



Short Article

## Good Prospects for Cassava Development

Cassava production, processing and marketing have a significant social and economic role in most developing countries, including in Asia. The crop is perceived as a catalyst for development because of its contribution to food security, poverty alleviation, improvement in income distribution, and gender equity (Harshey *et al.*, 2000). It is the basic staple crop for 500 million people in tropical and sub-tropical parts of the world and one of the most reliable and cheapest sources of food (IFAD and FAO, 2000).

The development of cassava could be an effective means to promote social and economic development, especially in developing countries. The strategy to promote cassava development is supported by the following arguments. Firstly, the cassava market is perceived to be attractive. A study by Fuglie (2002) related to cassava use in Asia, shows that cassava is a competitive crop, especially for the production of starch and animal feed. The use of cassava from 1993-2020 is predicted to increase by around 1.74 per cent per annum in the region. This implies that there is room to expand production.

Secondly, the productivity of cassava, especially in Asia, can be increased significantly since the potential yield and value of cassava have not yet been fully achieved. By using better planting material and improving input management, the productivity of cassava could be doubled (Table 1). Moreover, improvements in quality, processing, and product marketing could increase the value of cassava products by about 20 per cent (Harshey *et al.*, 2000). Thirdly, cassava is well known as an enduring crop, especially toward climate and soil conditions. It can grow in places where cereals and other crops do not grow well. It can tolerate drought and can grow in low-nutrient soil (FAO, 2002).

Cassava is a versatile crop that can serve many purposes. Currently around 165.5 million metric tons of cassava is consumed and predictions calculate that up to 208.8 million metric tons will be used for food, feed and industrial uses by 2005. Food use still represents more than half of the total consumption and consists mainly of fresh cassava and a large variety of processed flours and pastes. For feed, cassava is processed to become dried flakes, chips, and pellets, while industrial uses consist mainly of cassava-

These starches are used for manufacturing various products in terms of food processing, paper, cardboard, plywood, textiles, pharmaceutical and chemical, and feed industries (Henry, 1998). This versatility of cassava is expected to encourage demand to become more elastic so that market fluctuations stemming from demand are anticipated to be minimized.

Table 1. Potential increases for cassava productivity

Constraint/potential increase (%)	
Soil erosion	10
Soil fertility	22
Planting material	8
Weeds	7
Intrinsic yield potential	24
Pests and diseases	5
Climate	11
Other	9

Source: Harshey *et al.*, 2000.

Given these rather promising prospects, effective strategies for them to be realized are crucial. According to FAO (2000) in its Global Cassava Strategy, there are three key strategies for the development of cassava. The first one is the identification of markets that are growing or have the potential to expand. This will be essential in formulating production and distribution planning. The second is a production and post-harvesting program to guarantee a consistent supply of relatively uniform products. The third is to increase efficiency and product development to provide the market with competitively priced products that meet consumers' need. Thailand, to a certain extent, has been successful in implementing this strategy to promote its cassava sector ■

Rewrite by Wayan R. Susila

References:

Fuglie, K. O. (ed.), 2002. Economic Prospects for Root and Tuber Crops for Starch and Animal Feed in Asia, Progress in Potato and Sweetpotato Research Indonesia, CIP-ESEA and IAARD.

Henry, G., 2000. Global Cassava End-Uses and Market, Current Situation and Recommendation for Further Study, FAO.

Harshey, C., Henry, G., Best, R., Kawano, K., Howeler, Reinhardt, Iglesias, C., 2000. Cassava in Asia, Expanding the Competitive Edge in Diversified Market, FAO.

IFAD and FAO, 2000. Cassava Can Play a Key Role in Reducing Hunger and Poverty, Press Release 00/25, Rome April 26, 2000.

## FlashBREAKING



## Number of Poor People Increasing

According to UNDP, although the proportion of people living in poverty is shrinking, the absolute number of poor people is rising due to high population growth in poor countries. Around 1.2 billion of the developing world's 4.8 billion people still live in extreme poverty on less than US\$1 a day while another 2.8 billion live on less than US\$2 a day.

UNDP Evaluation Office, 2003. Monitoring Poverty. Essentials no. 10: January 2003

## Inequality Getting Worse

The gap between rich and poor is growing. Today, the richest fifth of the world's population receives 85 per cent of total world income, while the poorest fifth receives just 1.4 percent of this total.

UNDP Evaluation Office, 2003. Monitoring Poverty. Essentials no. 10: January 2003

## Increasing Demand of CGPRT Crop Products

World population growth is estimated at around 1.1 per cent per annum while the total is expected to attain 8.3 billion by 2030. As a consequence, demand for agricultural products, including those made of CGPRT crops, will increase at a 1.3 per cent annual growth rate.

FAO, 2003. World agriculture 2030

## Cassava Development to Reduce Hunger and Poverty

Why could the development of cassava, a basic staple crop for about 500 million people, reduce the number of hungry people and contribute to alleviate poverty? It is well adapted to stress conditions; it grows on low-nutrient soils and can be cultivated with few inputs. All these characteristics coincide with the conditions of poor rural people and make cassava the cheapest source of food.

IFAD and FAO, 2000. Press release 00/25: 26 April 2000

## Specific Policies for Processed Potato Development in Southeast Asia

The market prospects of processed potato products in Southeast Asia have been perceived to be promising. With the assumption of moderate economic growth and a continuing trend of urbanization, the demand for processed potato products is expected to increase by around 10-20 per cent per annum in the region. Unfortunately, the increase in the demand for the products will mostly benefit importers since local supplies have not been able to meet demand. While the demand for fresh potato has been largely met locally or regionally, the demand for processed potato products has mainly been satisfied through imports. This condition is not conducive for the development of potato industries in the region.

