



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***INTERCROPPING OF CORN AND LEGUMES WITH APPLICATION OF
CHICKEN MANURE AND CROP COMBINATION RATIOS TO INCREASE
YIELD AND QUALITY OF CORN-LEGUME FORAGE***

ALI BAGHDADI

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**By
ALI BAGHDADI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

July 2015

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Specially dedicated to:

My beloved wife Maryam



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

INTERCROPPING OF CORN AND LEGUMES WITH APPLICATION OF CHICKEN MANURE AND CROP COMBINATION RATIOS TO INCREASE YIELD AND QUALITY OF CORN-LEGUME FORAGE

By

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July 2015

Chair: Associate Professor Mohd Ridzwan A. Halim, PhD
Faculty: Agriculture

Corn silage is an important feed for intensive ruminant production but the growing of corn has relied heavily on the use of chemical fertilizer. Experiments were conducted to determine the appropriate technology of corn-legume intercropping with supplemental use of chemical, organic manure and biofertilizer. In experiment one, three species of legumes: stylo (*Stylosanthes guianensis*), soybean (*Glycine max*) and mungbean (*Vigna radiata*) were intercropped with corn to select the best legume species to use for intercropping. Results indicated that corn-soybean intercropping gave the highest mixed forage dry matter (14.10 t/ha) compared to corn-mungbean (13.22 t/ha) and corn-stylo intercropping (8.77 t/ha) ($p < 0.05$). Corn-soybean intercropping produced good quality feed in terms of the nutritive quality of forage and volatile fatty acids (VFA) of silage. Soybean contributed to increased crude protein (CP) in mixed corn-soybean forage (14.11%) in comparison with sole corn crop (10.05%), corn-mungbean (13.14%) and corn-stylo (11.28%) ($p < 0.05$). Corn-soybean intercropping gave the highest forage protein yield (1990 kg/ha) ($p < 0.05$) in comparison with corn monocrop (1415 kg/ha) and other corn-legume intercropped treatments. Higher level of CP, CP yield, leaves chlorophyll, leaf area index (LAI) and plant maturity of soybean than other legumes hence higher forage quality and DM of corn-soybean. In the second experiment, corn-soybean combinations of 75:25, 50:50 and 25:75 in addition to monocrops of corn and soybean were evaluated. The ratio of 75:25 and 50:50 recorded DM yields similar to those of monocropped corn (14.77 t/ha). Relative yield total (RYT) values of intercropping were higher than that of monocrop corn and soybean. Mixtures with 50:50 combination ratio had higher mean RYT values (1.15) ($p < 0.05$) than the other ratios. Land equivalent ratio (LER) increased with corn-soybean intercropping and the highest total LER value was recorded with 50:50 ratio (1.13). Forage quality in terms of CP (75:25 ratio 12.75%, 50:50 ratio 13.73% and 25:75 ratio 14.68%) was improved by intercropping due to higher nitrogen availability for corn in intercropping compared with its sole crop (10.83% CP). Combination ratio of 50:50 gave higher protein yield (1886.45 kg/ha) than other crop combination ratio. The third experiment was carried out to evaluate effects of 10 types of fertilizer on corn-soybean forage yield and quality. Chemical fertilizer (NPK) gave significantly higher yield and quality of forage compared to organic and biofertilizer ($p < 0.05$). Combining chemical fertilizers with chicken manure in a 50:50 ratio resulted in similar dry matter yield with the 100% NPK

treatment. This might be attributed to the gradual release of essential nutrient from chemical and chicken manure (CM) fertilizer as required by the plants at all growth time. Combinations of NPK and CM resulted in increased plant height; crop growth rate (CGR) and LAI compared to CM alone but was similar to 100% NPK application. Similarly, CP content was not significantly different among 100% NPK (14.48%) and 50% CM+50% NPK (14.55%). Treatments with application of biofertilizer and combination of biofertilizer with NPK or CM treatments gave higher values of ARA compared to sole chemical and sole organic manure fertilizers. Overall, evidences recorded from this study prove that corn-soybean intercrops could increase forage quantity and quality, produce higher total protein yield, decrease requirements for protein supplements and chemical fertilizer compared to the corn monoculture with a 50:50 corn-soybean combination ratio and combination of chicken manure and chemical fertilizer.



Abstraktesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuh keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENANAMAN SELINGAN JAGUNG DAN POKOK KEKACANG DENGAN
APLIKASI BAJA TAHI AYAM DAN NISBAH
KOMBINASI TANAMAN UNTUK MENINGKATKAN
HASIL DAN KUALITI FORAJ JAGUNG-KEKACANG**

Oleh

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Pengerusi: Prof. Madya Mohd Ridzwan A. Halim, PhD
Fakulti: Pertanian

Silaj jagung adalah makanan ternakan yang penting bagi pengeluaran ternakan ruminan. Walau bagaimanapun, pembajaan dalam penanaman jagung sangat bergantung kepada penggunaan baja kimia. Beberapa eksperimen telah dijalankan bagi menentukan teknologi yang sesuai untuk penanaman selingan antara jagung dengan kekacang dan kaedah pembajaan menggunakan baja kimia, baja organik dan baja bio. Bagi eksperimen pertama, tiga spesies kekacang iaitu stylo (*Stylosanthes guianensis*), soya (*Glycine max*) dan kacang hijau (*Vigna radiata*) telah diuji bagi menentukan spesies terbaik untuk digunakan dalam penanaman selingan bersama jagung. Hasil kajian mendapati tanaman selingan jagung dengan soya telah meningkatkan berat kering foraj campuran (14.10 t/ha) berbanding tanaman selingan jagung dengan kacang hijau (13.22 t/ha) dan tanaman selingan jagung dengan stylo (8.77 t/ha ($p < 0.05$)). Berdasarkan keputusan eksperimen ini, tanaman selingan jagung dengan soya telah dibuktikan dapat menghasilkan foraj yang berkualiti tinggi. Soya telah menyumbang kepada kenaikan protein kasar (CP) foraj (kandungan CP 14.11%) berbanding foraj dari tanaman jagung tunggal (10.05%), tanaman selingan jagung dengan kacang hijau (13.14%) dan tanaman selingan jagung dengan stylo (11.28%) ($p < 0.05$). Penanaman selingan jagung dengan soya adalah yang terbaik kerana telah menunjukkan peningkatan terhadap hasil protein foraj iaitu sebanyak 1990 kg/ha berbanding tanaman jagung tunggal (1415 kg/ha) dan kombinasi tanaman selingan yang lain. Paras CP, hasil CP, klorofil daun, luas permukaan daun LAI) yang lebih tinggi dan kematangan tanaman soya yang lebih tinggi berbanding legum lain, menjadikan kualiti foraj dan DM jagung-soya yang lebih tinggi. Dalam eksperimen kedua, beberapa kombinasi nisbah jagung dengan soya telah dijalankan bagi menentukan kombinasi terbaik untuk melaksanakan penanaman selingan. Kombinasi tersebut ialah 75:25, 50:50 dan 25:75. Penanaman jagung tunggal dan penanaman soya tunggal digunakan sebagai rawatan kawalan. Kombinasi tanaman selingan telah memberikan kesan yang bererti kepada sifat-sifat fisiologi pokok, berat kering hasil, dan kualiti nutrient dalam foraj dan silaj. Nisbah jagung:soya 75:25 dan 50:50 direkodkan memiliki berat kering hasil yang menyamai berat kering hasil dari penanaman jagung tunggal (14.77 t/ha). Jumlah hasil relatif (RYT) bagi penanaman selingan adalah lebih tinggi berbanding tanaman jagung tunggal dan tanaman soya tunggal. Kombinasi nisbah jagung:soya 50:50 memberikan

