

Cassava Farming & Gari Processing Method in Nigeria

by [Steve Olorun-Ni](#)

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Cassava farming is one of the most popular farming in Africa.

The reason is simple; Cassava is an essential raw material for foods in our continent.

If you are a lover of Nigerian food, then you must be familiar with the popular “Eba” or “Gari” which is popularly consumed by almost every tribe in Nigeria.

Today, cassava farming and processing is giving so many people the grace to earn decent living and that’s why we’re going to be teaching you how to start your own cassava business.

Let’s get started by briefing you about the history of cassava farming in Nigeria

Introduction to Cassava Farming in Nigeria

As early as 1667 the planting and cultivation of cassava as began in Nigeria. This move was credited to the Portuguese explorers and slaves from Brazil and the West Indies who have landed in Nigeria.

By the year 1890s, the systematic cultivation of cassava was becoming popular in Nigeria

According to our research, the above stated slaves (from Brazil, West Indies and Sierra Leone) who knew how to process crop to food were living in Lagos, Badagry, Abeokuta, Ijebu, etc. These people influenced the widely consumption of the cassava products, hence, demand for processed cassava (Garri, fufu, cassava flour, also known as lafun) increased

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In today Nigeria, aside rice, beans, and yam; garri is one food that most family in Nigeria can't do without. If it's not been prepared and taken with their favorite soups, then it is been taken inform of "cassava flake" in which some Nigerians do enjoy taking with sugar, milk, and groundnut; to sustain hunger, whereas some people take it because they love and enjoy the tastes.

Other Products of Cassava

Excluding garri, Cassava can be processed into other food and items like Fufu, Starch, wheat flour or cassava flour, animal feeds, commercial caramel, and a lot more.

So you see, cassava business no doubt could be a very lucrative [agricultural business](#) in Nigeria to start, which is easy (because cassava could be harvested after

9–18 month of planting) and It could be planted alone or in association with many other crops, like [maize](#), groundnuts,[vegetables](#), and [rice](#).

Aside from selling your garri in Nigeria, you can also export it to major African countries. But in this article, we will be looking at marketing your Garri in Nigeria (because that's the easiest way to start your cassava farming)

In this article, I will be writing a step by step guide on how to start up Cassava farming and Garri processing Business in Nigeria.

Steps to Be Taking While Starting Cassava Farming



1. **Select a Good Site for Planting Your Cassava;**

The first step you need to take before planting your cassava is to select a perfect land.

You should look for an area that is endowed with good soil texture because the best soil for growing cassava is deep loamy soil.

Loamy soils are the best because they are rich in nutrients, low in gravel, are easy to work or till and can retain water well.

Select an area with flat or gently sloping land. Do not select Steep slopes, Valleys and depression areas because they are easily eroded, get waterlogged quickly and do not allow cassava roots to develop well.

It is also advisable to know about the history of the site, that is to know what was planted previously in the land or if the land is a virgin land.

Also when looking for a land, you might be looking for an area with thick vegetation cover.

If you did not find a fertile land for your cassava plantation, take these steps to improve the nutrients in the soil;

- Add organic or manure or Inorganic fertilizers such as NPK to your farm.
- Practices mulching; (Mulch cassava seedbeds) this involves covering the soil surface with plant materials.
- Plant cassava in association with other crops such as maize, rice, vegetables and Legumes, like cowpea and groundnuts. They are particularly good intercrop because these plants make and release nutrients into the soil.

2. Select the Best Cassava Variety to Plant for Your Cassava Farming in Nigeria:

In the year 1954 modern research on cassava started in Nigeria at the FDAR (Focus Data Action and Response), Ibadan, south west Nigeria.

However, even before then, there were many cassava varieties in Nigeria. These cassava varieties varied in their tuber yields and general tolerance to pests and diseases.

In around 1967 the modern researches have led the country to have other improved varieties which were named; 60506, 60444, 60447 etc.

Few years later (1972) there was a bacterial outbreak which was known as Cassava Bacterial Blight (CBB). This attacked the cassava farms in Nigeria and only 60306 variety and few others were able to survive the disease.