To overcome this problem, specific policies directly dedicated to local industries are urgently required because general trade policies to slow imports, such as high import tariffs, are not effective. The first reason for this is that the purchasing power of processed-potato consumers is high, earning a medium-high level of income and living in urban areas (segmented consumer side). The second reason is that demand is inelastic (-0.17- 0.22), implying that a price increase resulting from high tariffs will not effectively reduce consumption. Finally, the market is also segmented on the production side due to local production mainly targeting the demand for fresh potato. Thus, a specific policy, such as a domestic support policy or an approach subsidizing infant industries would be more effective to promote local processed potato industries in the region ■

Based on Fuglie, Suherman, and Adiyoga, 2002. The Demand for Fresh and Processed potato in Southeast Asia. In K.O. Fuglie (ed). Progress in Potato and

## ENSO Impacts on CGPRT Crops

Having been increasingly frequent in the last 40 years, El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) has caused area and yield decreases for most crops. For CGPRT crops, the impacts have varied depending on the crop. Maize is found to be the most sensitive to ENSO for both area and yield, as indicated by a high correlation coefficient between the magnitude of ENSO to area and productivity (0.69 and 0.68 respectively). In terms of area, soybean is also sensitive to ENSO with a correlation coefficient of 0.49, but less sensitive in terms of yield with a coefficient correlation of 0.11. Cassava, sweet potato, and groundnut are not significantly affected by ENSO, both in terms of area and yield with coefficient correlations of less than 0.20 ■

Based on S. Yokoyama, 2002. ENSO Impacts on Food Crop Production and the Role of CGPRT Crops in Asia and the Pacific. CGPRT Centre Monograph No.43, Bogor: CGPRT Centre.

## Cassava Starch No Longer a "Secondary Crop" for Allergic

The number of people who suffer from food allergies is increasing in our modern societies, partly because of unbalanced diets, environmental pollution, or increasingly stressful daily lives. To avoid intake of food that contains allergens is a basic way of life for allergic subjects. For those who have an allergy to staple crops like wheat and rice, to find other sources of carbohydrates is a serious problem. Today, many kinds of so-called "secondary crops" are becoming important food sources for them.

In allergen-free food web sites, cassava and its processed foods are introduced as substitutes of wheat flour. For example, on-line shops based in Japan, which deal with food and other daily commodities for allergic subjects, provide cassava starch to their customers. Statistics show that imports of cassava starch into Japan have increased by 45 per cent in just four years, from around 85,000 metric tons (1998) to near 123,000 metric tons (2001). Though the increase is small compared to world cassava production, which is close to 185,000,000 metric tons (2002), further discussion is required about the contribution of its consumption as an allergen free food to this increase. The use as a food material for allergic subjects may reveal a new opportunity for CGPRT crop consumption ■

Based on various sources at <http://www.mogumogu.jp> and FAOSTAT, 2003.

### call for contribution

The UNESCAP CGPRT centre is calling potential contributors to submit short articles for its quarterly Newsletter "Palawija News"

Articles should cover recent social, economic or policy aspects related to research or development of CGPRT crops in Asia and the Pacific. Priority is given to the following types of articles: socio-economic benefits of new technologies for poor farmers, trade and market potential for CGPRT crops and environmental issues related to CGPRT crops. Comparative data is highly appreciated.

Proposals should be sent by E-mail to [cgprt@cbn.net.id](mailto:cgprt@cbn.net.id) or by regular mail. Contributions must be in English. They will be reviewed by the editorial committee of the CGPRT Centre, including at least one external reviewer. Priority is given to original and unpublished material.

Submitted articles should not exceed eight pages written in Arial 10 pt font, single space, including graphs, tables, references and author information.

## Flash EVENT



### International Seminar on Sweetpotato 2003: Sweetpotato Research and Development: Its Contribution to the World Food Economy

19 September 2003

Auditorium Thayib Hadiwijaya, Faculty of Agriculture  
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## Maize Production in India: Golden Grain in Transition

Compiled and Edited by: Ranjit Kumar and N.P. Singh  
Printed by: Division of Agricultural Economics, Indian Agricultural Research  
Institute (IARI), New Delhi, India 2003

The goal of this book is to discover the gray as well as potential areas of maize production as maize occupies a significant place amongst coarse cereals in India. It even considers, in the future, that maize could become the backbone of the Indian economy, as a golden grain.

Recent years have witnessed some spectacular changes in the domestic maize economy. Since maize is the third largest produced cereal, the government of India pays huge attention in terms of policy. The government opens the door for seed production, multiplication and distribution to private sectors. Maize is the only food grain crop in which private participation is maximum, right from seed production to final utilization.

This book also presents the facts on how the government should consider its policy: production expansion at all costs on one side; and import substitution on the other side.

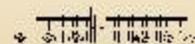
As a complete overview of issues influencing the performance of maize in industry, this book presents detailed factors affecting the acreage, production, and productivity at the national and regional level. It also states the government policies which are related to the industry. However, more discussion and elaboration is required on how the transformation of the Indian maize economy has taken place, especially from the perspective of employment and the institutional arrangement of the industry. Considering that maize could become the backbone of the Indian economy, it is also legitimate to suggest several policy implications of the new developments■

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