

ABSTRACT

In this study the problems associated with the importation of soyabean meal for livestock feed were identified as: (a) vulnerability to price and supply and (b) possible loss of economic benefits from local soyabean cultivation. It was however, noted that most of the arable lands with suitable soils for soyabean production were at present under sugarcane cultivation. The study sought to examine the technical (agronomic) and economic feasibility for soyabean production in Trinidad on lands currently used for mechanized sugarcane cultivation as a rotation crop with sugarcane. This study focused on Caroni (1975) Limited, one of the two sugarcane estates, because of the size of its arable land.

Determination of the technical suitability for soyabean cultivation was done using experiences in growing the crop in West Indies, in particular Chaguaramas Agricultural Development Project in Trinidad. Additionally literature review on agronomic research on soyabean production provided useful information in determining agronomic requirements for soyabean production. The analysis indicated that the new farming system was technically feasible.

The scope for mechanized soyabean cultivation in rotation with sugarcane was determined by evaluating characteristics of each soil group in comparison to the optimal soil properties suitable for soyabean production. It was estimated that 4660 hectares of land were suitable for mechanized soyabean-sugarcane rotation.

The net present value(s) indicated that the soyabean-sugarcane rotation farming system was not financially feasible, although Caroni (1975) Limited with the present monoculture

sugarcane farming system had been experiencing financial losses in recent years.

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