The research work at [The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture \(IITA\)](#) later identified improved varieties which were released after 1976.

These new cassava clones (varieties) were named; TMS 30110, TMS 30572, TMS 300017, TMS 30555, TMS 30001, TMS 4(2)1425, TMS 30337, etc

Nigerian cassava farmers preferred these improved varieties because of their high yields, earlier maturity and suppression of weeds, though these new cassava varieties are different in their resistance to cassava diseases and pests such as; Cassava Mealybug (CMB), Cassava Mosaic Virus (CMV), Cassava Green Spider Mite (CGM), Cassava Anthracnose Disease (CAD) etc.

To gain more in your Cassava farming and Garri processing [Business in Nigeria](#); you should make a careful selection of your cassava variety to avoid loss.

Qualities of the best cassava varieties are those that are mostly preferred by consumers, they grow fast, gives good yields, store well in the soil and are tolerant and resistant to major pests, and diseases.

What you should look at for when selecting your cassava varieties for your cassava farm are;

- **Cassava varieties with high dry matter and good food quality.** Cassava with high dry matter and food quality are good for your cassava business because the dry matter is mainly starch and a little bit of fiber. The percentage of dry matter in the roots determines the quantity and quality of the products obtained after the roots are processed. You should seek for a cassava varieties that bulks (that is the swelling of the storage roots as they are filled with stored food early): the cassava varieties that bulk early are better and are able to make up for losses in storage root yield which might be an impact of weed competition, leaf-feeding pests, and disease .
- **Cassava varieties that are tolerant to weeds, pests, and diseases:** when looking for perfect cassava varieties, you should select varieties that are tolerant and resistant to diseases, pests, and weeds. This is because adaptable varieties do branch early, low, and often. Such varieties are able to expand a lot of branches and leaves rapidly to shade the ground and prevent weeds from growing vigorously and become a problem.
- **Choose cassavas varieties that are edible.** Starting your cassava farming in Nigeria, you should look out for the cassava varieties which are edible; these are the varieties which their cassava storage roots can be cooked without processing.

The non-edible ones are referred to as bitter cassava while the edible ones are referred to as sweet cassava.

- And lastly **seek cassava varieties that have a ground storage capacity without getting spoilt, damaged or decayed till the harvesting time.**

Remember that when you plant the best varieties of cassava, your production will definitely be high and also there will be maximum income.

For easier choice, bellow are some of the best performing cassava varieties in Nigeria and their codes (names).

Comparative performance of early and recent improved cassava varieties of IITA in southwestern Nigeria

Variety	Root yield (t/ha)	% of check	Harvest duration (months)	Root HCN content (mg/100g)	So
TMS 4(2)1425	20.9	211.1	9-15	3.12	
TMS 30001	13.2	133.3	9-15	3.95	
TMS 30572	14.4	145.5	9-15	4.99	
TMS 50395	14.4	145.5	9-15	4.99	
60506 (check) ^a	9.9	100.0	15-18	4.51	

Source: [Fao](#)

3. Select Healthy Cassava Stem Cuttings for Your Cassava Farming:

When you plant healthy stem cuttings; you can, to a great extent reduce and control the spread and damage caused by cassavas pests and diseases.

These items can be easily purchased in town and villages markets. Make sure you make a good market research and make sure you look out for stem cuttings with pest and diseases. You should be looking for a healthy cassava stem cutting.

Note; The cassava Stem cuttings that are taken from the top green portions of stems or extreme top and bottom of stored stems are not fitting and unsuitable. They will dehydrate quickly, produce unhealthy sprouts, and are easily damaged by pests and diseases.

To prepare your cassava stem cutting for planting; cut each stem cutting to a length of at least 20–25 cm. Using stem cuttings with about 5–8 nodes

For cassava stems which are slightly infected with stem-borne pests; treat it by dipping them in heated water or into dilute pesticide solution for 5– 10 minutes.

