

Weed Control in Cassava Production



Controlling Weeds in Cassava Production

Cassava shares a common weed problem with other crops. It is more affected by weed within the first 4-12 weeks. Cassava requires at least two properly timed hand weeding.

Common Types of Weeds

The two broad categories of weeds are annual and perennial weeds.

Annual Weeds: These weeds start and complete their life cycle in one or two growing season.

Perennial weeds: These are weeds that grow and complete their life cycle in more than one calendar year.

Weeds are can also be classified into broad-leaved, grasses and sedges.



Broadleaved weeds



Grasses



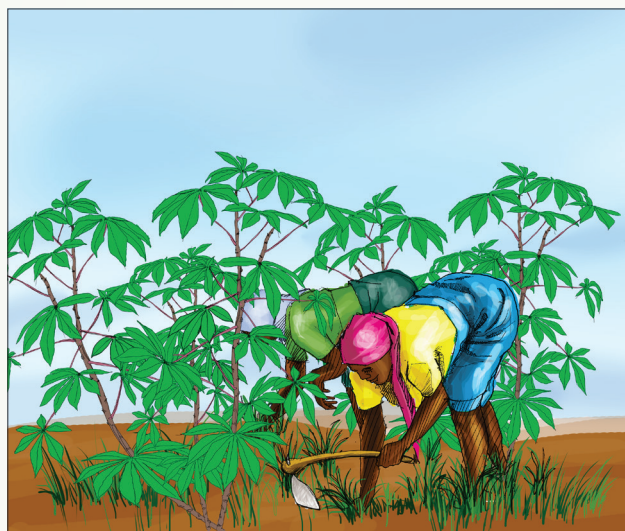
Sedges

When to control weed

Weed control should start in the first 3 – 4 weeks after planting during the raining season. However, if the crop is planted towards the end of the rainy season, weed control can be delayed to the following wet season.

Methods of weed control

Cultural method: This involves all aspects of good crop husbandry used to control weed problems and these includes:



Manual weeding: This is a common method of weed control, carried out at 4, 8 and 12 weeks after planting. It is often done with a hoe and cutlass.



Mechanical weeding: This is the use of a motorised implement such as the brush cutter.



Tillage: This simply means the use of good land Preparation practice (ploughing, harrowing, and ridging) to remove weeds such as, rhizomes, stolon sand tubers.



Mulching: This is the covering of the soil surface with large amounts of plant materials. Good mulch materials include leaves and leguminous plants, rice husks, and general crop and weed residues.

Other cultural weed control practices include;

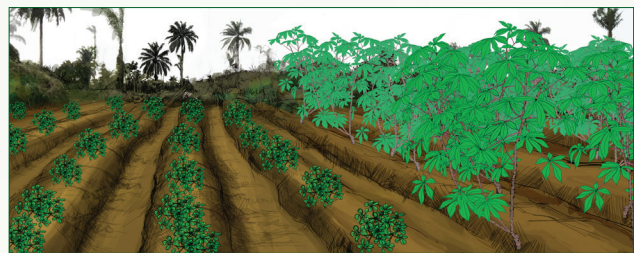
Selective burning which is used during the dry season and



Close spacing methods (such as 1m x 0.8m) for cassava also suppresses weeds.

Preventive weed control: This method limits the spread of weed and their seeds by using clean cuttings and farm machinery and also controlling animal movement in the farm.

Biological method: This means controlling weeds by natural means, it includes:



Cropping system: the use of cover Crops legumes (e.g groundnut) in intercropping and fallow systems can reduce weed problems in cassava farms.

Fallowing: This method allows the farm land to rest for one or more growing season. During this period good mulch materials can be used to cover the land to reduce weed population.



Chemical Weed Control method:

This method involves the use of herbicides to reduce the growth of weeds on a farm land. It can be applied before land preparation, immediately after land preparation, and 4–8 weeks after planting.

