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Contents

1	SUSTAINABLE CROP PRODUCTION PRACTICES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY	3
2	ADOPTION INDEX OF MAIZE PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES AND CORRELATION MATRIX IN SMALLHOLDER SYSTEMS	9
3	PROXIMATE AND SENSORY ASSESSMENT OF AADUN PRODUCED FROM MAIZE AND GROUNDNUT PASTE	15
4	RURAL WOMEN AND AGRO – PROCESSING: A CASE STUDY OF RURAL WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN GROUNDNUT PROCESSING IN KATSINA STATE	22
5	PROFITABILITY OF DRIP IRRIGATED MAIZE PRODUCTION FOR IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY IN MAIDUGURI SEMI-ARID REGION OF BORNO STATE, NIGERIA	28
6	PROFITABILITY ANALYSIS OF POULTRY EGG PRODUCTION IN IBADAN METROPOLIS, OYO STATE, NIGERIA	37
7	ADOPTION OF MODERN BEEKEEPING TECHNOLOGIES IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA	44
8	ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED COCOYAM PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES AMONG FARMERS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA	53
9	INNOVATIVE APPLICATION IN MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEMATIC SOIL (ACIDIC SOIL) UNDER MAIZE PRODUCTION IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	62
10	EFFECTS OF RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON	69
11	POVERTY STATUS OF RICE FARMERS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	69
12	EFFECTS OF FARMER-HERDER'S CONFLICT ON THE FARMERS PRODUCTIVITY IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA	75
13	EFFECTS OF ADOPTION OF IMPROVED BEEHIVE TECHNOLOGIES ON INCOME AND WELFARE STATUS OF BEEKEEPERS IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA	81
14	ASSESSMENT OF OUT-MIGRATION AMONG ARABLE CROP FARMERS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA: GENDER DYNAMIC APPROACH	88
15	THE EFFECT OF AGRITECH STARTUPS ON PARTICIPATION AND POVERTY STATUS OF ADOPTERS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA	97
16	OUTCOMES OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES: CORRELATES OF TIME, STRAIN AND JOB SATISFACTION	104
17	MICROBIOLOGICAL QUALITY OF OVEN ROASTED PLANTAIN (MUSA PARASIDIACA)	109

	SAVANNAH	620
95	EFFECT OF FOLIAR FERTILIZER APPLICATION ON PHYSIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND HERBAGE YIELD OF AMARANTHUS AND CORCHORUS	626
96	EFFECT OF FOLIAR FERTILIZER APPLICATION ON PHYSIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND HERBAGE YIELD OF AMARANTHUS AND CORCHORUS	631
97	RESPONSE OF SESAME (<i>SESAMUM INDICUM</i> L.) TO DIFFERENT NUTRIENT SOURCES IN ANYIGBA, KOGI STATE NIGERIA	636
98	EFFECTS OF INTEGRATED NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT ON WEED INFESTATION AND YIELD OF SOYBEAN IN SOUTHERN GUINEA SAVANNA ZONE OF NIGERIA	648
99	EFFECT OF MILLED GROUNDNUT SHELL AS A NUTRIENT SOURCE ON THE NUTRITIONAL QUALITY OF PEPPER IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER NUTRIENT SOURCES	656
100	REACTION OF RICE VARIETIES TO RICE BLAST - AN INSIGHT INTO UNDERSTANDING OF RICE RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE INDUCED RICE DISEASES	664
101	ALLELOPATHIC EFFECT OF MINTWEED (<i>HYPTIS SUAVEOLENS</i> (L.) POIT) GREEN AND BROWN LEAVES AQUEOUS EXTRACT ON SEED GERMINATION AND SEEDLING GROWTH OF COWPEA	676
102	PROXIMATE COMPOSITION OF SOME NEW SWEET POTATO VARIETES GROWN AT GIDAN KWANO, MINNA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	682
103	EVALUATION OF <i>SACCHARUM OFFICINARUM</i> GENOTYPES FOR JUICE QUALITY, CANE AND SUGAR YIELD	690
104	IMPACTS OF SUGARCANE GENOTYPES AND WEED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON WEED DRY MATTER AND SUGARCANE PRODUCTIVITY	696
105	ISIGHTS INTO PREVALENCE AND DISTRIBUTION OF VIRUSES INFECTING MELON IN GEORGIA, UNITED STATE	703
106	GROWTH AND YIELD RESPONSES OF MAIZE TO PARTIAL SUBSTITUTION OF INORGANIC NITROGEN WITH FARM YARD MANURE AT GIDAN-KWANO	704
107	EFFECT OF BIOCHAR AND NANOPARTICLES ON THE MICROBIAL DEGRADATION OF CRUDE OIL CONTAMINATED SOIL	713
108	INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND COPING CAPACITY OF FARMERS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION: A CASE STUDY OF AGAIE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	721
109	ASSESSMENT OF FERTILITY STATUS OF SOME SELECTED FADAMA SOILS IN BIDA LOCAL	

