

Land preparation for maize growing in Uganda

Maize is a crop that is grown both as a food crop and cash crop in Uganda. Proper land preparation can help improve on yield.

When preparing land for maize growing, its preferable that you do ploughing twice to have a fine seed bed and the land left for at least 21 days. These help in decomposition of the residues which in turn act as manure or source of nutrients to the maize. When the seed bed is prepared so well, germination is uniform and crops are able to come out well with vigour.

Field marking

For good field marking, ensure that the measurements at the edges are correct. To make the measurements at the edges, use pythagoras theorem measurements of 3,4,5.

Fix a peg at the corner to act as the starting point. Hold one peg along the length and one along the width of the field. Using a tape measure, adjust the distance of the pegs along the length and width until when the distance from the fixed peg to the peg along the length is 3 feet, distance between the fixed peg and peg along the width 4 feet and the distance between the peg along the length and that along the width 5 feet and fix the 2 pegs.

Do this at every corner and stretch planting ropes from one end to another to guide in making straight planting lines.

Planting and management

Plant in line at a spacing of 75 cm between rows and 60 cm within rows with 2 seeds per hole. When the land is sloppy, plant across the slope and cover the seeds well after

planting.

Use either organic or inorganic fertilizers to boost soil fertility.

Weeding starts immediately after planting. Can be either by using cultural methods or by using herbicides. These can be either pre emergence or post emergence.