Intercropping can Increase Total Crop Yield in Small-scale Farms

Florida A&M University, Cooperative Extension Program

**INTERCROPPING?**
Growing one or more crops between a main crop
- **Main crop e.g. corn**
- **Other crop e.g. cowpeas**

**Why do intercropping?**
- Higher yield Per unit land area
- Less disease and pest
- Reduce soil erosion
- Maximum use of soil moisture and plant nutrients
- Less weed infestation
- Reduce risk of crop failure

**Research has shown that corn yields higher per acre when intercropped with cowpeas versus corn planted alone (see Table 1).**

**Table 1: Corn-cowpeas intercrop vs. sole crop corn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Yield/acre</th>
<th>Plants/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corn-cowpeas intercrop</td>
<td>1,267 lb</td>
<td>9075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole crop corn</td>
<td>687 lb</td>
<td>22,142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sole crop corn means corn grown alone

**REFERENCES:**

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Cassel Gardner  
Cooperative Extension Program  
College of Engineering Sciences, Technology and Agriculture  
Florida A&M University  
215 Perry Paige, South  
Tallahassee, FL 32307-4100  
Telephone: (850) 599-3546  
Fax No.: (850) 561-2151  
Email: cassel.gardner@famu.edu

Dr. Lawrence Carter, Associate Dean/Extension and Outreach  
Email: lawrence.carter@famu.edu

Dr. Charles Magee, Interim Dean and Director of Land Grant Programs  
Email: Charles.magee@famu.edu

Carmen Lyttle-N’Guessan, Fact Sheet Editor  
Research-Extension Technician  
Cooperative Extension Program  
202 Perry Paige, South  
Florida A & M University  
Email: carmenngu@yahoo.com

The Research-Extension Fact Sheet is composed of research-based information transformed to better target our clientele, and will be published as a series of issues.

The Florida A & M University (FAMU) Cooperative Extension Program, an equal employment/educational opportunity access organization, provides research-based educational information and other services only to eligible individuals and institutions regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. FAMU is an Equal Opportunity Employer.