Recommended Practices for Planting Your Cassava for High Production;

The land used in the cultivation of your cassava should be tilled to loosen up the soil, facilitate soil drainage, and promote healthier storage root development and to make it easy for roots to develop.

When cutting up cassava stems you should handle cuttings carefully during transportation to prevent bruises and damage to the nodes. Your cassava stem which you will use for planting should be a cutting of at least 20–25 cm long and has about 5–8 nodes.

It is important to plant your cassava properly. And to get the best sprouting and growth from cassava stem cuttings, it is recommended that Cassava stems cuttings may be planted vertically, at an angle, or horizontally.

The different between planting your Cassava stem cuttings vertically and horizontally is that when planted vertically; the storage roots develops deeper in the soil, more closely together, and are more difficult to harvest by pulling. (Note; vertical planting is best in sandy soils.)

Whereas when planted horizontally; the storage roots develop more closely to the surface and are likely to be exposed and attacked by neither birds nor rodents.

Know when to weed your cassava farm when your cassava has started germinating to prevent the weed from stopping your plant from growing properly.

You should endeavor to plant cassava early; at the beginning of the rainy season. These guarantees healthy sprouting and good crop establishment which helps the plant to withstand damage by dry season pests and diseases.

If you intend to endure in late planting; at the end of the wet season be certain that you are exposing the crops to harsh harm by pests and diseases as the dry season emerges. So, therefore, after 9–18 month of planting you can finally harvest your cassava and ready to transform it into garri.

4. You May Need to Use Fertilizer on Your Cassava Farm

Depending on the situation of the soil, you may need fertilizer to boost the production of your cassava farming in Nigeria

If that is the case the following fertilizer and their rate/ha are recommended;

- NPK 20:10:10-9 (50 kg) bags
- NPK 15:15:15-12 (50 kg) bags
- NPK 12:12:17-15 (50 kg) bags

Fertilizer should be applied at about 8 weeks of planting your cassava and it should be a ring, 6 cm wide and 10 cm from the plant or spread with care around the cassava plants. Just make sure the fertilizer doesn't stay around the cassava stems.

Some Cassava Pests and Diseases That Could Affect Your Cassava Farm



Before we can discuss on how to produce garri from our harvested cassava, let's discuss the pests and the diseases that can affect the productivity of your cassava farm.

There are some pests and diseases which can affect your cassava and prevent you from gaining when you cultivate your cassavas. Which are;

- **Cassava bud necrosis;** this is caused by a fungus that grows on the outside of the cassava stems covering the auxiliary buds of stem cuttings.
The cassava mealy bug; This Cassava mealy bug damage symptoms contain shortened internodes lengths, compression of terminal leaves together into “bunchy tops” , distortion of stem portions, defoliation, and “candlestick” appearance of shoot tip. These takes place on the cassava leaves, shoot tips, petioles, and stems. The mealy bugs are covered with white waxy secretions.
- **The cassava green mite;** occurs on the undersurfaces of young leaves, green stems, and auxiliary buds of cassava. These Cassava green mite damage symptoms include yellow chlorotic leaf spots on the upper leaf surfaces, narrowed and smaller leaves, a candlestick appearance of the shoot tip, and stunted cassava plants.
- **The spiraling whitefly;** also known as *Aleurodicus dispersus*. These diseases spoil the cassava by sucking sap from the leaves. Most times, the Colonies of the insect occur on the undersurfaces of the cassava leaves and are covered with white waxy secretions related to those of the cassava mealy bug.
- **Cassava anthracnose;** this cassava disease is caused by a fungus which occurs on the surface of cassava stems.

After you might have harvested your cassava from the farm, one thing most farmers do is to process their cassava into garri.

Below is how to process your cassava into garri, if you like to.

(Note that some parts of Nigeria spell it as “garri” while others spell it “garri”)

Step by Step on How to Proccess Cassava into Garri

To process your cassava into garri, you can either process it manually or mechanically, depending on your capacity. But since you will be setting up a commercial garri production in Nigeria, it is recommended you should use a mechanized method in order to increase production and reduce stress.

