

DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED INTEGRATED CASSAVA PROJECTS

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SUMMARY

The development of specific integrated projects for cassava production and processing requires a clear policy backed with sufficient funding. It also requires commercial activities of a local firm or organization with sufficient entrepreneurial competence. This can often usefully be backed up on a temporary basis by employing the services of public or private consultants with appropriate knowledge and experience. It is suggested that the first processing development can most easily be directed towards the production of stock feeds with the production of human food following as a second stage of development.

RESUME

Le développement de projets spécifiques intégrés pour la production et la transformation du manioc exige une politique bien définie et un financement adéquat. Il faut également la mise en place d'une société locale ayant l'expertise pour organiser efficacement les structures et les activités de commercialisation. Pour commencer, il faut envisager une période transitoire en recourant aux services d'experts compétents du secteur public ou privé. L'entreprise peut se faire en deux phases: la première, facilement réalisable pourrait être orientée vers la production d'aliments de bétail et la seconde vers la production alimentaire destinée à l'homme.

RESUMEN

El desarrollo de proyectos integrales específicos para la producción procesamiento de yuca, requiere una clara política apoyada con fondos suficientes. También requiere de las actividades comerciales de una empresa u organización local suficientemente competente. Esto se obtiene a menudo, sobre una base temporal, con el empleo de los servicios de los consultores públicos o privados con conocimientos apropiados y experiencia. Se sugiere que el primer proceso para el desarrollo puede lograrse más fácilmente si se dirige hacia la producción de alimentos para ganado continuando con la alimentación humana en una segunda etapa de desarrollo.

INTRODUCTION

Cassava (manioc, mandioca, yuca) is a well-known root crop, grown and consumed all over the tropical and subtropical world. Estimated world production is 90,000,000 tons. Its main use in nearly all countries where it is grown is as a staple food, and it is usually cultivated as a subsistence crop. However, its use in industrialized countries, especially in the U.S.A., is well established in the form of processed cassava starch ('tapioca') employed both as food and for industry for innumerable derivatives such as glucose. Recently cassava has found a substantial market in the compounded animal feeds industry in Western Europe. This market reached 1,500,000 tons in 1971. Thailand provides nearly all the cassava traded for animal feed, and this country itself consumes no cassava at all, and until World War II, grew none.

This monopolistic position, coupled with the recent renewal of interest in cassava in scientific and development-aid circles, has generated several inquiries from governments and private organizations in developing countries. Some of these inquiries have led to projects intended to introduce new producers into the promising European animal feeds market. However, each attempt has revealed considerable difficulties at practically every operational level — agricultural marketing, quality, cost of production — as well as the complications of coordinating all the components into a workable enterprise or 'system'. As a result, Thailand still (1973) maintains its dominant position in the markets, and no substantial alternative source of supply has yet been developed.

The challenges presented by the formulation and implementation of new 'integrated cassava projects' several years ago involved organizing applied research, analyzing the economics and developing trading contacts required by such an undertaking. Several projects are now on the verge of becoming realities, so it is possible to outline them here in general terms.

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