

More milk from cows fed better forage

For Coastal lowlands



INTRODUCTION

Creeping legumes are rich in protein. Dairy cows give more milk when they are fed forage legumes. They are easy to grow and do not need to be weeded once established well. The following legumes do well in the coastal lowlands.



HOW TO PLANT

Prepare the land early, to plant at the onset of the long rains.

Clitoria/Siratro

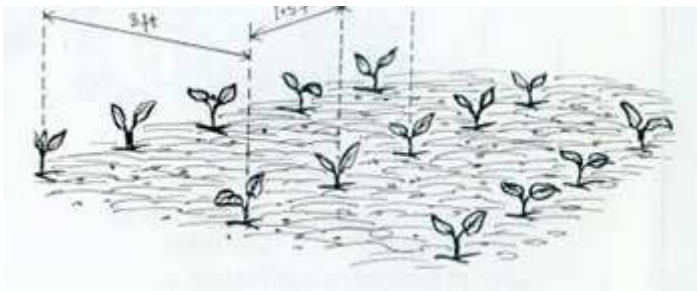
- * Make small furrows using a pointed stick.
- * Space furrows 1.5 ft (45 cm) apart.
- * Drill seeds in furrows and cover with soil.

Dolichos/Mucuna

- * Space 3 ft (90 cm) by 1.5 ft (45 cm).
- * Plant 2 seeds per hill

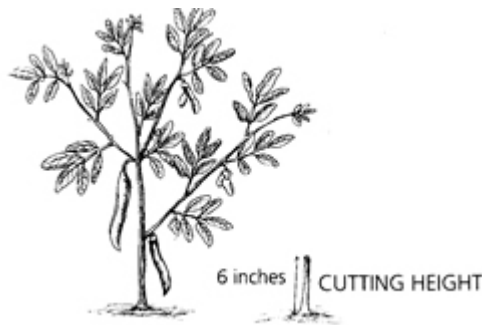


DRILLING



INTERCROPPING

Forage legumes can also be intercropped with Napier grass (or cassava or maize)



HOW TO MANAGE

Weed the plants when young and after every cut.

HARVESTING

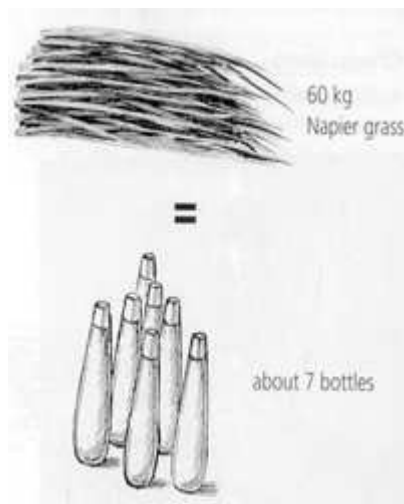
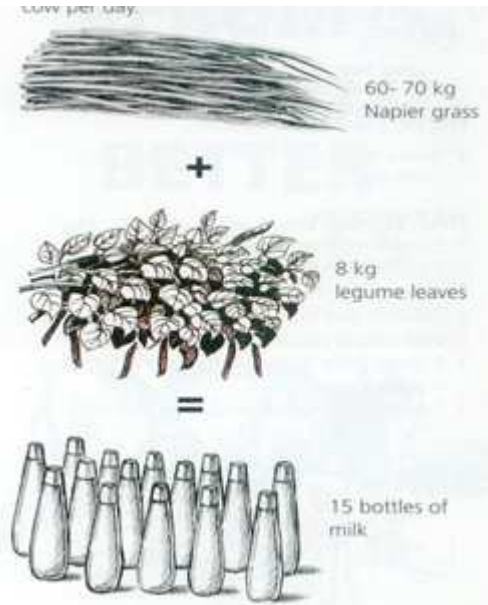
- Cut the legumes 3 months after planting at 6 inches (15 cm) above the ground.
- Repeat after every: @2-3 months.
- Dolichos and Mucuna can be cut quarterly until they dry up.
- A sharp knife is needed for cutting Dolichos and Mucuna.
- Clitoria and Siratro can stay for 3-4 years

Expected yield

- Clitoria and Siratro: 2500 - 3750 kg fresh forage/acre.
- Dolichos and Mucuna: 3500 - 4500 kg fresh forage/acre.

FEEDING

Eight (8) kg of fresh legumes fed together with 60-70 kg of fresh Napier grass will support milk yield up to 15 bottles (10 kg) per cow per day.



SOURCE OF SEEDS

Legume seeds can be obtained from neighbouring farmers, extension staff and Regional Research Centre-Mtwapa at a reasonable price.

When feeding only Napier grass (60Kg) 7 treetop bottles (5Kg) of milk may be possible.

BENEFITS

Feeding forage legumes increase milk production from your farm and saves costs of purchasing feeds.

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