

SEED MULTIPLICATION IN THE WEST SEPIK

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Department of Primary Industry out-stations are being encouraged to carry out their own seed multiplication programmes to supply seeds to the people in their districts. In the last issue of HARVEST (6(1)) there was an article on seed and seedling production in the Southern Highlands. This article is about production in the West Sepik.

The seed multiplication programme at Passi Extension Centre was started in 1978. Its aim is to supply the province with seeds from a number of high protein crops such as peanuts and beans.

In 1978, the programme was able to supply 730 kg of different kinds of seeds to schools, missions, health centres, farmers, women's clubs and D.P.I. out-stations.

From January, 1979 to September, 1979, another 127 kg of vegetable seeds were distributed.

So far, 3 out of the 7 districts in the West Sepik have a seed multiplication programme. The plan is that every D.P.I. station will start one of its own.

The extension officers encourage schools, missions, health centres and women's clubs to start their own nutrition projects by providing them with seeds and advice. In school

projects, almost all the harvest is eaten by the children during cooking demonstrations given by the provincial nutritionist and the D.P.I. nutrition worker.

People running nutrition projects are encouraged to keep the best seeds from their harvests so that they will have their own seeds to plant in future.

The nursery building at Passi Extension Centre was built in August 1979 to house fruit tree and vegetable seedlings until they are ready for permanent planting. The building protects the seedlings from heavy



Nutritionist R.D.T. Julie Numboien and Domingo Vergara beside the nursery building at Passi Extension Centre.

rain, stray animals and too much exposure to sunlight. It is 6 m wide and 10 m long. The front post is 2.5 m high and the back post is 2.0 m high.

Except for the roofing, the nursery building is made entirely of bush materials. The roofing is made of U.V. stabilized plastic sheeting which cost K73.00 including air freight from Moresby to Vanimo. This, plus K2.00 for nails, was all that was paid for materials. The nursery was built by one D.P.I. carpenter and two labourers.

The seedlings available in the nursery include jackfruit, avocado, sweet muli, giant lau lau, pink guava, cherries. and grapes.

Twenty-two avocado seedlings

Photograph: N. Birge

have been planted at the Vanimo Hospital, Baro Girls Vocational Centre and the Village Development Centre and twenty more were sent to Oksapmin for a trial planting in that area. Fifteen jackfruit seedlings were planted at Lote Community School.

The fruit tree seeds came from L.A.E.S., Keravat. Other seeds on order from L.A.E.S. are banana, mango, rambutan, mango-steen, five corner, lemon, orange, mandarin and custard apple.

There are also plans to establish an orchard plantation at the D.P.I. Provincial Experiment Station at Passi for future seed distribution in the West Sepik Province.