Analysis of integrated farming systems prevalent in homestead agro forestry of Kerala, India

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SUMMARY
This study was undertaken with the principle objective of documenting the crop diversity in homesteads of Kerala along with uses of different plant species, multispecies farming models and the impact of these diverse cropping pattern on farmers profitability. 120 traditional homestead agroforestry farms were selected for collecting data. They were selected by multi-stage random sampling technique from three districts of Kerala viz., Kannur, Thrissur and Kollam representing Northern, Central and Southern parts respectively. High diversity of crop species ranging from 17-51 species were recorded in the field. The most preferred crop was coconut followed by banana, spices, vegetables etc. Among the crops plantations followed by spices contributed significantly towards the gross returns of the farmer. Integration of livestock showed positive and significant relationship with gross returns. Farmer’s preferences varied with the utility of the crops. Based upon the study, the indicators of sustainability of the system, implications and suggestions of findings of the study for field extension work as well as for future research were listed.

Key words : Integrated farming, Homestead, Agro forestry, Kerala.