

CROTON MEGALOCARPUS

Extent of adoption

Thijssen (1993) indicates that, in the Embu area, on the slopes of Mount Kenya, *Croton megalocarpus* has been found on 40% of the farms at an average density of about 15 trees per farm (excluding trees managed as a hedge). The majority of farms (84%) had between 1 and 10 trees, while 11% contained between 50 and 100 trees. An estimate of the total number of croton trees on farms in the coffee-based land-use system of this area (400 km²) gives a figure of more than 160 000 trees.

Economics of production

A study by Thijssen (1993) on croton as a poultry feed tree indicates that the trees generally start flowering during the fourth year and potential seed yields of mature trees are assessed at 25 kg per year.

Darr and Pretzsch (2006) argue that croton nuts are a good source of biofuel and are better than *Jatropha*. Whereas *Jatropha* requires as much 20,000 litres of water (in Kenya) to make a litre of biofuel, the Croton tree grows wild and yields about .35 litre of oil per kilo of nuts. The tree is planted as a windbreak in Kenya and its use as a source of biofuel may offer a benefit to rural economies there.

Further reading

Darr, D., Pretzsch, J. (2006) Participatory, Farmer- to-Farmer and other Contemporary Extension Approaches in Eastern Africa; Are there any lessons for forestry extension in Europe? Forest-X-Change. Germany.

Blauert, J. and Quintanar, E. (2000) Seeking local indicators: Participatory stakeholder evaluation of farmer-to-farmer projects, Mexico. In Learning from Change: Issues and Experiences in Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation. IDRC

<http://www.africabiofuel.com>

Thijssen, R. (1993) *Croton megalocarpus*, the poultry-feed tree: how local knowledge could help to feed the world. ETC Kenya Consultants, P.O. Box 76378, Nairobi, Kenya.
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/W3735E/w3735e29.htm>