

# CURRENT TRENDS IN CASSAVA RESEARCH

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## SUMMARY

Cassava, for long a crop neglected by research workers is now receiving attention at both national and international research centres with the largest ever research programme for this commodity being provided by the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Colombia. The significance of the crop in tropical agriculture and its growth potential, especially as an animal feed, have recently been widely recognized. The recent literature, and a substantial volume of unpublished ongoing work, are reviewed under the following headings: cassava as human and animal food: enrichment and fortification: toxicity: industrial use: economics of production: genetic improvement: diseases and pests: factors affecting yield: and improved information systems. A multi-disciplinary approach to cassava research and a greater research input are recommended.

## RESUME

Le manioc, une culture oublié pendant des années par les investigateurs, recoit actuellement une attention particulière de la part des centres de recherches nationaux et internationaux; jusqu'a présent, le plus grand programme d'investigation sur le manioc se fait au Centre International pour l'Agriculture Tropical (CIAT) en Colombie. Il n'a été que tout récemment qu'on a reconnue la valeur de cette culture dans les pays tropicaux et sa capacité de production, comme nourriture pour animaux spécialement. Des publications récentes et de nombreux travaux actuellement en procès et qui n'ont pas encore été publiés ont été décrit sous le titre: "Le manioc comme nourriture humaine et animal, sone enrichissement et renforcement, toxicité, utilisation industrielle, economie de sa production, progrès génétique, maladies, pestes, facteurs qu'affectent son rendement et des méthodes meilleurs d'information". On recommande l'utilisation d'un plus grand effort investigatif et un aperçu multidisciplinaire dans l'investigation sur le manioc.

## RESUMEN

La mandioca, un cultivo olvidado durante mucho tiempo por los investigadores, ha despertado ultimamente el interés de los centros de investigación tanto a nivel nacional como internacional; hasta ahora el mayor de los programas de investigación sobre este cultivo se está llevando a cabo en el Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT) en Colombia. Solo recientemente ha sido reconociao el valor de su cultivo en los trópicos y su capacidad de producción, especialmente como alimento para animales. Un recuento de las publicaciones recientes y de una cantidad apreciable de trabajo actualmente en desarrollo que no ha sido publicado, aparece bajo el título: "La mandioca como alimenta para humanos y animales, su enriquecimiento y fortalecimiento, toxicidad, utilización en la industria, economiá de su producción, mejoramiento genético, enfermedades 6 pestes, factores que afectan su rendimiento y sistemas mejorados de información." Se recomienda un jayor esfuerzo investigativo y un enfoque multi-disciplinario en la investigación sobre mandioca.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most thoughtful and perceptive contributions to the Second International Symposium on Tropical Root Crops in Hawaii was presented by Frank Martin<sup>115</sup> in his paper entitled 'Cassava in the World of Tomorrow'. Martin postulated that cassava represented an untapped resource in tropical agriculture and indicated what he felt was the type of research programme required before the potential of this commodity could be properly assessed and exploited. In some senses Martin's paper turned out to be prophetic in that within a year of its presentation, the International Centres for Tropical Agriculture in Colombia (CIAT) and Nigeria (IITA) both decided to give priority to cassava in their research programmes.

Prior to 1971 the global resources available for cassava research were extremely limited and, with the exception of Kerala in India, the work was being carried out by individual scientists, usually with limited financial support, rather than by multidisciplinary teams. In the last two years this picture has changed

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