

Survey on Weed Management in Peanut Fields in Southern Ghana.

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A survey to determine farmers' practices, perceptions and weed management practices in peanut production was conducted in the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern and Volta regions of Ghana in 2001. Peanut was planted as mono crop on 64 % of the fields. Forty one percent of the land was family owned while 33.3% was on lease. The choice of land preparation method seemed to relate to the land tenure system. The slash-burn method constituted 71.5 % and tractor ploughing, 25 %. In Brong Ahafo region, 80 % of the farmers planted on ridges while planting was on the flat in the Volta region while Ashanti and Eastern regions had a varied system. Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) was ranked as the worst weed by 40.7 % of the farmers and wild poinsettia (*Euphorbia heterophylla*), the second most important, by 37.5 % with densities ranging from 26-42 plt/m² and 25 – 110 plt/m² respectively. Farmers listed difficulty in weeding, competitiveness with crop, rapid growth and profuse seeding as the main reasons for the ranking. Generally, weed control was perceived as poor by 64.7 % of the farmers, fair by 23.5 % and good by 11.8 %. Majority of farmers (68.5 %) employed hired labour for weed control usually with the hoe but 4.3 % applied herbicides. Farmers perceived that peanut yield loss, due to untimely or inappropriate weed control, could be in the range of 21-80 %. Twenty-five per cent and 60% of farmers who either ploughed or slashed-burned and planted on flat reported of yield loss of 61-80%, while all the farmers who slash-burn and ridged reported losses of 41-60 %.