

1. Introduction

For many years the most widely used edible oil in Trinidad has been that of the coconut, but with the increased demand for edible oils, other sources of this essential material have had to be investigated. Thus work has been carried out in recent years on oilseeds, with soyabeans (Glycine max L. Merrill) and sesame (Sesamum indicum) occupying much of the research effort. Soyabeans are a natural choice, since besides having a relatively high oil content (18-23%), the resulting meal after oil extraction is rich in protein (up to 45%) and is a useful animal feedstuff.

Previous attempts at establishing soyabeans in Trinidad, at U.W.I. during the period 1929-32, met with little success and no further traceable research was done until 1965. Work began that year at the U.W.I. Field Station at Valsayn Park with the introduction of some 50 varieties of soyabeans from Venezuela, Australia and the United States; at about the same time work on soyabeans was initiated at the Central Agricultural Research Station at Carapichaima and also at the Texaco Demonstration Farm where attempts were made to grow the crop on a field scale.

Experimental work up until now has been centred on the selection of varieties ecologically suited to Trinidad.