Common practices in fonio production

Continuous Burning of vegetation cultivation of cereals Exposure of the soil We referren underent. to sun and wind Man time **Basic post-harvest** technology No weeding **Delayed harvesting** No pest management The above practices commonly result in poor harvests of fonio.



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Improved management of fonio



The above practices together with the use of improved fonio cultivars, integration of animals into the farming system, reduced tillage for water conservation, timely harvest before shattering, and efficient post-harvest technology result in better harvests and lower grain losses.



Criteria for selecting fonio cultivars



- > High adaptability to local conditions
- > Appropriate length of growth cycle
- Tolerance to local pests and diseases
- > Resistance to lodging and shattering
- High yield potential





Different ways of sowing fonio

Mechanically

Broadcasting

- > Easy to apply
- > Requires more seeds
- > Results in uneven stands
- > Allows weeding by hand only





Mechanically



- Done manually or better mechanically
 Requires less seeds than broadcasting
 - Results in more even stands
 - Allows mechanical weeding between the rows



Manually

How to further improve soil fertility





How to improve water use efficiency of fonio



The above practices together with the collection of water in trenches or ditches, and weed control improve availability of water in the soil, and result in better harvests.



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Managing weeds in fonio



Reduce weed pressure with a suppressive crop, before growing fonio. Sanitize Striga infested fields.



Sow immediately after land preparation.



Remove weeds 4 to 7 weeks after sowing. A second weeding may be necessary at flowering.



Avoid dispersal of weed seeds during harvest of fonio.

8

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Harvesting fonio

Harvest as soon as the grains are ripe to avoid shattering of grains



Pre-dry the fonio sheaves on well-aerated heaps until the straw is dry. Control heaps regularly for heat.



Post-harvest handling of fonio



After harvest allow the fonio sheaves to dry for one or two weeks on well-aerated heaps.



If possible, thresh, sift and wash the grains mechanically to reduce work.



Dry the raw fonio in the sun on canvas or plastic sheets for 4 or 5 days before storing. Avoid pollution from dust or animals.



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Store in bulk or in bags in a dry place.

Processing of fonio