nilai RYT paling tinggi (1.15) ($p < 0.05$) daripada kombinasi nisbah yang lain. Nisbah setara tanah (LER) juga telah meningkat bagi penanaman selingan dan LER tertinggi (1.13) direkodkan daripada nisbah jagung:soya 50:50. Bagi penentuan kualiti foraj, protein kasar foraj daripada penanaman selingan adalah lebih baik daripada penanaman secara tunggal kerana kedapatan nitrogen untuk jagung lebih tinggi dalam penanaman selingan. Nilai protein kasar foraj bagi nisbah 75:25 ialah 12.75%, nisbah 50:50 ialah 13.73% dan nisbah 25:75 ialah 14.68% manakala bagi penanaman jagung secara tunggal ialah 10.83%. Nisbah jagung:soya 50:50 berjaya memberikan hasil protein tertinggi (1886.45 kg/ha) berbanding kombinasi nisbah yang lain. Eksperimen ketiga dijalankan bagi menilai kesan 10 jenis rawatan baja terhadap hasil dan kualiti foraj jagung-soya. Hasil kajian mendapati baja kimia (NPK) memberikan hasil dan kualiti foraj lebih tinggi berbanding baja organik dan baja bio ($p < 0.05$). Kombinasi baja kimia dan baja organik dengan nisbah 50:50 menghasilkan berat kering hasil yang menyamai berat kering hasil dari rawatan 100% NPK. Ini berkemungkinan disifatkan kepada perlepasan nutrien secara beransur-ansur seperti yang diperlukan oleh tanaman sepanjang masa tumbesaran daripada baja kimia dan baja tahi ayam. Kombinasi NPK dan (CM) juga menghasilkan tinggi pokok, kadar pertumbuhan tanaman (CGR) dan indeks luas daun (LAI) yang lebih tinggi berbanding rawatan menggunakan CM sahaja. Keputusan CGR dan LAI dari kombinasi NPK dengan CM juga tidak menunjukkan perbezaan bererti dengan rawatan 100% NPK. Kandungan protein kasar (CP) turut didapati tidak berbeza antara rawatan 100% NPK (14.48%) dan kombinasi NPK dan CM dengan nisbah 50:50 (14.55%). Namun, nilai ARA adalah lebih tinggi dalam rawatan tiada penggunaan baja, baja bio sahaja, dan kombinasi baja bio dengan NPK atau CM berbanding penggunaan baja kimia dan baja organik semata-mata. Secara keseluruhannya, kajian ini membuktikan bahawa penanaman selingan jagung dengan kecacang mampu menghasilkan kualiti dan kuantiti foraj yang tinggi, meningkatkan jumlah hasil protein, mengurangkan keperluan untuk makanan tambahan protein dan mengurangkan penggunaan baja kimia seperti yang sering diamalkan dalam penanaman jagung tunggal dengan nisbah jagung:soya 50:50 dan kombinasi baja kimia dan baja tahi ayam adalah yang terbaik daripada kombinasi yang lain berdasarkan peningkatan hasil silaj, hasil protein dan nilai CP.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 30 July 2015 to conduct the final examination of Ali Baghdadi on his thesis entitled "Intercropping of Corn and Legumes with Application of Chicken Manure and Crop Combination Ratios to Increase Yield and Quality of Corn-Legume Forage" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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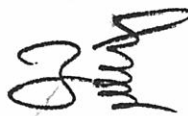
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
	ABSTRACT	i
	ABSTRAK	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
	APPROVAL	vi
	DECLARATION	viii
	LIST OF TABLES	xiii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvii
	CHAPTER	
1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	3
	2.1 Intercropping system	3
	2.2 Benefit of intercropping	3
	2.3 Potential problems with intercropping	4
	2.4 Compatible crops	4
	2.5 Crop combination	4
	2.6 Measuring yield advantages	5
	2.6.1 Land equivalent ratios (LER)	5
	2.6.2 Competition model of de Wit (1960)	6
	2.7 Forage corn	7
	2.8 Legumes	8
	2.8.1 Soybean (<i>Glycine max</i>)	8
	2.8.2 Mungbean (<i>Vigna radiata</i>)	9
	2.8.3 Stylo (<i>Stylosanthes guianensis</i>)	10
	2.9 Photosynthesis	11
	2.10 Forage quality analysis	11
	2.11 Corn-legume intercropping and forage yield and quality	12
	2.12 Corn silage, quality and fermentation characteristics	14
	2.13 Soil fertilizer and crop performance	15
	2.13.1 Chemical fertilizer	16
	2.13.2 Organic fertilizer	17
	2.13.3 Biofertilizers for sustainability	18
	2.14 Effect of integrated nutrient management on crop productivity	19
	2.15 Biological nitrogen fixation (BNF) in cereal-legume intercropping systems	20
3	EVALUATION OF THREELEGUME SPECIES INTERCROPPED WITH CORN	21
	3.1 Introduction	21
	3.2 Materials and methods	22