Among machines needed to process cassava into garri are;

- Cassava peeling machine
- Cassava grater stainless metal
- Hydraulic cassava presser
- Cassava shifter or separator
- Automatic Garri fryer or community Garri fryer with bricks and chimney
- Cassava washing
- Bag sealing machine.

There are many machines in the markets with a reduced price which you can use to start up. But if you feel like starting manually, then you can start by employing other labors to work with your cassava processing farm.

Steps to Process Your Cassava into Garri;

- After you have harvested your cassava, then start by peeling off the back or the outer layer of the cassava tubers and try not to peel deeper into the cassava tubers.
- After peeling the cassava, wash your white cassava tuber properly. Wash with a lot of water to prevent sand. It is recommended that you should wash it like three to four times because this will be the only washing you be doing until the final processing.
- Cut the tubers into medium or smaller sizes to make things easy for you when grinding (know that small sizes grinds fast).

- Take you cut cassava to a bigger machine and grind them.
- After grinding, pack your watery cassava powder into long bags and dry them for 2-3 days.
- After drying, use a sieve or filter, usually a bigger sieve and separate the fine cassava powder from other particles.
- After separating the powder, now it's time to fly it. Using a bigger flying pan and a normal fire. Flying your cassava to garri. Keep a check on it to know when it's done to prevent burning.

Now your Garri ready. Package your garri in bags and styles and store properly.

Time to market your Garri. Sell your Garri in the market, knowing properly the market price.

PS; This post could be downloaded as PDF ([Cassava Farming in Nigeria PDF](#))

Now you see, Cassava farming and Garri processing business in Nigeria could be well-paid business because of the high consumption rate and a proper **investment** and abiding by proper recommended steps will make the production a lot easier

GRATERS

The grater are of two different capacities, measured by how many tonnage it could process in an hour.

A 2ton/hour grater may come with a big 8hp diesel Lister engine, 165 diesel engine or an 8hp petrol engine. As a consultant, your intended output will determine which one I would proffer.

1. 2tons/hr STAINLESS STEEL machine with an 8hp Lister engine costs 450,000
2. 2tons/hr STAINLESS STEEL Grating machine with an 8hp Petrol engine costs 320,000
3. 1ton/hr STAINLESS STEEL Grating machine with a 5hp petrol engine costs 260,000
4. 2tons/hr NON-STAINLESS STEEL Grating machine with a 8hp petrol engine costs 230,000

The choice to have go stainless or not is an individual and dream-related. You can call me for free advice via PHONE/EMAIL /WHATSAPP/IMO/GOOGLE DUOS +2347035593128

PRESSERS

Pressers are majorly of one type. Capable of pressing four bags at a time and you can press and fry within few hours, other than the 48hrs the old ones will give you.

THOUGH, ONE OF MY FABRICATORS CAN DO A SMALLER ONE FOR LESS.

1. Pressers with ability to press more than 10bags at a time and capable of pressing and frying in the same day with a 30 ton hydraulic jack. Cost is 110,000.
2. Pressers with ability to press 5bags at a time and capable of pressing and frying in the same day with a 20 ton hydraulic jack. Cost is 60,000.

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FRYERS

Fryers are of two major types. Manual and mechanical.

The manual fryers are a remake of the old ones, but more modern, convenient and effective. With it being stainless steel, it has many edge against the old conventional ones. It gets heated quickly, uses less fuel and fry more garri than



the old ones.

MECHANICAL FRYERS

Also of different sizes. ALL STAINLESS STEEL. The decision to use either firewood or gas depends on you and other factors. Call me for free advice.

1. Big size, 50kg in 35 minutes. Price is 450,000
2. Small size, 25kg in 35 minutes. Price is 350,000



SIFTERS

Sifters are used to either sift the cassava cakes before frying or after. The decision to sift before or after frying depends on one major factor- THE TYPE OF GARRI YOU INTENDED TO PRODUCE. If you want to know how to produce various types of garri and the best time to sift or no, contact me on how to get the manual.