



Analysis of the population structure of cassava growers, production systems, and plots' sanitary state in Côte d'Ivoire

DJAHA Konan Engueran^{*1}, ABO Kouabenan², KONE Tchoa¹, KONE Daouda³, KONE Mongomaké¹.

¹UFR Sciences de la Nature, Laboratoire de Biologie et Amélioration des Productions Végétales, Université Nangui Abrogoua, 02 BP 801 Abidjan 02, Côte d'Ivoire.

²Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Laboratoire de Phytopathologie et de Biologie Végétale, BP 1313 Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire.

³UFR Biosciences, Laboratoire de Physiologie et Pathologie Végétales, Université Félix Houphouët Boigny, 22 BP 582 Abidjan 22, Côte d'Ivoire.

*Corresponding author: DJAHA Konan Engueran, tel: (225) 04284659/77958928, email: senadke@yahoo.fr

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1 ABSTRACT

These last decades, the cassava (*Manihot esculenta*, Crantz) sector has become a provider of employment and therefore, a significant source of revenue in Cote d'Ivoire. This economic growth led to changes in the management of cassava cultivation, mainly characterized by diversified farming practices that do not require high technicality. Unfortunately, information regarding this new production environment is not yet available.

Objective: the present study aims to analyze the environment and the agricultural practices of the cassava sector in Cote d'Ivoire.

Methodology: investigations were carried out from March to October 2014 in different production areas in Cote d'Ivoire. After interchanges and farming plots diagnosis, cuttings of different varieties and symptomatic leaf samples of the mosaic viral disease were collected.

Results: the information gathered revealed that the major growers in the cassava cultivation areas are the men. Fallow practice is inexistent, and plot areas are small (0.25 ha). Pure or associated culture is practiced, and growers prefer cassava varieties with a cycle length of six months. A total of 252 cassava phenotypes have been collected. 40.63% of the farming plots support at least two different varieties. For the renewal and/or the extension of cultivated plots, 87.9% of the farmers use cuttings from previous harvests. Cassava mosaic disease is present in all producing areas, but predominantly in the North Cote d'Ivoire (72%) where the disease severity index is 3.58.

Conclusion and applications of results: Cassava is one of the main food crop grown by local populations in various agroecological areas of Cote d'Ivoire. Its cultivation is mainly practised by men. Cassava mosaic disease is present in all areas of cultivation in the country, but with a higher index of severity in the North zone. The results of this survey can help in sustainable management strategies for cassava cultivation.
