Plant Population in Basins

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 basins use the guides below;

- **MAIZE**: Plant 4 seeds per basin. Spread the seed along the basin and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with 5cm of soil
- **SOYA BEANS**: Plant 10-12 seeds along the basin and 90cm between rows; Remember to inoculate seed before planting. Cover or backfill with only 2cm of soil for a good crop emergence.
- **SORGHUM**: Plant 10-12 seeds along the basin and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with only 2cm of soil for a good crop emergence.
- **GROUNDNUTS**: Plant 8 to 10 seeds along the basin and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with 5cm of soil for a good emergence.
- **COWPEAS**: Plant 8 to 10 seeds along the basin and 90cm between rows. Cover or backfill with 2cm of soil for a good emergence.
- **COTTON**: Plant a pinch of 3-4 seeds at both ends of the basin and 90cm between rows. 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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