Plant Population in Rip-lines

Recognize the problem
Low plant population usually results in to lower than normal yields harvested. Correct plant populations play a major role to achieving high yields. In order to achieve higher yields, farmers need to plant various crops following recommended number of plants per given area (plant population).

Background
Most farmers never pay much attention to the area cultivated but mainly focus on the kilograms of seed planted. For example, 20 kilograms of maize is equivalent to 1 hectare planted but farmers may plant this over an area larger than 1 hectare. In order to achieve correct plant population, well measured fields with correct dimension need to be cultivated and correct amounts (kgs) of seed to be planted.

Management
To achieve correct plant population per hectare for selected crops in rip lines use the guides below:

- **MAIZE**: 20cm spacing in the row or 5 seeds per pace and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with 5cm of soil for a good crop emergence.
- **SOYA BEANS**: 5cm spacing in the row or 12 to 14 seeds per pace and 90cm between rows; Remember to inoculate soya bean seed before planting. Cover or backfill with only 2cm of soil for a good crop emergence.
- **SORGHUM**: 5cm spacing in the row or 12 to 14 seeds per pace and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with only 2cm of soil for a good crop emergence.
- **GROUNDNUT**: 7cm spacing in the row or 8 to 10 seeds per pace and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with 5cm of soil for a good crop emergence.
- **COWPEAS**: 7cm spacing in the row or 8 to 10 seeds per pace and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with 2cm of soil for a good emergence.
- **COTTON**: 20cm spacing in the row or 5 stations per pace and 90cm between rows. Drop a pinch of 3-4 seeds per station. Cover or backfill with very little soil or just press the seed down without backfilling.

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Zambia

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