

FOURTH PRESENTATION
THE CULTIVATION OF SUBSTITUTES
TO CANNABIS

By Mr. MBILI OLOUME
(MINADER)

INTRODUCTION

Some young Cameroonians are attracted by easy profits through dangerous activities such as the cultivation and sale of cannabis.

However, there are several agricultural activities that can generate revenue without falling foul of the law.

The following two questions can therefore be asked:

- What can we cultivate in order to quickly earn money without cultivating CANNABIS?
- How can we have access to the various agricultural inputs and financial support offered by the State

The objective here is to promote the use of short-cycle production varieties with a high market value and which are supported by several ongoing programmes in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Consequently, the farmer can have several planting seasons within a year and multiply his revenue. Most of the short-cycle varieties benefit from various types of support from MINADER.

1. WHAT CAN WE CULTIVATE IN ORDER TO QUICKLY EARN MONEY WITHOUT CULTIVATING CANNABIS?

There are several crops but we have retained 4 because of their high market value. These are:

- Irish potatoes;
- Watermelon;
- Okra;
- Onion.

A. Irish potatoes

- At the nutritional level;
- At the economic level: It is an ideal crop for fighting against poverty. With its relatively short cultivation period (90 to 135 days, that is, 3 to 4 months), we can have three (3) to four (4) production cycles per year

depending on the measures taken to ensure constant water supply (through irrigation in the dry season).

What is needed to cultivate 1 hectare of Irish potatoes?

Note: Seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and farming materials are freely given by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

In conclusion, it is preferable to freely and easily make money by cultivating Irish potatoes instead of cultivating cannabis in hiding.

B. Watermelon

- At the nutritional level:

- It is a very nutritive fruit of the cucumber family;
- It has a good calorie content;
- It is used in the preparation of several refreshing drinks;
- It is widely used as a dessert during ceremonies;
- It is recommended for diabetics.

- At the economic level:

It is a short-cycle crop (3 to 3.5 months for early varieties and 3 to 4 months for full-season varieties). Traditionally, there are two planting seasons in Cameroon:

- 1st planting season from March to June;
- 2nd from September to December;

However, a 3rd planting season could be possible on the same land if well irrigated off-season.

The prices on the local markets are attractive and vary depending on the period of the year: CFAF 200 to CFAF 500 for small fruits, CFAF 700 to CFAF 1,000 for medium-sizes and CFAF 1,000 to CFAF 1,500 for big fruits. These prices could double in Yaounde and Douala especially during the dry season.

Watermelon also has a great diversity of forms (size and colour of the fruit, duration on the farm, yield ...) that helps in the choice of the desired varieties (Chalestone-Sugar Baby...).

What is needed to cultivate 1 hectare of watermelon?

Note: Watermelon is usually cultivation in pure culture to obtain more yields and for easy follow-up. Government subsidizes with small materials and organic manure so as to boost profit.

To conclude, it is interesting to cultivate watermelon in all liberty instead of looking for trouble by cultivating cannabis in hiding.

C. Okra

- At the nutritional level:

Okra is used as a vegetable in soups and eaten with fufu made from cassava, rice, maize (fufu corn) or millet.

When cooked, okra can also be eaten as a salad and it is very nutritive.

- At the economic level:

Okra is a plant that generates money for the farmer in a very short time and which in high demand on the market.

D. Onion

- At the nutritional level:

Onion is used as an ingredient to spice meals. It can be used in common soups, grilled fish, roast meat or by managers of cafeterias. It is very nutritive.

- At the economic level:

Onion is a plant that generates money for the farmer in a very short time and is in high demand on the market. It does not require much work and is not yet cultivated by many people.

Cultivation of 1 hectare of onion:

You must cultivate varieties that suit the local soil and climate. The “NOFLAYE” variety which is purplish colour is suitable for the East Region. Onions can be harvested after three or three and a half months. It is preferable to buy small onions (bulbils) if one cannot make a nursery or buy the plant from nurserymen.

To conclude, the cultivation of onion is more profitable than that of cannabis.

II. HOW CAN WE HAVE ACCESS TO THE VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL INPUTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT OFFERED BY THE STATE

You just need to have a well-developed agricultural production project to be submitted to the Head of the Agricultural Post or the Subdivisional Delegate.

The Agricultural adviser/Head of the Agricultural Post/the local Extension worker shall help you draw up the project.

Depending on the specificity, you can receive the necessary financial help to start your project which varies between CFAF 1,000,000 and CFAF 3,000,000 through projects such as:

- PAIJA (The Agriculture Youth Insertion Support Programme);
- PEA-JEUNES (Programme for the Promotion of Youth Agro-Pastoral Entrepreneurship);
- PADMIR (Rural Microfinance Development Support Project);
- CRD (Decentralized Rural Credit Project);
- ACEFA (The Programme for the Improvement of Competitiveness of Family Agro-pastoral Farms)
- AFOP (The Agro-pastoral Vocational Training Support Programme).