3.2.1	Experimental location, climate and soil	22
3.2.2	Experiment design and treatments	25
3.2.3	Agronomic practices	26
3.2.4	Plant sampling, plant growth, yield and yield components	26
3.2.5	Nutritive quality measurements	27
3.2.6	Silage preparation	28
3.2.7	Nutritive value in silage	28
3.2.8	Determination of volatile fatty acids in silage	28
3.2.9	Determination of ammonia-N in silage	28
3.2.10	Statistical analysis	29
3.3	Results	30
3.3.1	Yield and dry matter yield of corn-legume intercropping	30
3.3.2	Plant growth characteristics	31
3.3.3	Nutritive quality of corn and legume species	33
3.3.4	Nutritive quality in silage	36
3.3.5	Volatile fatty acids in silage	37
3.4	Discussion	38
3.5	Conclusion	41
4	PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY OF FORAGE CORN INTERCROPPED WITH SOYBEAN UNDER DIFFERENT CROP COMBINATION RATIO	42
4.1	Introduction	42
4.2	Materials and methods	43
4.2.1	Experimental location, climate and soil	43
4.2.2	Experiment design and treatments	45
4.2.3	Agronomic practices	46
4.2.4	Plant sampling, plant growth, yield and yield components	46
4.2.5	Land equivalent ratio (LER)	46
4.2.6	Competition indices computed	46
4.2.7	Competition indices computed	47
4.2.8	Silage preparation	47
4.2.9	Nutritive value in silage	47
4.2.10	Determination of volatile fatty acids in silage	47
4.2.11	Determination of ammonia-N in silage	47
4.2.12	Statistical analysis	47
4.3	Results	47
4.3.1	Dry matter yield and relative yield of corn-soybean intercropping	47
4.3.2	Plant growth characteristics	49

	4.3.3	Land equivalent ratio (LER)	52
	4.3.4	Nutritive quality in silage	52
	4.3.5	Nutritive quality in silage	53
	4.3.6	Volatile fatty acids in silage	54
	4.4	Discussion	56
	4.5	Conclusion	59
5		EFFECT OF CHEMICAL, ORGANIC AND BIOFERTILIZERS ON YIELD AND QUALITY OF FORAGE CORN INTERCROPPED WITH SOYBEAN	60
	5.1	Introduction	60
	5.2	Materials and methods	61
	5.2.1	Experimental location, climate and soil	61
	5.2.2	Experiment design and treatments	61
	5.2.3	Agronomic practices	63
	5.2.4	Plant sampling, plant growth, yield and yield components	63
	5.2.5	Nutritive quality measurements	64
	5.2.6	Silage preparation	64
	5.2.7	Nutritive value in silage	64
	5.2.8	Determination of volatile fatty acids in silage	64
	5.2.9	Determination of ammonia-N in silage	64
	5.2.10	Determination of biological nitrogen fixation (BNF)	64
	5.2.11	Statistical analysis	65
	5.3	Results	65
	5.3.1	Yield and DM yield of corn-legume intercropping	65
	5.3.2	Plant growth characteristics	67
	5.3.3	Corn-legume forage nutritive quality	69
	5.3.4	Nutritive quality in silage	72
	5.3.5	Volatile fatty acids in silage	73
	5.3.6	Biological nitrogen fixation (BNF)	75
	5.4	Discussion	77
	5.5	Conclusion	81
6		SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	82
	6.1	Summary	82
	6.2	General conclusion	82
	6.3	Recommendations for future research	83
		REFERENCES	85
		BIODATA OF STUDENT	116
		LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	117

