Recommended practices for intercropping cassava and sweet potatoes

Across the world, every farmer is interested in harvesting highly for a variety of crops from a small piece of land which calls for land maximisation for profit earning hence taking intercropping a serious business.

First and foremost cassava can be inter cropped with beans, soya beans, ground nuts, cow peas, cereals and roots and tubers. With inter cropping, the weed spread is reduced which also reduce on weed requirements as well.

Intercropping considerations

Good intercropping system minimise reduction in cassava yield and sweet potatoes to generate enough value.

To continue with, considerations for intercropping both crops include compatibility of varieties of both crops, soil fertility and proper arrangement of both crops in optimal crop densities. As a fact that incompatible varieties of both crops reduce yield, a farmer should know their soil whether there is need for fertilizer and if it is so, compost manure should be applied first in every poor soils before applying fertilizers.

Furthermore field fertility is determined by previous crop performance. However in moderate fertile fields, apply 8 of 50kg bag /ha fertilizer dividing them into portions where 4 bags are applied at planting and 4 bags in 3 weeks after planting.

For proper application, calculate the cost benefit of fertilizer before application. Apply NPK at 15cm away from both crops in moist soils.

When intercropping, make ridges of 1 metre apart and plant cassava on top with cuttings in vertical or slanted and inter row distance of 1 metre. When planting avoid burying and horizontal planting of cutting as this slows down the establishment and increase competitions between both crops.

Finally plant potato vines on top of ridges in between 2 cassava cuttings at a spacing of 50 cm from cutting to vines. However, all plants should be planted on the same day to avoid competition for light at a later stage.