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Procedural and Dereliction-linked Seed Losses from an Oil Palm Seed Production Programme in Cameroon

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La Dibamba Oil Palm Research Centre is one of the two oil palm seed producers in Cameroon and probably the most important based on its high annual potential of about 10 million seeds. The country's replanting of old areas and expansions require considerable amount of seeds. A big gap exists between the annual potential of germinated seeds and current productions. Germinated seeds are produced following rigorous procedures starting from the harvest of the bunch derived from controlled pollination. Both the normal practices and derelictions induce losses of seeds estimated at 7.6 per cent of total germinated seeds over six-year records. The most important cause of losses is the lack of germination which accounts for 73 per cent of total seed losses. Improving germination rate alone can significantly reduce the losses encountered, while respecting procedures would contribute to further increment of quantities of germinated seeds.

Keywords: Oil palm, seed production, seed losses, bunch harvest, seed preparation, seed germination, La Dibamba, Cameroon.

