

Soil Fertility & Crop Theft: changing rural dimensions and cropping patterns

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Seasonality Revisited





”To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under
the heaven; a time to be born, and
a time to die; a time to plant, and a
time to pluck up that which is
planted”

Ecclesiastes 3 : 1-2

Consider the following:

 Less reported but a major obstacle to sustainable soil fertility management and livelihood at local level is thievery—theft of grains and livestock

”The soil could grow anything but salt”




-  Fallowing impossible – population & land..
-  Manuring: decreased livestock
-  Crop residue: for fuel or animal feed
-  Chemical fertilisers:
Very expensive








No Beans in Crop Rotation -theft



Tolerated Food Theft

-  **Food sharing**
-  **Tasting or "quenching" hunger**
e.g. sweet cassava, mangoes
-  **Pilfering apples, pears, berries**

Why Stop Growing Beans?

-  Impoverishment
-  Stolen & Eaten
- fresh/green in field
-  Small-scale production
-  Conflicts;
-  Preserve community
& human security



Consequences of Bean Theft


1. Reduced soil fertility, particularly N, and thus agricultural productivity
2. Conflicts between husbands and wives at household level
3. Poor diet, and poor health
4. Households expend more money to purchase beans
5. Reduced income opportunity from growing beans

Possible role of traditional institutions to address the problem of theft

Iddir

- A voluntary association established for the purpose of mutual aid in matters of burial and community concerns. Iddir serves its members partly as a social security institution and most recently has also been engaged in community development activities.

 **Traditional institutions are in most cases, organized on spatial and community bases, cutting cross ethnic and religious boundaries.**

 **The saying “*dir biabre anbessa yasir*”, if threads unite they can be strong enough to tie a lion, is the principal under which most traditional institutions operate in Ethiopia**



Bean Intervention – testing the way forward

