

A Note on the Double Cropping of Paddy in Wynad

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In Madras State, Malabar is one of the deficient districts in rice production, even though the total area under paddy in Malabar is fairly high. Malabar records a total production of 3.17 lakhs tons from an area of 8.45 lakhs acres which compares very unfavourably with the production of 8.5 lakhs tons from a cultivated area of 13.38 lakhs acres in Tanjore district. On this basis Tanjore records a mean acre yield of 1400 lb. per acre while in Malabar the average yield works out only to 900 lb. per acre (Natarajan 1941). This situation therefore calls for consideration of the ways and means to augment the production of rice in this district.

Ramiah (1953) has observed that many parts of Orissa which were more or less akin to Wynad, a high-lying taluk of Malabar in respect of terrain and climatic conditions, have made a mark in rice production by adopting the "double cropping" of paddy lands. It was therefore considered possible that the same practice could be applied to parts of Wynad with advantage. One major handicap, however, which confronts the rice grower in Wynad is the prolongation of duration of paddy crops, as a result of which sufficient time is not available for raising a second crop. But with suitable short-duration varieties, there is scope for raising two crops of paddy in this region.

With the object of securing two crops in a year, trials were conducted at the Agricultural Research Station, Ambalavayal (Wynad) to determine the optimum combination of two paddy varieties that could be usefully raised in the double-cropping scheme in wetland blocks which commanded satisfactory irrigation facilities. Several combinations of long and short duration types of paddy previously tested and found promising under Wynad conditions for the first and second crop seasons, were included in this trial. The yields obtained from these combinations are set out as follows:

| First Crop | | | | Second Crop | | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Name of Variety strain or culture | Duration in days | Yield per acre in lb. | Value in Rs. | Name of Variety or culture | Duration in days | Yield per acre in lb. | Value in Rs. | Total yield in lb. | Value in Rs. |
| Combination I. Short duration first crop variety followed by long duration second crop variety. | | | | | | | | | |
| Siamese | | | | | | | | | |
| type 2801 | 142 | 2690 | 294/- | MTU. 19 | 218 | 1397 | 152/12/- | 3997 | 153/- |
| do. 2801 | 142 | 2554 | 279/- | Kothandan | 202 | 1727 | 189/- | 4281 | 468/- |
| Combination II. Medium duration first crop variety followed by long duration second crop variety. | | | | | | | | | |
| Palthondy | | | | | | | | | |
| 9114 | 165 | 3638 | 398/- | MTU. 19 | 218 | 771 | 84/- | 4409 | 482/- |
| do. 9114 | 165 | 3710 | 406/- | Kothandan | 202 | 1519 | 166/- | 5229 | 572/- |
| Combination III. Long duration first crop variety followed by short duration second crop variety. | | | | | | | | | |
| MTU. 19 | 218 | 3075 | 330/- | Co. 13 | 120 | 1515 | 166/- | 4590 | 502/- |
| Kothandan | 202 | 3932 | 430/- | Palthondi | 165 | 2081 | 228/- | 6013 | 658/- |
| | | | | 9114 | | | | | |

It would be observed from the above data that the most profitable combination on considerations of yield was of *Kothandan* 517 in the first crop, followed by *Palthondi* 9114 in the second crop seasons. Growing of short duration varieties in the first crop followed by long duration varieties in the second crop invariably led to low yields. In terms of monetary value, the third combination has yielded an income of Rs. 658/- per acre, as compared to the maximum income of Rs. 430/- realised from a single crop of *Kothandan*.

These methods of raising two crops of paddy seem to have caught the imagination of the growers in Wynad. In the course of the past three years, the area under second crop paddy has steadily increased from practically nothing in 1950-51 to over 500 acres in 1954-55. This would mean that the Wynad growers have contributed in a measure towards food production and have earned for themselves an additional income of Rs. 1,14,000/-. If the above practice of double cropping is adopted on a more extensive scale, it will help to narrow down the rice deficiency in this district considerably.

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REFERENCES

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