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page	
3.1	Soil physical and chemical properties of the experimental site (0-30 cm depth)	25
3.2	List of treatments	25
3.3	Mean Squares from analysis of variance of dry matter (DM) yield of corn and legumes in corn-legume intercrops	30
3.4	Dry matter (DM) yield of corn in monocrop compared to intercrops with grain and forage legumes	30
3.5	Mean Squares from analysis of variance of growth, development and leaf gas exchange parameters of corn in corn-legume intercrops	31
3.6	Growth, development and leaf gas exchange parameters of corn in monocrop compared to intercrops with grain and forage legumes	32
3.7	Mean Squares from analysis of variance of growth, development and leaf gas exchange parameters of legumes in corn-legume intercrops	32
3.8	Growth, development and leaf gas exchange parameters of legumes intercropped with corn	33
3.9	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of whole plants of corn and legumes in corn-legume intercrops	34
3.10	Nutritive quality of whole plants of corn and legumes	34
3.11	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of corn-legume mix forage in corn-legume intercrops	35
3.12	Nutritive quality of corn-legume forage compared with sole corn forage	35
3.13	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of corn-legume silage in corn-legume intercrops	36
3.14	Nutritive quality of silage from corn monocrop compared to intercrops with legumes	37
3.15	Mean Squares from analysis of variance volatile fatty acids of corn-legume silage in corn-legume intercrops	37
3.16	Silage volatile fatty acids (VFA) profile of corn in monocrop compared to intercrops with legumes	38
4.1	Soil physical and chemical properties of the experimental site (0-30 cm depth)	45
4.2	Mean Squares from analysis of variance dry matter (DM) yield and relative yield (RY) of corn, soybean and total under different crop combination ratios in corn-soybean intercrops	48
4.3	Dry matter yield and relative yield (RY) of sole and intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by crop combination ratio	48

4.4	Mean Squares from analysis of variance growth parameters and land equivalent ratio (LER) of corn and soybean under different crop combination ratios in corn-soybean intercrops	49
4.5	Growth parameters and land equivalent ratio (LER) of sole and intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by crop combination ratio	50
4.6	Mean Squares from analysis of variance leaf gas exchange parameters of corn and soybean under different crop combination ratios in corn-soybean intercrops	51
4.7	Leaf gas exchange parameters of sole and intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by crop combination ratio	51
4.8	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of corn-soybean forage under different crop combination ratios in corn-soybean intercrops	52
4.9	Forage nutritive quality of sole and intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by crop combination ratio	53
4.10	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of corn-soybean silage under different crop combination ratios in corn-soybean intercrops	54
4.11	Silage nutritive value quality of sole and intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by crop combination ratio	54
4.12	Mean Squares from analysis of variance volatile fatty acids (VFA) of corn-soybean silage under different crop combination ratios in corn-soybean intercrops	55
4.13	Silage volatile fatty acids (VFA) of sole and intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by crop combination ratio	55
5.1	Soil physical and chemical properties of the experimental site (0-30 cm depth)	61
5.2	List of treatments	62
5.3	Chicken manure analysis	63
5.4	Mean Squares from analysis of variance dry matter yield of corn, soybean and total forage under integrated nutrient management in corn-soybean intercrops	66
5.5	Forage dry matter (DM) yield of intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by integrated nutrient management	66
5.6	Mean Squares from analysis of variance plant growth parameters of corn and soybean under integrated nutrient management in corn-soybean intercrops	67
5.7	Plant growth parameters of intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by integrated nutrient management	68
5.8	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of corn-soybean forage under integrated nutrient management in corn-soybean intercrops	69

