Criteria for the Choice of Oil Palm (Elaeis guineensis Jacq.) Planting Material in Africa: The Cameroon Experience

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The superiority of tenera palms over dura palms for palm oil production is widely known in the African oil palm belt in general and particularly in Cameroon. When all oil palm plantations in Cameroon are expected to be laid out with tenera planting material, it is surprising to find that part of them comprise of various proportions of dura and pisifera. The latter is generally female sterile due to usual abortion of fresh fruit bunches. The use of low yielding tenera, dura and even pisifera planting materials is mostly unintentional though some cases exist where the choice of high quality planting material is not given priority by the planter. Yield criteria are of prime importance for industrial plantation while smallholders’ choices of planting materials depend on economical, technical, political, land and cultural factors. Actions can be taken in a short-term to make improved tenera the unique planting material for all planters.

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