

Editor's Comment:

The study is aligned with the Journal of Experimental Agriculture International's Scope and aspirations and is publishable in the journal. The authors have carried out a comprehensive revision and fully responded to the reviewers' comments suggested. I am satisfied that they have fully responded to the reviewer's concerns. However, I have corrections that must be corrected before the manuscript can be published. Much of it touches on references.

Specific comments

1. Title:

The authors have revised the title as suggested.

2. Abstract

The abstract has been enhanced, and it is now self-sufficient.

3. Keywords

Keywords are sufficient and relevant.

4. Main text

The authors have worked on the introduction, the methodology, and the discussion as suggested by reviewers. Results are comprehensively reported with tables and figures well represented and captioned. Their discourse in the prose is well-referenced. The conclusion is concise and supported by data.

5. References

i. This is the area I feel should be worked on. Quite many references are more than 10 years old, and if possible, authors can augment them with recent references. For example. The sentence "A good short-term predictor of soil biological and biochemical fertility is microbial activity (Melero et al., 2008; Nannipieri et al., 1990), can be augmented with "Khasabulli et al. 2023".

Khasabulli, B. D., Mutisya, M. D., Anyango, S. P., Manono, B. O., & Odhiambo, D. G. (2023). Soil microbial biomass, microbial population and diversity in maize-banana based agroforestry system in Kisii County, Kenya. *Asian J. Res. Crop Sci*, 8(4), 230-239.

- ii. For consistency, use only one reference format. As they are, it is a mixture of more than one.
- iii. Authors should make sure that all references in the text must be in the list. For example, Franzluebbbers (2002). Parihar et al., (2016) are in the text but not in the list.
- iv. Authors should ensure that all references in the reference list also appear in the list. Otherwise, they should be deleted. For example, these references appear in the list but are not in the text. Bielińska and Agnieszka 2012; Stewart et al. 2007; Martín-Lammerding et al. 2015; Harasim et al. 2020; Liu, Chang et al. 2014; Roldán et al. 2005; Walkley and Armstrong 1934.
- v. Some references are double-listed in the reference list. It should be corrected. For example, Hati et al. 2015.

Decision:

The authors should make the corrections suggested. Once done, the paper is publishable. This also allows authors to work on minor grammatical and typographical errors before publishing the manuscript.

Editor's Details:

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