

Planting Soybeans

Selecting good quality seed, inoculation with the right species of rhizobia, proper spacing and fertilizer application are key in successful soybean planting.

After land preparation, ensure that you get certified seed from input dealers or from grain saved from the previous season incase you cannot afford to buy certified seed but incase you use saved grain consider changing this every 3 years to maintain its purity. Fifteen days before planting, carry out a germination test and inoculate the seed at planting with rhizobia.

Procedure

Soybean fixes nitrogen in the soil and rhizobia enhances this and its better to grow a cereal in the next season. Inoculation is cheaper than buying urea and to apply the rhizobia, place 15 kg of soybean in a plastic container and cover, add 6 bottle tops of water to moisten the seed and add 75g of inoculant and mix. Cover the bucket in a shade for one hour to dry the seed and plant the seed in 1 to 2 hours after inoculation. Make sure your ready to plant before inoculation.

Plant the soybeans when the rains are established when the soil is moist and in the morning or evening to avoid direct sunlight since direct sunlight kills the inoculant. Planting should be in a straight line leaving 60 cm between rows and 5 cm within rows with one seed per hole or 60 x 10 with 2 seeds per hole.

Inter cropping can be done with a cereal crop but since soybean does not grow well in shade, grow in strips. Intercropping can also be done in newly established cassava.

Applying too much nitrogen prevents Biological Nitrogen Fixation and promotes vegetative growth while phosphorous increases yields by boosting root development and nodulation.