

Conservation Farming Unit

Hoe CF: Land Preparation and Basal Dressing



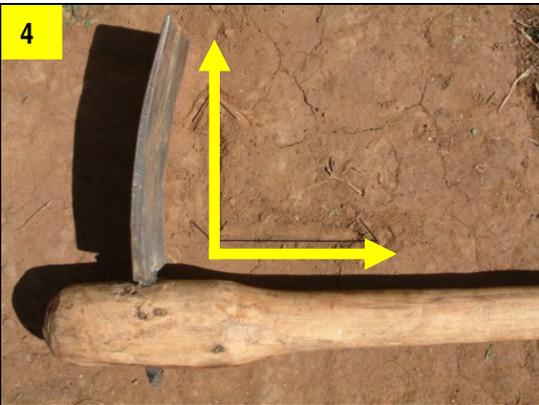
Equipment Needed: Chaka hoe, or strong weeding hoe with narrow blade, blue and white fertiliser cups, Teren rope, 90cm row sticks, pegs.



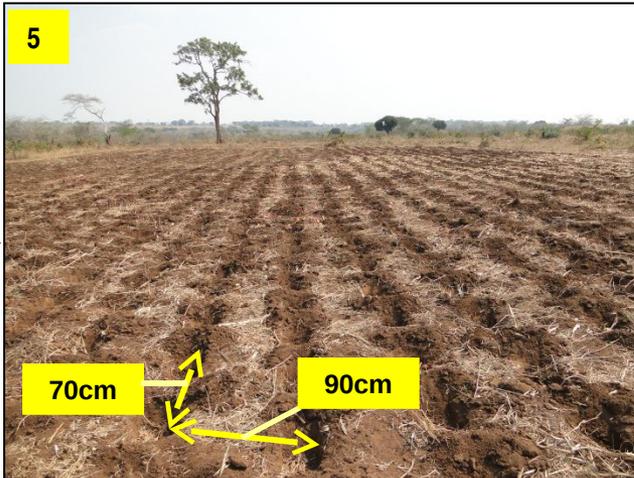
Residues. Don't burn. Erosion is reduced and run-off is reduced so rainwater is held in field.



Termites. Harvest residues and add organic matter to soil.



Chaka Hoe: Blade must be at right angle to shaft and firm. Learn how to fit blade and swing hoe properly.



Digging Basins: 90cms across row between centres of basins. 70cms between centres of basins in the row



Depth & Length: 20cms deep to break pans. 30cms long (foot length) to accommodate different crop seeds. Width of Chaka blade.



7
Early Land Preparation: Start as early as possible in season. Work for **2 hours** each morning only. Make sure whole family knows the job.



8
Finish Land Preparation: Finish by July or August before the hot season when work becomes harder. Be ready for the first planting rains.



9
Applying Basal Fertilisers: Fertiliser is expensive. Always use No. **7 blue cup**. For good yields scatter **2 cups** in bottom of basin. **For Manure** use **1 double handful** per basin. Manure is better than fertiliser.



10
Liming: If you have grown Maize for many years your soils will be acid. Apply **1 cup** of lime with the basal. Always use the **No 8 white cup**. This is 4bags/ha. Read CF Handbooks about liming.



11
Backfilling Basins: Backfill basins with hoe blade leaving only small hollow about **5cms deep**.



12 **Plan ahead for good results**
Get Ready Early: **Coop fertiliser and seed may come late**. Buy some **for cash** so you can plant on time. Don't rely on Maize alone. What if the rains are poor? What about planting Groundnuts, Soya or Cowpeas?