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## FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LAB FOR LEGUME SYSTEMS RESEARCH

#### February 2021



The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research fosters dynamic, profitable, and environmentally sustainable approaches that contribute to resilience, productivity, and better nutrition and economic opportunities. The lab is managed by Michigan State University.

# From the Management Office

Legume researchers discuss project highlights during Annual Global Convening



The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research held our Annual Global Convening 2021 on February 16-18. The event, which was slated to take place on the campus of Michigan State University, was switched to an all virtual format due to COVID-19 stay save protocol.

Over 125 global legume researchers and stakeholders engaged in project presentations highlighting innovative research for impact on legume systems throughout West and Southern Africa.

To view the presentations and sessions click the link below.

View Presentations and Sessions

## **From the Field** Quantifying the scale and scope of nutritious cowpea products in local markets of West Africa Research Protocole: Part I

#### by Aliou Diagne, Melinda Smale, Véronique Thériault, and Idrissa Wade

The following is summarized from the paper's Introduction. Please click the **Read more** link below to view the paper in its entirety.

Cowpea, known locally as *niébé*, is the most important indigenous grain legume in West Africa both in terms of food security and income generation for smallholder farmers (CNFA 2016; Mishili et al., 2007; Langyintuo et al. 2003)...

...From the perspective of human consumption, cowpea is an affordable source of high-quality protein and other nutrients for both urban and rural households Dovlo et al. (1976). This explains why it is commonly known in Hausa as *naman talaka*—meaning "poor man's meat" (Robinson et al. 2014). Cowpea grains are rich in micronutrients with nutrient density depending on the variety. The leaves and young shoots of the cowpea plant, which are particularly high in iron and calcium (Madodé et al. 2011), are often added to the stews consumed with starchy staples by families (in addition to being used as fodder for small ruminants). There are also numerous food products that are prepared from cowpea grain. Dovlo et al. (1976) recorded more than 50 cowpea-based products consumed in West and Central Africa and a recent report by CNFA (2016) lists 32 cowpea dishes that are sold by women entrepreneurs in markets and various retail outlets of Niger.

This brief account of what is known about cowpeas from the literature shows the potential for cowpea to contribute significantly to improved well-being of West African populations from both food security and economic standpoints—if the various constraints hindering wider production and consumption are identified and alleviated... ...we know little in quantitative terms about the scale and scope of cowpea products, and especially processed products, in local markets.We need a better understanding of the potential for engaging a diversity of private and public sector actors, including small-scale enterprises led by women, in cowpea-related business opportunities. Our research in Mali and Senegal seeks to close the information gap by building a quantitative inventory of cowpea products supplied and demanded in local markets.

This is the second working paper for the Legume Systems Innovation Lab projects. Visit the <u>Legume Lab website</u> for full listing of available publications, papers and articles.

Read more

# *Featured Legume of the Month* BAMBARA BEANS



According to the <u>FAO</u>, "Bambara groundnut is a grain legume grown mainly by subsistence farmers in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is cultivated for its subterranean pods, is extremely hardy and produces reasonable yields even under conditions of drought and low soil fertility. The pods are approximately 1.5 cm long, and may be wrinkled and slightly oval or round, containing one to two seeds.

The colour of the seeds varies from black, dark-brown, red, white, cream or a combination of these colours. At harvest, i.e. when the pods ripen, the plant is extracted from the soil, exposing the subterranean nuts."

If you are lucky to find Bambara beans in your region, try this tasty recipe below as from the FAO.

### Cooking with Bambara Beans... Creamy Bambara Beans Sauce

Bambara beans are nutritious, containing about 63% carbohydrates and 19% protein providing a good source of dietary protein.

Creamy Bambara beans sauce is featured in the website, <u>biscuits and ladles</u> and is pictured to the right. The dish incorporates the Bambara beans with grain of paradise, scotch bonnet peppers and shrimp powder.



#### For More Information on the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Legume Systems Research

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