Weed cover in slash and burn fields increases with reduced fallow times

Northern Laotian slash-and-burn farmers consider weeds, insufficient rainfall and rodent damage to be their most important constraints on upland rice production. Annual labour inputs for weed control will range from 140 – 190 person days per hectare of field. Average fallow periods reported from the 1950s, 1970s and 1992 were 38, 20 and 5 years respectively. Reduced fallow periods have caused a marked increase in weeding requirements.


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