5.9	Forage nutritive quality of intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by integrated nutrient management	70
5.10	Mean Squares from analysis of variance nutritive quality of corn-soybean silage under integrated nutrient management in corn-soybean intercrops	73
5.11	Silage nutritive quality of intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by integrated nutrient management	73
5.12	Mean Squares from analysis of variance volatile fatty acids of corn-soybean silage under integrated nutrient management in corn-soybean intercrops	74
5.13	Silage volatile fatty acids (VFA) of intercropped corn and soybean as influenced by integrated nutrient management	75
5.14	Effect of chemical, organic and biofertilizer on acetylene reduction assay (ARA) of corn and soybean roots	76

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	de wit's 1960 graph (Adapted from Ann et al., 1996)	7
3.1	Map of the field experiment at Field 2, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia. A yellow arrow shows the experimental plot location. Picture was downloaded from the Google's earth website http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html	23
3.2	Mean Monthly Rainfall for Year 2013	23
3.3	Mean Monthly Minimum and Maximum Temperature for Year 2013	24
3.4	Mean Monthly Relative Humidity for Year 2013	24
3.5	Plot layout	26
3.6	Fermentation analysis flow diagram	29
4.1	Mean Monthly Rainfall for Year 2014	43
4.2	Mean Monthly Minimum and Maximum Temperature for Year 2014	44
4.3	Mean Monthly Relative Humidity for Year 2014	44
4.4	Plot layout	45
4.5	Graph of relative yield of corn-soybean combination ratio	49
5.1	Plot layout	62
5.2	Acetylene reduction method to measure nitrogenase enzyme activity	65

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADF	Acid detergent fiber
ADL	Acid detergent lignin
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
ARA	Acetylene reduction assay
BF	Biofertilizer
CGR	Crop growth rate
CM	Chicken manure
CP	Crude protein
CV	Coefficient of variance
DM	Dry matter
DMY	Dry matter yield
DMD	Dry matter digestibility
FYM	Farm yard manure
GA	Ground area
GC	Gas chromatography
INM	Integrated nutrient management
LA	Leaf area
LAI	Leaf area index
LER	Land equivalent ratio
LSD	Least Significant Difference
MOP	Muriate of potash
NDF	Neutral detergent fiber
NIRS	Near infrared reflectance spectroscopy
PGPB	Plant growth promoting bacteria
PGPR	Plant growth promoting rhizobacteria
PM	Poultry manure
R ²	Coefficient of determination
RCBD	Randomized complete block design
RY	Relative yield
RYT	Relative yield total
TSP	Triple super phosphate
WSC	Water soluble carbohydrate

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Forage from corn has high value for food, high yield capability, short-growth period, and is suitable as forage and feed for poultry and livestock and it is gaining an essential position in the cropping system (Saif et al., 2003). Feed products from corn are characterized by high-energy content, but relatively low content of crude protein with low biological value (Summers, 2001; Mlynár et al., 2004). The low protein concentration in forage corn can be augmented simply by incorporating protein-rich ingredients such as soybean (Choukan, 1997). Intercropping of corn and legume is considered best for subsistence food production system (Tsubo et al., 2005; Egbe and Adeyemo, 2006). Corn-legume intercrops could substantially increase forage quantity and quality and decrease requirements for protein supplements as compared with the corn monocultures (Liu et al., 2006; Javanmard et al., 2009).

