

June 1, 2004

Hi, Norm,

... On a related topic, I wanted to share with you the early results of Zelia Menete's SRI trials in Mozambique. I am attaching an Excel file with the general results, and Zelia's comments below. As you may remember, the Chokwe area is plagued by salinity, and the cost of drainage to ameliorate the soils is considered to be prohibitive. Zelia's results show interesting effects of the components of SRI technology, but the reduced irrigation rates took their toll on rice yields. This may be attributed to the fact that more water is needed to dilute the salts. Even with reduced watering, though, the yields were still very good.

Keep in mind that these results are preliminary, but I thought you would be interested in them. This is only the first year of the experiment, of course.

Cheers,
Harold

Zelia's note:

Dear all, Please find attached some of my data. I am still fighting to finish inputting and processing qualitatively the data as well as do the second crop and aggregate stability measurements (very time-consuming). As things are now I am very happy with my data.

I've gotten very high yields with SRI, especially with young seedlings and composting. There is plenty of room for understanding the water management part of SRI. I have tried the 1-week water scheduling, but there is a lot to be known about water application and how to estimate the quantities.

Please note that no fertilizer was applied, but SRI yields vary from 8 to 3-4 ton/ha. (Average yields for good farmers, on non-saline, fertilized soil and with flooded conditions in Mozambique are 3 tons per ha!). Most comments are in the SRI summary sheet [available on request from CIIFAD]

Also I've gotten very good results of yield differences in a RDB with 3 transplanting dates (10, 20 and 30 days). For ITA 312 variety, this gives an increase of 1-2.7 ton/ha (see sheet D transplant table). Note that a fertilizer trial gave lower response than this (sheet: dry biomass within fertilizer trial last columns).

Note also that the yields of wet/dry water management, although lower than flooded plots, are very good if we consider that water was applied only once per week, so the water amounts used are in the order of 25-30 % of the flooded amount (still calculating exactly). This is important because Chokwe will receive less and less water per year. It is more important to increase the productivity/unit water applied than the total yield/ha itself. That's it for now. Zélia

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