

Root and tuber crop breeders and cropping systems researchers join forces

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For several years, IITA's Root and Tuber Crop Improvement Program (TRIP) and the Resource and Crop Management Program (RCMP) have both collaborated with the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARS) for the advancement of root and tuber crop production in sub-Saharan Africa. Increasingly, the need was felt to integrate these collaborative arrangements in order to avoid duplication and to increase interaction between crop improvement and cropping systems workers.

A joint meeting was therefore held at IITA in June 1991 in order to explore ways of improved collaboration within and between the two groups. The following institutes were represented at the meeting:

- University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria
- National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike, Nigeria
- Crop Research Institute (CRI), Kumasi, Ghana
- Institut de Recherche Agronomique (IRA), Cameroon
- Institute of Agricultural Re-

- search, (IAR), Sierra Leone
- Institut des Savannes (IDESSA), Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Nigeria
- National Service for Applied Agricultural Research and Extension (SENARAV), Kinshasa, Zaire
- Coastal Agricultural Research Station, Kikambala, Kenya
- Niaouli Research Station, Benin
- Centre de Recherche de Foulaya-kindia, Guinée
- National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), Mozambique
- Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Natural Resources, Zanzibar, Tanzania
- Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda (ISAR), Rwanda
- Institut des Plantes à Tubercules (INPT), Togo

Country reports were presented on a variety of topics. The root and tuber crop breeders and the cropping system researchers met in separate sessions to draft rec-

ommendations for future collaboration. The recommendations were presented at a plenary session where they were amended and approved. The resolutions agreed upon for root and tuber crop improvement will be published extensively in a forthcoming meeting report.

An action committee was formed which met in Ekona, Cameroon during 31 September-1 October 1991. The collaborative group was named CORTIS (Collaborative group for Root and Tuber Improvement and Systems) in English and COSART (Collaboration pour les Systemes et l'Amelioration des plantes a Racines et Tubercules) in French. For the immediate future there are plans to organize a workshop on the choice and on-farm testing of improved root and tuber crop varieties.

We trust that CORTIS will develop into a vigorous regional group which will bring about much needed collaboration for the improvement of all aspects of root and tuber crop research.

Are you up to date? *

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Information is being churned out at a much faster rate than most of us can keep pace with. It is however necessary to our survival in our various assignments to acquire relevant information. This article highlights some of the sources of information useful to root and tuber crop researchers. This can by no means be exhaustive.

The International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCS) make use of an array of channels for dissemination of information on root and tuber crop technologies as well as general research methodology. IITA, CIAT and CIP are relevant centres for root and tu-

ber crop research. Their channels for dissemination of information include meetings, visits, training courses, publications and sometimes the popular media for transfer of information relevant to their mandate crops. Prominent among the meetings in Africa are the triennial symposia of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops—Africa Branch (ISTRC-AB), the annual root crop collaborators meetings now combined into Collaborative Group for Root and Tuber Improvement and Systems (CORTIS) and the East and Southern Africa Root crops Research Network (ESARRN)

workshops, all with published proceedings. There is considerable exchange of information on root crop technology during these meetings.

The list below gives a sample of publications available at IITA that have relevance to root and tuber crops:

Carter, S.E., and P.G. Jones. Collaborative study on cassava in Africa: site selection procedure.

Dorosh, P. Economics of root and tuber crops in Africa. RCMP Research Monograph No. 1. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1988.

Eggleston, G. Cassava into bread. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1991.

Hahn, N.D. (ed.). In praise of cassava. Proceedings of the inter-regional experts' group meeting on the exchange of technologies for cassava processing equipment and food products, IITA, 13-19 April 1988. UNICEF/IITA.

Hahn, S.K., and F.E. Caveness (eds.). Integrated pest management for tropical root and tuber crops. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1990.

Hahn, S.K., and R.L. Théberge. Root and tuber crops: food security in Central Africa. Third Central Africa Regional Workshop on Root Crops (Bangui 1986): Proceedings. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1989.

Lawani, S.M., J.S. Umoh, and M.O. Odubanjo. A bibliography of yams and the genus *Dioscorea*. Vol 2: 1975-1983. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Nweke, F.I. Collaborative study on cassava in Africa: project description. COSCA Working Paper 1: IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria, 1988; and COSCA Working Paper 2: IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria, 1989.

Nweke, F.I., J. Lynam, and C. Prudencio (eds.). Status of data on cassava in major producing countries in Africa: Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zaire. COSCA Working Paper 3. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1989.

Nweke, F.I., J. Lynam, and C. Prudencio (eds.). Methodologies and data requirements for cassava systems study in Africa. COSCA Working Paper 4. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1989.

Nweke, F.I., H.C. Ezumah, and D.S.C. Spencer. Cropping systems and agroecological performance of improved cassava in a humid forest ecosystem. RCMP Research Monograph No. 2. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Stoorvogel, J.J., and L.O. Fresco. The identification of agroecological zones for cassava in Africa with particular emphasis on soils. COSCA Working Paper 5. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1991.

Théberge, R.L. (ed.). Third West African Root Crops Workshop, 22-26 July

1985, Accra, Ghana. Proceedings. IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria. 1988.

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• Contributions to this Bulletin are always welcome.

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