



Multi-cropping

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A recent study conducted by the **Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS)** has highlighted the importance of multi-cropping system.

- In multi cropping system, farmers grow **two or more crops** on farmland in one calendar year (unlike mono-cropping, that involves planting only one crop on a field). It includes inter-cropping, mixed-cropping and relay cropping.
 - **Intercropping:** Is growing two or more crops simultaneously in a definite cropping pattern.
 - **Relay cropping:** Relay cropping involves growing of two or more crops on the same field with the planting of the second crop after the first one has reached its reproductive stage.
 - **Mixed intercropping:** It involves growing more than one crop simultaneously **without any distinct row arrangement.**
- Multi cropping system is common in **tropical regions** having more rainfall, higher temperatures, and a longer growing season.

Economical Benefits

- **Higher Productivity:** Multiple cropping system is seen as a way to maximize land productivity in a small area by improving the intensity of land and labor use for better profit and stabilizing farm income.
- **Fodder Stock:** Growing multicrops or polycrops ensures enough fodder stocks for cattles.
- **Food Security:** In multi-cropping system, even if one or two crops fail, farmers still be able to harvest other crops to guarantee food throughout the year.
- **Multiple Uses:** Crops don't just yield grains but also fodder and fuelwood.

Agronomic Benefits

- **Pest Management:** Growing a variety of crops together minimizes pest problems and makes efficient use of soil nutrients, water, and land.
Leguminous (crops having roots that are able to make soil nitrogen available to other plants), when intercropped with other crops, particularly those that require plenty of nitrogen (e.g. young maize plants and sorghum), results into efficient use of soil nutrients.
- **Weed Management:** It helps to suppress weeds, as weeds find it difficult to grow alongside some crops.
- **Sustainable crop production systems:** This reduces the application of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Centre for Economic and Social Studies

- The Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) was established as an autonomous research Centre in 1980.
- Later in 1986 it was recognized as a national institute by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India).
- The Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) has been registered under Section 6(1) (a) of the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 1976**.

Source: BL