

Growing annual crops in cashew orchards

They are primarily cultivated for their valuable nuts and cashew apples, both of which are appreciated by consumers. Roasted cashew kernels and cashew apple juice are popular products derived from these trees.

Key maintenance practices

It's crucial to address some key maintenance practices to ensure the health and productivity of cashew orchards. Many farmers tend to neglect weeding their orchards until the flowering and fruiting seasons have already passed. This delay results in weeds sapping essential nutrients from the soil, leaving the cashew trees malnourished. Additionally, the failure to weed the orchard creates a favorable environment for insects and diseases to proliferate, posing a threat to the trees' well-being.

To maintain cashew orchards effectively, consider the following steps:

1. **Timely Weeding:** It is essential to weed your orchard promptly, especially during the flowering and fruiting seasons. Weeds compete with cashew trees for nutrients and resources, so eliminating them early is critical.
2. **Intercropping:** A practical approach to orchard maintenance involves intercropping cashew trees with annual crops. This strategy can help optimize land use and enhance overall farm productivity.
3. **Orchard Cleanup:** Begin by thoroughly cleaning your orchard, removing weeds, and untangling intertwined branches that might hinder tree growth.
4. **Appropriate Ploughing:** When preparing the soil, ensure you plough to an appropriate depth. Deep ploughing can

damage the roots of cashew trees, so exercise caution.

5. Planting: Plant cashew seeds up to the base of the trees, providing them with adequate space and access to nutrients.

By diligently following these steps, you can protect your cashew orchard from potential risks such as bushfires, insect infestations, and diseases. Additionally, maintaining good air circulation within the orchard can lead to the production of high-quality cashew nuts, allowing you to harvest twice and increase your earnings.

In summary, proper maintenance of cashew orchards is essential for ensuring the longevity and profitability of this valuable crop. Timely weeding, intercropping, orchard cleanup, careful ploughing, and planting practices can all contribute to a thriving cashew orchard that yields high-quality nuts and apples, ultimately leading to increased income for farmers.