	GOVERNMENT AREA OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	725
110	EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT NITROGEN SOURCES ON THE GROWTH OF MAIZE AND SOYBEAN IN AN INTERCROPPED SYSTEM	731
111	EVALUATION OF IRRIGATION SUITABILITY FOR SURFACE IRRIGATION IN BAKAJEBA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	738
112	EFFECTS OF BIOCHAR AND NITROGEN FERTILIZER ON SOIL ORGANIC CARBON, NUTRIENT RETENTION AND MAIZE PERFORMANCE	744
113	IMPLICATION OF LAND SURFACE TEMPERATURE AS A DRIVER OF LAND COVER CHANGES ON THE URBAN DYNAMICS OF ABUJA NIGERIA	751
114	PHOSPHATE MOBILIZATION BY ADDITIONS OF THREE ANIMAL MANURE SOURCES IN SOILS OF KARU, NASARAWA STATE	758
115	RESPONSE OF GROWTH AND YIELD OF MAIZE (<i>ZEA MAYS</i> L.) TO LIME, INORGANIC AND ORGANIC FERTILIZER IN MOKWA, NIGER STATE OF NIGERIA	763
116	UNDERSTANDING THE INTENTION TO USE GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES ON VEGETABLE FARMS – A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FARMERS IN PUNJAB, INDIA AND NAKURU, KENYA	771
117	SENSORY AND PROXIMATE COMPOSITION OF 'BISCUIT' PRODUCED FROM SOME LESS VALUED DRIED FISH POWDER	778
118	COMBINATION OF ORGANIC MANURE, INORGANIC FERTILIZER AND BIO-FERTILIZER ON SOYBEAN [(<i>GLYCINE MAX</i> L. (MERRIL)] GROWTH	785
119	GENDER ANALYSIS OF FARMING HOUSEHOLDS' ACCESS TO LIVELIHOOD RESOURCES IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA	793
120	EFFECTS OF PHOTOPERIOD AND FEEDING RATE ON THE GROWTH PERFORMANCE AND FEED UTILIZATION OF <i>CLARIAS GARIEPINUS</i>	802

EFFECTS OF INTEGRATED NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT ON WEED INFESTATION AND YIELD OF SOYBEAN IN SOUTHERN GUINEA SAVANNA ZONE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Field trials were conducted at Lapai, Minna and Mokwa Local Governments area of Niger State, Nigeria to evaluate the effects of integrated nutrient management on weed growth and yield of soybean. The study was aimed to determine the effects of integrated nutrient management on weed infestation and yield of soybean. The treatments were: - No-input, Farmers practice (NPK only) at the rate of 200 kg/ha, Agric Lime at the rate of 0.5 tons ha⁻¹ + NPK at 200 kg/ha, Agric Lime at the rate of 0.5 tons ha⁻¹ + Farmyard manure at the rate of 5 tons ha⁻¹ + NPK at the rate of 200 kg ha⁻¹ and Farmyard manure at the rate of 5 tons ha⁻¹ + NPK at the rate of 200 kg ha⁻¹ arranged in a randomized complete block design (RCBD) and replicated three times. Results revealed that, the important weed species of soybeans are *Hyptis suaveolens*, *Tridax procumbens*, *Digitaria horizontalis*, *Paspalum scrobiculatum* and *Commelina benghalensis*. Application of No-input reduced weed infestation than in terms of weed density and dry weight. The application of combination of Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK increased the grain yield of soybean by 56.5 %, 95.3%, 80.0% and 77.4 % in Lapai, Minna, Mokwa and across the location, respectively. It is recommended that farmers in this agro-ecological zone of Nigeria should apply Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK for higher soybean yield.

