Grain Legumes?

**Why**

**Production is large and important for developing countries**

Grain Legumes are primarily grown in developing countries.

Almost 200 million hectares of grain legumes are grown globally; exceeding that of wheat and maize.

**Commonly farmed by women**

In many countries and as a source of empowerment and income.

In Mali, 85% of groundnut is farmed by women.

**Implements soil health**

by fixing nitrogen and extracting phosphorus.

This means:

- Improves farm productivity of all the crops
- Reduces fertilizer needs.
- Adds nitrogen to the soil.

**Multiple uses**

- Food
- Fertilizer
- Forest
- Other

Major crops, eg. wheat and rice, are mainly used only for food.

- Major crops like wheat and rice may be used as a source of food.

**High in protein and nutrients**

A major source of protein in developing countries, 2-4 times higher protein content than cereals.

Protein levels:

- Chickpeas: 17%
- Groundnut oil: 26%

**Concerns**

Production is being displaced to cereals, leading to higher legume prices and negative nutritional impacts.

Consumption of legumes have dropped significantly below optimal levels.

**Solutions**

Better varieties and farm management practices.

Where leguminous crops are being displaced, there is need to support farmers with improved varieties and management practices.

By prioritizing nutrition, it is possible to increase the yield and production of grain legumes, thus, improving the protein content in the diet of the world’s population.

**Exports opportunities exist**

Assistance in Ethiopia led to a 21-fold increase in export earnings, to $32 million per annum (from 2006 to 2010).

US$33 million in extra value to impoverished farmers in Tanzania came through assistance that tripled yields and boosted exports.

**3.5 tons 1.7 to 2.5 tons per hectare**

**Development down the value chain**

- Policy support
- Market access
- Building partnerships with farmers and other stakeholders
- Developing sustainable products.

**Saves the farm**

Hardy and water efficient

The pigeonpea’s drought tolerance makes it particularly valuable in drought prone areas. This is often the only crop that yields grain during dry spells when other crops such as maize have dried up.

**Rescues after failed crops**

Can be sown later in the season to come to the rescue of failed crops. When cereal, root or tuber crops are damaged by drought, the later sown legume can bring critically needed food security and income to farming families.

**Fast growing**

Chickpea varieties like JGI can mature as little as 3 months, enabling the crop to escape drought. Yields in parts of India have more than doubled (from 600 to 1,000 kg per hectare). This is now being widely adopted in Africa.