USE OF INDIGENOUS CROP PROTECTION PRACTICES AMONG LEGUME CROP FARMERS IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

Rashid S. Adisa
Department of Agricultural extension and Rural Development, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ilorin, PMB 1515, Ilorin, Nigeria

Abstract
Legumes occupy a special position in Nigeria’s agricultural landscape. Apart from being relatively affordable sources of protein, legumes have the unique ability of soil enrichment, thus making them suitable in most farming systems in Nigeria. Unfortunately, legume production suffers from several challenges, chief among which is pest and disease infestation. This study investigated the level, types, determinants, and perceived effectiveness of the use of indigenous crop protection practices (ICPPs) among legume farmers in north-central Nigeria. A four-stage random sampling procedure was used to select 327 respondents, consisting of farmers cultivating cow pea, pea nut, and soya bean in Benue, Kogi, and Kwara States. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to elicit data from respondents. The study identified major pests and diseases of legumes, noted a rising trend in infestation, and revealed that traditional crop protection practices preponderated over chemical application. However, 29% of respondents used a combination of both methods. The most widely used ICPPs were crop rotation, bush fallowing, cutting of infected plant parts; and application of pepper (Capsicum Annum), neem (Azadirachta Indica) extracts and wood ash to control pests. The use of ICPPs prediction profile featured respondents’ socio-economic and occupational variables. Farm size, income, and age exhibited significant correlations with use of the ICPPs. Convincingly, most respondents perceived the ICPPs to be more effective than chemicals, and that the ICPPs posed minimal risks. It is thus worthwhile to improve ICPPs and incorporate them into the mainstream of agricultural extension service delivery, especially among low-income and youth farmers in Nigeria.

E-mail: rsadisa@unilorin.edu.ng; rsadisa@yahoo.com
Phone: +2348037523892