



Can home gardens feed the world? The role of home gardens in urban food security and livelihoods in Ghana

Patrick Opoku, Ralitsha Alhassan, Dorcas Peggy Somuah, Dorothy Asabea Opoku and Yvonne Yemoteley Yemoh

Introduction

In Ghana the benefits and challenges of home gardens are poorly understood and documented. The purpose of the study is 1) Identify the types of trees species and food crops preferred for planting in home gardens 2) To assess whether these trees and food crops make any significant contribution to household income and food security and 3) To identify the challenges affecting the sustainability of home gardens in urban landscape.

Methods

- Case study approach
- Two study communities selected in Ghana
- Interviews with 60 households
- Data analysis using SPSS
- Inferential statistics

Results

Table 1. Types of food crops preferred in home gardens

Food crops	Goaso	Dechem
	Percent (%)	Percent (%)
Tomatoes	3.3	6.7
Garden egg	3.3	6.7
Pineapple	6.7	
Plantain	23.3	16.7
Cassava	13.3	
Cocoyam	-	3.3
Maize	13.3	30
Mixed crop	3.3	16.7
Others	6.7	-
Banana	13.3	-
Watermelon	6.7	-
Legumes	3.3	-
Yam	3.3	3.3
Total	100	100

Table 2. Types of tree species preferred in home gardens

Tree species	Trade/local name	Goaso	Dechem
		Percent (%)	Percent (%)
<i>Amacodium occidentale</i>	Cashew	6.7	-
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Neem	10	6.7
<i>Cedrela odorata</i>	Cedrela	6.7	16.7
<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Orange	10	6.7
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Coconut	6.7	10
<i>Elaeis guineensis</i>	oil palm	6.7	16.7
<i>Magnifera indica</i>	Mango	16.7	10
<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Moringa	6.7	16.7
<i>Persea americana</i>	Avocado	10	10
<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Gauva	3.3	-
<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Teak	-	6.7
<i>Terminalia catappa</i>	Indian almond/nut	10	-
<i>Theobroma cacao</i>	Cocoa	3.3	-
Total		100.0	100.0

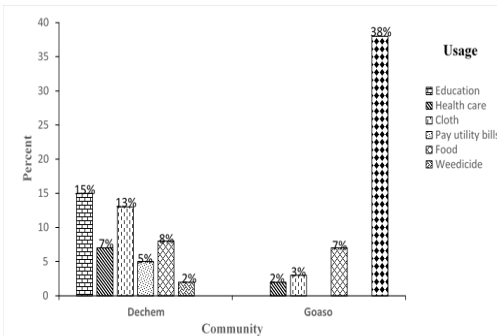


Figure 1: Usage of income from home gardens

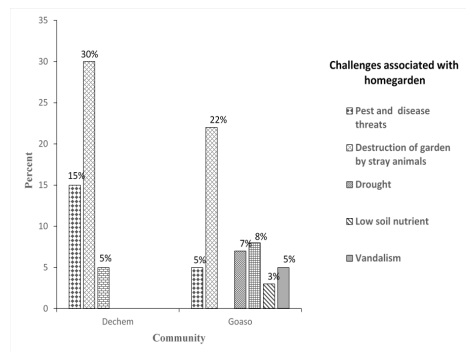


Figure 2: Challenges associated with the maintenance of home garden

Conclusions

- Home gardens contribute significantly to household income and food security in Ghana.
- However, several challenges needs to be address in order for the benefits of home gardens to be fully realized
- These include the need to check drought through harvesting of rain water for irrigation in home gardens,
- Control of pest, diseases and vandalism in home gardens
- Improving soil fertility through the use of biochar and compost

