



An International Center
for Soil Fertility and
Agricultural Development

Success Story

Farmer From Benin, West Africa, Harvests Greater Yields Using IFDC Crop Production Package

Todji Gabriel is a very successful farmer from Ahohoue, Benin. He has more fields and more money than most farmers in the area. The Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) package that he uses includes phosphate rock, a cover crop of mucuna or legumes (cowpeas), and crop residues. On his larger fields, he applies the ISFM packet of ideas (which includes applying phosphate rock every 3 years, weeding, growing cover crops, recycling nutrients, etc.). In 1998 he started using phosphate rock at a dosage of 300 kg/ha as basic dressing; ISFM recommends using 50 kg/ha/year for balanced fertilization. On his other fields he uses the traditional practice because of the additional labor required for the preferred practice. He recycled the biomass from a mucuna cover crop and applied the ISFM recommended rate of 200 kg/ha of NPK/urea fertilizer. Later he reduced the rate of application to 125 kg/ha; he tries to adjust the rate according to crop response to management practices. He thinned his crops to reduce the number of plants and applied



NPK and urea 34 days after sowing. His harvest for the first season was 4,375 kg/ha of maize. During the second season he cultivated cowpeas and realized a harvest of about 280 kg of cowpeas on one-half hectare. Gabriel grows mucuna when the soil needs it and to correct the weed problem. He applies phosphate rock every 3 years. This is a very resourceful farmer; to associate phosphate rock with a leguminous cover crop is a very good combination. By using this combined approach, Gabriel's fields have fewer weeds and he harvests greater yields. Using the ISFM technology package, he can now grow cotton and realize greater yields and, hence, more revenue. With the profits from his labor, Gabriel has built a house.