Chain Development Project

The **Dos and Don’ts** of Cassava Root Production

The Dos and Don’ts of Cassava Root Production

About IITA

Africa has complex problems that plague agriculture and people’s lives. We develop agricultural solutions with our partners to tackle hunger and poverty. Our award-winning research for development (R4D) is based on focused, authoritative thinking anchored on the development needs of sub-Saharan Africa. We work with partners in Africa and beyond to reduce producer and consumer risks, enhance crop quality and productivity, and generate wealth from agriculture. IITA is an international non-profit R4D organization established in 1967 and governed by a Board of Trustees. IITA is a member of the CGIAR Consortium.”
Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank our investors, Nestle Nigeria Plc, for providing the funds to catalyze cassava production among smallholder farmers in selected States in Nigeria and a readily available market for the roots of farmers at harvest. This will increase cassava production, create more jobs, generate more income and improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers. We are grateful for the role played by each stakeholder (especially the farmers and the processors) in the value chain and their patience in accommodating us while administering the survey questionnaire.
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Land preparation

Plant on well-drained land
Avoid a waterlogged area
Plant on friable, loamy land
Avoid stony land
Land management

Plant leguminous crops in rotation with cassava
Do not crop cassava after cassava
Allow organic manure to cure 34 weeks before applying
Do not apply uncured, organic manure
Stem management: Cutting, handling and planting

Obtain stems from plants that are 10-12 months old
Do not cut stems from immature plants
Keep stems for planting under shade
Do not keep stems out in the sun
Use sharp tools to cut stems for planting
Do not use blunt tools to avoid damage to the stems
Select and use healthy stems
Do not use diseased stems
Plant stems with 5–7 nodes
Do not plant stems that are too short or too long
Weed control

Use adults when spraying
Avoid using children when spraying
Use the right protective clothing when spraying
Avoid using wrong protective clothing when spraying
Spray when there is clear weather
Do not spray when the weather is cloudy
Fertilizer application

Apply fertilizer by the band or ring method
Do not scatter fertilizer on the plant or the leaves of the plant
Apply fertilizer on weed-free plots
Do not apply fertilizer on weedy plots
Apply fertilizer in cool weather
Do not apply fertilizer in hot weather
Harvesting

Harvest with the use of a mechanical harvester
Harvesting with many workers means a high cost
Harvest carefully with the use of a hoe, cutlass or harvesting tool.
Do not use bare hands to pull roots forcefully.
Use cutlass to cut roots from the stem base
Do not use your hand to break roots
Post harvesting

Load roots gently in layers in vehicle immediately after harvesting
Avoid headloading or the use of bicycles
Convey roots to processing centers immediately (within 24 hours) to add value
Do not leave roots for too long (more than 24 hours) after harvesting to avoid spoilage