Keywords: Agric lime, Farmyard manure, Integrated nutrient, Soybean, Weed species,

INTRODUCTION

Soybean [*Glycine max* (L.) Merrill] is an important crop commodity widely grown and utilized as a main food source for humans, feed for livestock and as a raw material for oil production (Mamia *et al.*, 2018). At present in tropical Africa, the average seed yield of soybean is below 1 t ha⁻¹ as against the world average of 2.7 t ha⁻¹ (FAO, 2016). General low yields of food crops in the tropics have been attributed to low soil fertility status, weed infestation, rising cost of agrochemicals, low purchasing power of resource-constrained farmers, lack of improved crop varieties, lack of access to necessary inputs, poor management practices among others (Zerihun and Haile, 2017).

Weeds are a unique group of plants species that infest and thrive in intensively disturbed habitats. In farmlands, weeds compete with crops for most abiotic resources such as nutrients, light and

water, and their presence usually results in drastic decline in crop yield and quality. The magnitude of crop yield reduction can be influenced by the weed density, types of weed species present in the field, as well as the weed species persistence and the type of cultural practices in use in the farmland (Kaur and Verma, 2016).

The continuous application of inorganic fertilizer is known to decrease the water holding capacity, organic matter and nutrient content, and the soil microbe population which in turn can decrease the quality of soil fertility (Zerihun and Haile, 2017). Declining soil fertility is one main reason for the slow growth in food production in Sub-Saharan Africa (Zerihun and Haile, 2017). In the same vein, the productivity of soybean is limited due to poor soil and crop management practices. As a result, smallholder farmer yield for the crop is far below the potential production.

However, use of organic manure alone or in combination with chemical fertilizer can improve the physical and chemical properties of the soils; which in turn can provide a good substrate for the growth of microorganisms, and in maintaining a favourable nutritional balance (Gautam and Pathak, 2014). One of such strategy to maintain soil fertility for sustainable soybean production is through the judicious use of fertilizers for higher crop yield (Mamia *et al.*, 2018). It has also been reported that the application of combination of inorganic and organic fertilizers increased soybean yield by 3.5 t ha⁻¹ (Yamika and Ikawati, 2012). In order to optimize and maintain healthier soil and achieve sustainable soybean production, we suggest the integration of ameliorant (organic manure and lime) and inorganic fertilizers. Therefore, the objective of this study was to determine the effects of combining NPK fertilizer, agric lime and farmyard manure on weed growth and yield of soybean.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

On farm study was conducted in Lapai, Minna and Mokwa Local Government of Niger State, located in the Guinea savannah zone of Nigeria. The treatments were (No-input, Farmers practice (NPK only) at rate of 200 kg/ha, Agric Lime at the rate of 0.5 tons ha⁻¹ + NPK at 200 kg/ha, Agric Lime at the of 0.5 tons ha⁻¹ + Farmyard manure at the rate of 5 tons ha⁻¹ + NPK at the rate of 200 kg ha⁻¹ and Farmyard manure at the rate of 5 tons ha⁻¹ + NPK at the rate of 200 kg ha⁻¹) arranged in a randomized complete block design (RCBD) and replicated three times. The soybean seed variety TGX 1987-6f was sourced from the National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI) Badeggi, Niger State. This variety is early maturing and high yielding. Farm yard manure and Agric. lime

were sourced in Minna, Niger State and NPK cherifien des- phosphate (OCP) fertilizer was sourced from Morocco where it is manufactured. Lime and manure were applied one week before planting by incorporating them into the soil according to the treatment combinations. Manual weeding was done at 3 and 6 WAS. The NPK fertilizer was applied at 3 WAS by side placement 5 cm away from the plant stands. Soybean was sown at 3 seeds per hole and later thinned to 2 plants per stand at 14 days after planting. The parameters measured were weed importance value index (IVI), weed density and weed dry weight at 9 WAS, number of pods per plant and grain yield. Data collected were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) version 9.2 software. The Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was used to separate the treatment means at 5% level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fourteen, thirteen and eight weed species from 10 different families were identified in soybean across the integrated nutrient management at 9 WAS in Lapai, Minna and Mokwa, respectively (Table 1). Based on the importance value index (IVI), the prevalent weed species infesting soybean field in all the locations were *Hyptis suaveolens*, *Tridax procumbens*, *Digitaria horizontalis*, *Paspalum scrobiculatum* and *Commelina benghalensis* (Table 1). Similarly, weed species such as *Sida acuta*, *Cyperus rotundus*, *Vernonia galamensis*, *Dactyloctenium aegyptium* and *Kyllinga pumila* were predominant in Lapai and Minna only than the other weed species (Table 1). In general, five weed species, *Hyptis suaveolens*, *Tridax procumbens*, *Digitaria horizontalis*, *Paspalum scrobiculatum* and *Commelina benghalensis* were the most important and prevalent in soybeans in our study. This suggests the ecological importance of these weed species and their ability to compete favourably with soybeans for growth resources. Our observations also suggest that the variation in the number of weed species identified during the sampling period might be attributed to the fact that weed species and crops are site specific over a wide range of habitat (Dada *et al.*, 2017).

