



SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF VEGETABLE CORN

Now that maize grain production has dwindled, many producers grow maize specifically for sale as fresh cobs. The recommendations contained in *GROWING MAIZE, Advisory Bulletin No. 4* are not all applicable. The specific recommendations for vegetable corn are :

Varieties, plant density and seed requirements

Cropping system	Variety (1)	Density (plants/ha)	Seed rate (kg/ha)
Pure stand	MSIRI 6 (2)	73 750	25
Intercropping	MSIRI 4	20 575	10

Fertilizer rates

Fertilizer requirements for vegetable corn are less than those for dry grain production. The following may be applied :

Cropping system	Amount required per ha	
	At planting (at the bottom of furrows)	Top-dressing at 1 month (if necessary) (3)
Pure stand	either 400 kg 13-13-20-2 or 150 kg Calcium Ammonium Nitrate + 60 kg Triple Super Phosphate + 100 kg Muriate of Potash	100 kg Calcium Ammonium Nitrate
Intercropping	either 100 kg 13-13-20-2 or 40 kg Calcium Ammonium Nitrate + 15 kg Triple Super Phosphate + 25 kg Muriate of Potash	25 kg Calcium Ammonium Nitrate

Pest control

As cobs are consumed fresh, the presence of insect larvae on the ear is unsightly. An insecticide (e.g. Decis) should be sprayed on the silk three times at weekly intervals as from silk emergence (*Vide also Recommendation Sheet No. 79 of March 1994*)

Harvest

The time of harvest of green cobs is critical. Green cobs are eaten only when the kernels are at a particular stage of maturity known as the dough stage. The kernel contents are then thick and creamy. One way to verify is to press the dehusked ear with the thumb nail. A thick cream will ooze out at the right stage of harvest. The contents of immature kernels are watery while those of overmature ones are hard. After harvest it is preferable not to dehusk the ears until cooking time.

Notes :

1. Consumers prefer orange-yellow kernels and large ears fetch higher prices. A new full-season hybrid has been developed and, if the demand for seed is enough to justify seed production, it will be released as MSIRI 7.
2. MSIRI 6 has larger ears than MSIRI 4 but also matures later.
3. There is usually no need to top-dress unless the plants are not developing normally.