

Basics of Agroforestry

As a mode of improving on the sustainability of the environment, agroforestry is carried out given the different benefits it holds.

As agroforestry combines agricultural, pastoral and forestry elements in one area, forestry elements are of different types of woody perennials and trees can be arranged in rows as contours or dispersed randomly.

Agroforestry importances

First, agrosilviculture combines trees with crops and silvopastoral for trees with livestock as agrosilvopastoral combines trees, crops and animals. Benefits and drawbacks of agroforestry are as diverse as its systems and the complex agroforestry systems require knowledge, skills and manual labour throughout the year.

Similarly, depending on trees types, agricultural elements and special temporal arrangement, competition for light, water and nutrients become excessive and lower yield for individual component and the pay back on investment can be long.

Benefits of multi functional agroforestry systems exceed mono cropping system with good planing and it provides bio diversity carbon sequestration and proper nutrient use in the soils. Trees improve micro climate, reduce erosion and improve soil fertility and pesticides are reduced as intercropping lowers pests and diseases.

Furthermore, trees reduce heat stress for livestock however, establishment of agroforestry require careful planning and design and if managed well, agroforestry is productive for a long period of time and result in highly resilient land use strategy.