Weed density differed significantly among the integrated nutrient management at Lapai, Mokwa and the mean (Table 2). Plots with No-input produced the lowest weed density than all the other plots. The application of Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK produced higher weed density across the locations and the mean. Weed dry weight differed significantly among the integrated

nutrient management in Lapai, Minna, Mokwa and the mean (Table 2). The plots with No-input had lighter weed dry weight than all the other plots. Plots with the combined application of Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK produced heavier weeds in each location and the mean.

Table 1: Weed species composition and their importance value index average across the integrated nutrient management at 9 WAS in Lapai, Minna and Mokwa

Weed species	Family	Important value index		
		Lapai	Minna	Mokwa
<i>Sida acuta</i> Burm.f.	Malvaceae	10.92	14.97	-
<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Cyperaceae	10.75	42.70	-
<i>Hyptis suaveolens</i> Poit.	Lamiaceae	27.78	18.77	36.33
<i>Tridax procumbens</i> L.	Asteraceae	25.35	54.80	60.61
<i>Digitaria horizontalis</i> Willd.	Poaceae	31.36	20.59	62.05
<i>Paspalum scrobiculatum</i> L.	Poaceae	28.56	14.97	31.18
<i>Commelina benghalensis</i> L.	Commelinaceae	18.39	45.77	25.13
<i>Vernonia galamensis</i> (Cass.) Less	Asteraceae	11.34	12.04	-
<i>Dactyloctenium aegyptium</i> (L.) P. Beauv	Poaceae	12.77	14.97	-
<i>Kyllinga pumila</i> Michx.	Cyperaceae	47.44	14.97	-
<i>Panicum maximum</i> Jacq.	Poaceae	49.46	-	-
<i>Calopogonium mucunoides</i> Desv.	Papilionoideae	8.62	-	25.70
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> (L.) Pers	Poaceae	8.62	-	-
<i>Mitracarpus villosus</i> (Sw.) DC.	Rubiaceae	8.62	-	-
<i>Pennisetum pedicellatum</i> Trin.	Poaceae	-	-	31.18
<i>Daniellia oliveri</i> (Rolfe) Hutch. & Dalz.	Fabaceae	-	-	27.92
<i>Senna occidentalis</i> (L.) Link	Fabaceae	-	14.97	-
<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i> Linn.	Asteraceae	-	15.45	-
<i>Ludwigia decurrens</i> Walt.	Onagraceae	-	14.97	-

Table 2: Weed density and dry weight at 9 WAS in soybean as affected by integrated nutrient management in 2021 rainy season at Lapai, Minna and Mokwa

Treatment	Weed density (no. m ⁻²)				Weed dry weight (g m ⁻²)			
	Lapai	Minna	Mokwa	Mean	Lapai	Minna	Mokwa	Mean
No-Input	6.0c	5.0a	0.48b	4.0d	1.03d	1.13b	2.00b	1.40d
NPK only	9.0bc	5.0a	0.57a	5.0cd	1.50c	1.80ab	5.33a	2.90bc
Agric lime + NPK	13.0bc	7.0a	0.57a	7.0bc	2.47b	2.50a	5.33a	3.34ab
Agric lime + Farmyard manure + NPK	21.0a	7.0a	0.57a	10.0a	3.20a	2.72a	5.67a	3.90a
Farmyard manure + NPK	16.0ab	7.0a	0.56a	8.0ab	2.42b	2.14a	4.33a	2.10cd
LSD (0.05)	7.81	2.97	0.53	2.61	0.40	0.99	2.28	0.80

