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| **Abstract / Content summary** | Manus Island in Papua New Guinea is a food insecure province with low-income level and low economic activities at provincial, district and household levels. Sago starch is a staple food that provide food security for the island province. Manus Island has a rich natural sago palm resource. A pre-feasibility study was conducted in three sample locations – Maraman, Laues and Wireh representing the main island of Manus between 17 – 24 September 2022. The Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) method was used to assess the utilization of sago palm for food security and for cash sale at the local markets in Lorengau town.
It is estimated that there is 2,000 ha of natural sago forest resource on Manus Island and are located along the coast. At a conservative dry starch yield of one ton/ha/yr, the existing sago resources has a potential to produce 2,000 ton of dry sago starch per year. Currently, utilization of the sago palm resource is confined to close proximity to villages and hamlets. It is estimated that only 10% of is utilized as staple with limited trading. Large areas are left untouched and underutilized. Traditional and inefficient processing techniques have greatly impaired sago starch productivity in Manus. There are 5-6 folk varieties identified by the locals, namely pao, pamat, pomolou, nduri and amoi. All are claimed to be high in starch yield. The average starch yield of 32% is lower than those of cultivated sago palms in Indonesia and Malaysia (av 40% wet starch). Nonetheless, higher yields are expected if these palms are grown under better light condition and growing environments. Most varieties are reasonably high starch yielding. To improve sago starch yield and income on Manus Island, a sago value chain is proposed through increased sago starch production and marketing.
Key words: Food, Manus, Sago, Value Chain, Yield |
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