

Fruitcrops in the cashew-coconut system of Kenya: their use, management and agroforestry potential

I. O. O. Aiyelaagbe

Abstract

The cashew-coconut system in the Coast Province of Kenya was appraised to determine the efficacy and adoption potential of a fruitcrop based agroforestry intervention designed to increase the productivity of the system. Fruitcrops on farmers plots ranged between 16–22 species. They featured mainly as understorey trees in cashew-coconut plots and upper storey of foodcrop plots. Fruit tree management was generally poor.

Between 67–100% of farmers interviewed were interested in planting more fruit trees on their farms. Envisaged cash generation was a major reason for their interest. Preferred species were generally adapted exotics. Preference was in the order of *Mangifera indica*, *Citrus sinensis*, *C. reticulata* > *Cocos nucifera*, *Anacardium occidentale*, *Carica papaya* > *Passiflora edulis* var. *flavicarpa*, *Ananas comosus*, *Syzygium cumini*, *Citrus limon*, *Musa sapientum*, *Persea americana* > *Musa paradisiaca*, *Citrus aurantifolia* *Annonaspp.* Locational differences existed in exact order of preference within the groupings. Constraints to fruit production included lack of improved fruit tree seedlings, low proficiency in fruit seedling production, transportation, no capital for initial investment, damage by wild animals, prolonged dry spells, and frequent die back of fruit trees. Based on its high adoption potential, a fruitcrop based agroforestry intervention is recommended for increasing the productivity of the cashew-coconut system of Kenya.

Possible agroforestry technologies in which fruitcrops could feature are discussed.

Key words adoption potential - agroforestry - cashew - Coast Province - coconut - fruitcrops - homegarden - intercropping - Kenya