Alternatively, intercropping system is very suitable for organic production because these cropping systems ensure more efficient use of land, greater yield stability, greater diversity of produce and better soil and water conservation (Oljaca et al., 2000; Dolijanovic et al., 2007). The intercropping system greatly contributes to crop production by its effective utilization of resources, as compared to the sole cropping system (Inal et al., 2007).

Successful intercropping of corn and soybean has been reported since soybean is often used to increase the typically low protein content of corn silage. Substantial information has been obtained on the corn-soybean model (Geren et al., 2008). However, there are significant gaps in the literature regarding the variability among different species of legume crops. Intercropping corn with pea, pigeonpea and soybean was good strategy to significantly increase corn productivity (Manna et al., 2003). This suggests that selecting intercrops that are best adapted to the growing environment would have the most positive effect on the companion crop by minimizing competition (Ahmad et al., 2014).

Different crop combination ratio for cereal-legume intercropping have been practiced by many researchers. Competition among mixtures is thought to be the major aspect affecting yield as compared to solitary cropping of cereals. Species or cultivar selections, seeding ratios, and competition capability within mixtures may affect the growth of the species used in intercropping systems. A number of indices such as LER, crop combination ratio, real yield loss, financial advantage, and intercropping benefits have been proposed to describe competition within and economic advantages of intercropping systems (Carr et al., 2004; Banik et al., 2006; Agegnehu et al., 2006; Dhima et al., 2007). Forage corn responds differently to crop combination ratio under

different environmental and cultural factors, which influence corn forage yield and quality (Carpici et al., 2010).

Corn productivity in tropical low external input systems is usually limited by low soil fertility because crop uptake leads to a gradual depletion of soil nutrient stocks. Since the use of chemical fertilizers is undesirable, the management of the fertilizer of these soils depends primarily on low cost processes based on nutrient recycling (Figueiredo et al., 2009). The main processes that may contribute to this are biological nitrogen fixation (BNF) and nutrient recycling through organic fertilization. Biological nitrogen fixation may contribute to corn growth and yield by direct fixation in corn, or through the use of legume plants either as crops in rotation or intercropped with corn. Either way, BNF can usually be considered as long-term sustainable nitrogen source for low external input corn production systems (Figueiredo et al., 2009).

Being a fast-growing plant with C₄ photosynthesis, corn requires plentiful supply of the essential elements nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, which traditionally have been obtained by inputs of chemical fertilizers to replenish soil nitrogen and phosphorus, resulting in high costs and environmental pollution (Dai et al., 2004; Awodun et al., 2007). The harmful effects on the environment of heavy use of nitrogen fertilizer are becoming more evident. There is a need for sustainable farming, which maintains soil fertility by using renewable resources easily and cheaply available on the farm. The supply of other nutrients such as phosphorus can also be enhanced with the use of biofertilizers (Mayer et al., 2008; Oliveira et al., 2009). Organic fertilizers including farmyard manure, chicken manure, sheep manure, and biofertilizer may be used for crop production as a substitute of chemical fertilizers (Khan et al., 2005). Organic fertilizers improve soil fertility without leaving any residual effects in the soil and are much cheaper as compared to chemical fertilizers (Chater and Gasser, 1970).

Application of organic manure alone to sustain cropping has been reported to be inadequate due to their relatively low nutrient contents and their inability to provide a sufficient amount of nutrients. Integrated nutrient management approaches, where inorganic and organic fertilizers are combined, have been suggested as an efficient approach for crop production (Palm et al., 1997).

Therefore, this study was conducted with the following objectives:

- 1) To identify the best legume species to use for intercropping with corn.
- 2) To determine nutritive quality, physiological traits and performance of forage corn intercropped with legume under different crop combination ratios.
- 3) To determine the effect of chemical, organic and biofertilizers on improvement of quality and quantity in forage corn intercropped with legume.
- 4) To quantify biological nitrogen fixation (BNF) by legumes intercropped with corn.

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