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Short Communication

Effect of Intra- and inter-row mixing of sorghum with two varieties of cowpea on host crop yield in a *Striga hermonthica* infested field

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Abstract

A trial was conducted in the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) research farm in Kano, Nigeria during the 2002/2003 cropping season to evaluate the effect of intrarow and interrow mixing of sorghum with two varieties of cowpea on host crop yield in a *Striga hermonthica* infested field. Significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) highest number of *Striga* per sorghum plant were obtained with sorghum only, which also have the lowest yield (2370 kg/ha). A significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) higher yield (3709 kg/ha) was obtained with intra-row mixture of sorghum and densely planted cowpea variety, IT96D-452-1. This treatment also had the least number of *Striga* per net plot and per plant, which may be attributed to the effectiveness of the cowpea trap crop in stimulating the suicidal germination of the *Striga* seeds which would have otherwise attacked and reduced the productivity of the host plant. It may also be attributed to the effectiveness of the cropping method, with a ratio of sorghum : cowpea plants of 1:13, which improves the productivity of the system and at the same time suppresses the germination of *Striga* seeds.

Keywords: Sorghum, yield, Intra-row, inter-row, cowpea, mixed-cropping

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