

WALAGAMBAHUWA CROPPING SYSTEMS PROJECT

The Cropping Systems Project at Walagambahuwa is a joint undertaking of Department of Agriculture, Sri Lanka and I.R.D.C. Canada. The main objective of this project is to develop more productive and acceptable cropping systems for small scale farms.

The broad objectives of the programme are to :

- 1: Analyse and study rainfed and tank-irrigated (partially irrigated) cropping systems in the intermediate and dry zone of Sri Lanka.
- 2: Test, evaluate and identify improved crop varieties and cultural practices for use where water resources are limited.
- 3: Develop and test improved cropping systems on farmer's fields under rainfed and tank-based irrigated conditions.
- 4: Train and educate research and extension workers in the cropping system approach to improve productivity and production in cultivators fields.

Summary of activities at Walagambahuwa:

Background:

The Cropping Systems Project, at Walagambahuwa is a representative sample of paddy fields, 1,000,000 - 200,000 ha. (250,000-30,000 acres) in the dry zone of Sri Lanka, that comes under the tank-based agriculture. This extent of land shall remain rainfed or tank-fed, as the Mahaweli Diversion project is concentrating on the development of dry zone land under a lower contour level. There are about 10,000 minor tanks (Similar to Walagambahuwa tank) in the dry zone of Sri Lanka. These could be developed with the same technology applicable to Walagambahuwa. These areas have a bimodal pattern of annual rainfall distribution and 60-70% of the annual rainfall (760 mm or 30 ins). is received during the Maha season (from October to January) and 30-40% (380 mm or 15 ins) is received during the Yala season (from March to May).