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Natural Drying of Cassava for Animal Feed - The Establishment of Small-Scale Agro-industries on the North Coast of Colombia

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ABSTRACT

The paper describes the ongoing cooperative project between the Colombian Integrated Rural Development Programme, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical, whose objective is to establish small scale cassava natural drying plants on the North Coast of Colombia.

The project initiated with the setting up in collaboration with a group of 15 farmers of a pilot drying plant. In 1981 the plant operated on an experimental basis in order to collect data on drying performance under the conditions prevailing on the North Coast and to ascertain the acceptability of the product by the animal feed industry. In 1982, the plant has been operated on a semi-commercial basis to collect accurate production cost figures and to demonstrate the economic feasibility of replicating the process in other areas of the region in 1983.

From the experience obtained to date it can be concluded that for the successful establishment of drying plants, the following conditions should be met: a) the selection of a processing technology that may be easily controlled and managed by the farmers themselves, b) the integration of crop production, processing and marketing activities and c) the provision of institutional support in terms of technical assistance, training and credit facilities.