

Increasing Cacao Production through Formative Propping: An Innovation in Cultural Practices

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Abstract

The study was conducted to investigate the outcome of formative propping to the production of cacao as an innovation to the existing and traditional cultural practices. It made use of a case study approach where a half hectare land was used as demo farm and introduced with the formative propping as innovation in cultural practice for cacao production. The area, located in Villa Hermosa, Wangan, Calinan, Davao City, was subjected to the usual traditional procedures of cultural practices in raising cacao from cultivation, variety selection, planting, shading, weeding, fertilizer application, pruning, pest and disease control, to harvesting and other postharvest practices. The only difference is that on top of the above cultural practices, formative propping was introduced and integrated into the farm practices to increase the yield. Constant naturalistic observation was conducted to trace the improvement and response of the cacao plant towards formative propping. Observations were then recorded and analyzed through field notes. Based on the results of the study, it was observed that given the right amount of fertilizer and performance of other cultural practices, formative propping can increase the production of cacao up to 40%–50% per hectare per year. Formative propping can also minimize the pruning activity, reduce soil evaporation, maintain soil fertility, produce healthy cacao leaves, minimize the practice of weeding beneath the cacao farm, maintain the temperature beneath the canopy, and help ease in doing other cultural practices inside the cacao farm. If the innovation is adopted by farmers, the worldwide shortage of cacao may be addressed without necessary adding cost in the inputs.