

Pawpaw leaves and cassava peels to trap snails

Recognize the problem

Snails eat the leaves of many plants, particularly vegetables such as beans and cabbages. They make holes in the leaves and often leave a trail of clear slime where they have moved over the leaf or ground. They can eat entire vegetable seedlings.

Background

Because snails move slowly, it is relatively easy to collect and remove them from plants. However, they can be difficult to find during the day time because they hide when the sun is shining. Snails find their food by smell. They move towards the smells they like most. For example, snails like the smell of pawpaw leaves and cassava peels. People normally do not have use for their pawpaw leaves or cassava peels so they just throw them away. The idea is to attract snails away from the vegetable plants using pawpaw leaves or cassava peels.

Management

- Prepare traps to attract and collect snails.
- Gather at least 1 kg of fresh pawpaw leaves or cassava peels. If you have access to both you can mix pawpaw leaves and cassava peels for best trap effects.
- In the evening, place the material in a pile on the ground at the corner of the vegetable plots, about 1 every 10 metres.
- Be sure to place the pawpaw leaves and cassava peels about ½ up to 1 metre away from the plants you want to protect.
- The piles are about the size of a football.
- Early in the morning before the day becomes hot, you will find many snails gathered around the trap.
- Hand-pick all the snails around and under the pawpaw and cassava peels.
- Destroy all the snails collected. This can be done by crushing them, feeding to pigs, or boiling and eating them.
- Refresh the trap with new pawpaw leaves when old ones begin to wither and become dry.

Snail feeding on a vegetable.
(Photo by David Short, CC BY)



A pile of cassava peels like this would attract many snails. (Photo by François Lebas, CC BY)



Scientific name(s) > **Gastropoda**

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Zambia



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