

Cotton Research and Development at Institute for Agricultural Research, Samaru, Nigeria

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The Institute for Agricultural Research, Samaru, has the national mandate for genetic improvement and development of production technologies for cotton, maize, sorghum, cowpea, groundnut, sunflower, and castor. The Institute collaborates well with other national agricultural research institutes as well as with other governmental and non-governmental organizations, national cotton farmers association, input supply agencies, marketers, etc. Cotton research is carried out by a multi-disciplinary team, which includes plant breeders, plant physiologists, agronomists, crop protectionists, soil scientists, agricultural economists, and rural sociologists. The objectives of the cotton improvement program are to develop high yielding, early maturing varieties with improved ginning percent, resistance to pests and diseases, and acceptable fiber properties. Breeding endeavors resulted in the development of 13 varieties, suitable for production in the different cotton growing zones of the country. The varieties include short, medium, and long staple types. Future research will use biotechnology tools to develop new varieties resistant to major abiotic and biotic stresses.