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## Use of Indigo as green manure

Indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria* L.), locally known as “tayum,” is a shrubby legume that was initially introduced in the Philippines as a source of dye but was adopted by farmers as green manure (GM).

### How to Produce the Planting Materials

- 1** Place the seeds in a sack and soak it in tap water for at least 8 hours before sowing or dip in boiling water for minute.
- 2** Broadcast seeds in moist and thoroughly prepared field. To ensure even distribution of seeds in the field, mix indigo seeds with clean sand, then broadcast.
- 3** Flash irrigate the indigo one-month after sowing or when the plants are about 3-4 inches tall. (No fertilizer or insecticides are applied until seeds are harvested).
- 4** Harvest indigo seed pods at 3.5-4 months after sowing. Most farmers cut the indigo stalks above ground, then dry the cut stalks with pods. Seeds can be separated from the biomass by manual pounding.
- 5** Store seeds properly at room temperature in sacks, bottles, or plastic container until planting time.



### Benefits

- ✓ Enhances soil fertility
- ✓ Better growth and yield performance of rice with Indigo
- ✓ Increases profits and reduces production cost per kilogram rice grains
- ✓ Reduces use of chemical fertilizers
- ✓ Sustains yield of companion Direct Seeded crop
- ✓ Catches residual soil nitrate, which otherwise would move at deeper soil layer and ultimately contaminate the groundwater

## How to Incorporate Indigo as Green Manure

- 1** Wait until the field has accumulated sufficient water for wetland preparation.
- 2** Cut the indigo at ground surface or topple the plants using spike tooth harrow.
- 3** Plow the field thoroughly using an animal-drawn plow or a tractor to incorporate the indigo.
- 4** Transplant rice immediately or 3-5 days after GM incorporation.

The indigo biomass is incorporated as GM for the succeeding wet season in July-August depending on the availability of rainfall.

It is incorporated in the soil while the land is prepared for transplanting.



Source: Rice Technology Bulletin No. 39. Philippine Rice Research Institute. ©2001