

Farmers who grew groundnuts usually only planted their fields once. Only one farmer planted his field twice. This trend might be accounted for by the fact that groundnut planting is very expensive and one planting is all most farmers can afford. In addition, seed for replanting is sometimes difficult to obtain. The overall average amount of seed planted in groundnuts was .80 sacks per mukhammas, and the range was .13 to 1.67 sacks. The reason for this wide variation in reported planting rates is unclear.

As for sorghum planted in separate stands, farmers used about the same or slightly more seed per mukhammas as they did for millet. The average amount of seed planted in sorghum was 1.01 mids per mukhammas, and the range was .5 to 2.0 mids. Farmers who planted their sorghum only once used .99 mids. The range was .5 to 2.0 mids. A few farmers planted their sorghum more than once, and the average amount of seed used was 1.05 mids. The range was 1.01 to 1.15 mids.

Farmers who intercropped sorghum with sesame planted less seed per mukhammas than those who planted sorghum in separate stands. The overall average amount of intercropped sorghum seed was .37 mids per mukhammas, and the range was .11 to 2.0 mids. For farmers who planted sorghum with sesame only once, the average amount used was .18, and the range was .11 to .29 mids. Some farmers planted sorghum seed with sesame more than once, and the average amount used was .64 mids. The range was .20 to 2.0 mids.

Seed Acquisition

Farmers in the study area acquire seed from a number of different sources. Inquiries into this subject area revealed that aside from reserving seed from their own fields, farmers obtained seeds from other farmers, merchants, urban markets and government distribution programs.

Fifty-three percent of the farmers interviewed obtained their millet seeds for planting from their own fields (Table 12). Only 5 per cent obtained seed as a gift from relatives. However, it is significant that 45 percent of the farmers purchased millet seed. Most of these seed purchases were made from other farmers (12 of 17 or 71%), but some farmers purchased seed from local merchants as well (5 of 17 or 29%). Farmers told us that they preferred to purchase millet seeds from other farmers rather than merchants because farmers take greater care in keeping millet varieties separated. When a farmer purchases seed from another farmer, he can be sure of what he is buying. Merchants on the other hand tend to mix different varieties of seeds together in the same sack, so the farmer doesn't really know what he is getting.

To account for such a large percentage of farmers purchasing millet seed for planting, it is quite probable that most of these farmers consumed all of their millet before the planting season. Farmers often resort to consuming their millet early, especially if they had a low millet yield the previous season due to pests or some other adverse environmental condition. In fact, because farming is so precarious in this fluctuating environment, we believe that millet seed purchases are and will continue to be a common pattern in this area.

As for sesame seed, 76 percent of the farmers obtained some or all of their seed for planting from their own reserves. This high percentage might