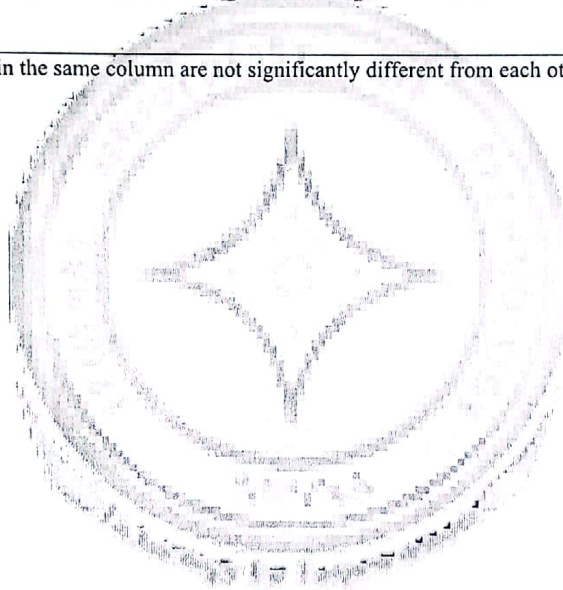
Means with the same letter(s) within the same column are not significantly different from each other using the least significant difference (LSD) test at $P \leq 0.05$

Table 3: Number of pods and grain yield of soybean as affected by integrated nutrient management in 2021 rainy season at Lapai, Minna and Mokwa

Treatment	Number of pods per plant				Grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹)			
	Lapai	Minna	Mokwa	Mean	Lapai	Minna	Mokwa	Mean
No-Input	176.0	273.0c	230.0c	226.0c	833.33b	92.27e	361.10d	430.23e
NPK only	263.0	347.0c	367.0c	326.0c	1037.03b	979.20d	962.93c	990.72d
Agric lime + NPK	480.0	659.0ab	574.0b	571.0b	1509.27a	1361.10c		1379.62c
Agric lime + Farmyard manure + NPK							1268.58bc	

NPK	745.0	786.0a	812.0a	781.0a	1916.67a	1981.50a	1805.53a	1901.23a
	a							
Farmyard manure + NPK	526.0	587.0b	669.0ab	594.0b	1638.87a	1685.20b	1574.10ab	1632.72b
	b							
LSD (0.05)	141.2	182.86	159.92	181.51	466.55	252.47	358.93	179.22
	1							

Means with the same letter(s) within the same column are not significantly different from each other using the least significant difference (LSD) test at $P \leq 0.05$



The higher weed density and heavier weeds recorded with the application of Agric lime + FYM + NPK could be attributed to the availability of nutrients in sufficient quantity, and as at when required to support the growth and development of the weeds. This finding is in line with the work of Lukangila (2016) who reported that the application of mineral and organic fertilizers can increase weed pressure either by strengthening the growth of weed seedlings present at the time of the fertilizer application or by stimulating seed germination from seed stock of the past growing season.

Number of pods per plant were significantly different among the integrated nutrient management in this study (Table 3). The application of Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK significantly produced more pods per plant compared to the other plots. Plots with No-input produced the least pods per plant in each location and mean. Soybean grain yield differed significantly among the integrated nutrient management in all the locations and the mean (Table 3). Plots with the application of Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK produced the highest grain yield than all the other plots. The plot with No-input had the lowest grain yield in this study. The production of more pods per plant and higher grain yield by the application of Agric lime + FYM + NPK might be attributed to the improvement of the soil physical and chemical properties by the soil amendment and organic manure in providing a favourable medium for the uptake of inorganic fertilizer which in turn supported the increase in the yield and yield characters of soybean. This finding is in conformity with the work of Mania *et al.* (2018) who reported maximum number of pods per plant, number of seeds per pod, pod length and seed yield of soybean due to adequate supply of nutrient element at the right time from organic and inorganic sources and consequently increased the yield and yield attributes of soybean.

CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, it is concluded that weed species associated with soybean include *Hyptis suaveolens*, *Tridax procumbens*, *Digitaria horizontalis*, *Paspalum scrobiculatum* and *Commelina benghalensis*. Application of combination of Agric lime + Farm Yard Manure + NPK resulted in the production of highest grain yield of soybean and therefore recommended to soybean farmers in this zone of Nigeria.

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