

Trend and Cuses of Decline in Trifoliolate Yam (*Dioscorea dumentorum*) Production in Enugu State, Nigeria: Implication for Food Security and Biodiversity Conservation

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Abstract : In recent time and in the study area, yam farmers are moving into less laborious and more economical crops and very few yam farmers are growing trifoliolate yam. In yam markets, little or no bitter yam is displayed or sold. The work was therefore designed to ascertain trend and causes of decline in trifoliolate yam production in Enugu state. Three agricultural zones, six blocks, eighteen circles and one hundred and eight trifoliolate yam farmers that were purposively selected constituted sample for the study. An interview schedule was used to collect data while percentage, mean score and standard deviation were used for data analysis. Findings of the study revealed that the respondents had no extension contact, Majority (90.7%) sourced information on trifoliolate yam from neighbours/friends/relatives and produced mainly for consumption (67.6%) during rainy season (70.4%). Trifoliolate yam was produced manually(71.3%) and organically (58.3%) in a mixture of other crops (87%) using indigenous/local varieties (73.1%). Mean size of land allocated to trifoliolate yam production was relatively steady, mean cost of input and income were increasing while output was decreasing within the years under consideration (before 2001 to 2014). Poor/lack of finance(M=1.8) and drudgery associated with trifoliolate yam product(M=1.72) were some of the causes of decline in trifoliolate yam production in the area. The study recommended that more research and public enlightenment campaigns on the importance of trifoliolate yam should be carried out to encourage and consolidate farmers and the masses effort in production and consumption of the crop so that it will not go extinct and then contribute to food security.

Keywords : causes, decline, trend, trifoliolate yam

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