



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

KALRO/NAVCDP Factsheet No.../2024

Intercropping in Pyrethrum Cultivation

Introduction

Intercropping is a type of multiple-cropping system that includes growing two or more crops in close proximity or at the same time, on the same piece of land. In the case of pyrethrum, an additional non-climbing leguminous crop can be planted in proximity during the growing season.

In Kenya, there has been a decrease in arable land size per household due to increasing population density. The decrease has led to low food crop production, an increase in food insecurity, and a decrease in farm incomes. Intercropping offers a solution to farmers as they can produce more diverse yields on one piece of land

Benefits of Intercropping

1. Increases land productivity
2. Increases household income from the intercrop crops
3. Enhances ground cover for soil conservation.
4. Decreases weed incidence
5. Reduced pest and disease incidence



A Pyrethrum and bean intercrop (source KALRO Molo)

Ideal conditions for intercropping pyrethrum

An intercrop can only be introduced during the following stages of pyrethrum production

- During the earlier growth stages after planting of pyrethrum before flower production begins. (month 2 to month 4)
- The period after cut back when the crop is still short

- If a farmer plants on a wider spacing than recommended

Suitable crops for intercropping with pyrethrum

Food legumes are recommended for pyrethrum intercrops because of their high economic and nutritional value. The combined benefit per unit area for pyrethrum and legume intercrops in monetary terms is high compared to where pyrethrum is grown as a sole crop.

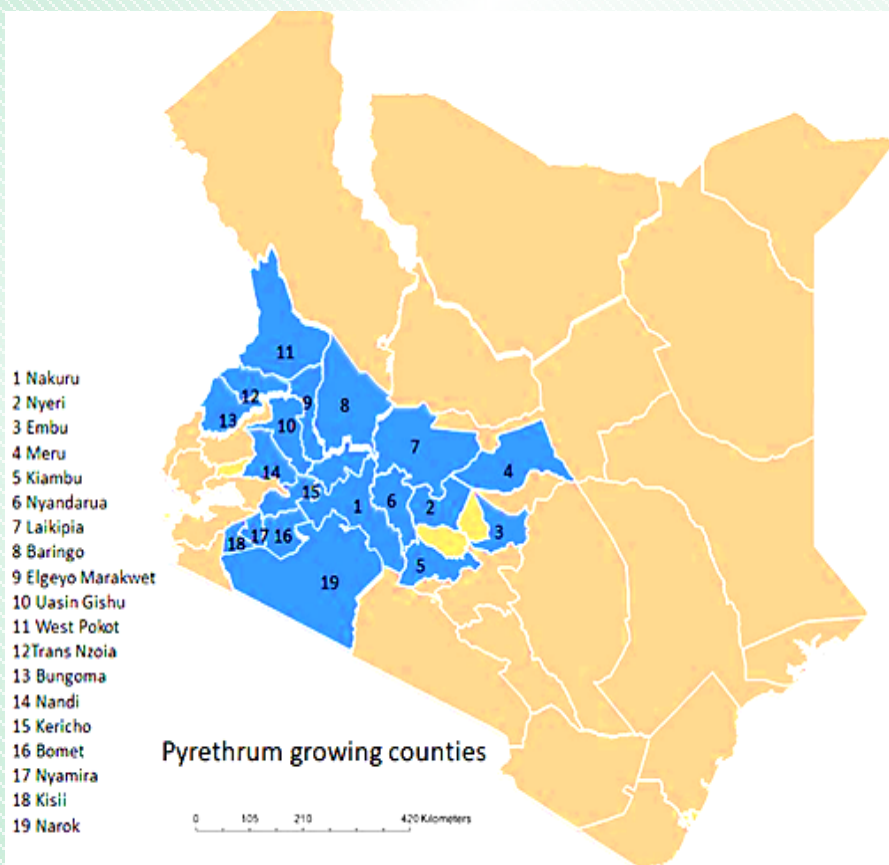


Advantages of Legumes as intercrops with Pyrethrum:

1. They are high in protein content and hence contribute to food and nutrition security
2. They have fast growth, they mature early and are ready for harvest within four months.
3. Their ability to fix nitrogen symbiotically with rhizobium making nitrogen available for use by pyrethrum.
4. They lower nematode infestation for the pyrethrum crop.

Avoid intercropping with crops that are climbers, or tall that can cast a shade onto the pyrethrum crops as this could lead to low production or total loss of the whole plant

Caution: Examples of recommended legumes are common beans, green peas and chickpeas.



Counties growing pyrethrum



Compiled by: Obanyi, J., Muriithi, I., Wandera, F., Njogu, N., Kimutai, C. and Thuo, M.

Edited by: Nyabundi, K.W., Mukundi, K.T. and Maina, P.

Design and Layout: Nogrecia Mnene

Disclaimer: The content of this publication is for general information to farmers and extension services. Further information may be available from the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO)

For more information Contacts: Director General
Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization, Kaptagat Road, Loresho Nairobi Kenya
P.O. Box 5781 I, City Square, Nairobi, 00200, Kenya

Email: info@kalro.org

Safaricom: +254 722206986/722206988, **Airtel:** +254 733-333-223/4/733333299/4

