Cover Crops

Rehabilitating the Soil during Dry Season

Cover crops are creeping and bushy plants with dense vegetative growth, grown mainly to cover and protect soil.

Benefits

✓ Provide large quantities of nitrogen. Legumes are recommended to be used as cover crops.

✓ Increase soil’s organic matter content up to 30 tons/ha., thereby improving topsoil depth, water-holding capacity, nutrient content, friability and soil texture.

✓ Shade the soil for keeping the soil temperature as much as 10°C lower than uncovered soils. Therefore microorganisms remain active and organic matter is preserved.

✓ Dense foliage of cover crops protects soil from wind and water erosion.

✓ Provide human food and additional source of income.

✓ Help sustain garden plots during dry months when other crops are hard to grow.

Instruction in Sowing the Seeds

1. Using a dibble, make holes (1/2 in deep, 1 ft apart) between hills and rows.
2. Sow 2-3 seeds of tapilan (rice bean) or paayap (cowpea) and cover with soil.