CROPPING PATTERN: The yearly sequence and spatial arrangement of crops or of crops and fallow on a given area.

CROPPING SYSTEM: The cropping patterns used on a farm and their interaction with farm resources, other farm enterprises, and available technology which determine their make up.

MULTIPLE CROPPING: Growing two or more crops on the same field in a year.

TYPES OF MULTIPLE CROPPING:

1) INTERCROPPING: Growing two or more crops simultaneously on the same field in definite row pattern.
   (a) Mixed intercropping: Growing two or more crops simultaneously with no distinct row arrangement. Also referred to as mixed cropping.
   (b) Row intercropping: Growing two or more crops simultaneously where one or more crops are planted in rows. Often simply referred to as intercropping.
   (c) Strip intercropping: Growing two or more crops simultaneously in strips wide enough to permit independent cultivation but narrow enough for the crops to interact agronomically.
   (d) Relay intercropping: Growing two or more crops simultaneously during the part of the life cycle of each. A second crop is planted after the first crop has reached
its reproductive stage of growth, but, before it is ready for harvest. Often simply referred to as relay cropping.

**Advantages of intercropping**

- Better use of growth resources including light, nutrients and water
- Suppression of weeds
- Yield stability; even if one crop fails due to unforeseen situations, another crop will yield and gives income
- Successful intercropping gives higher equivalent yields (yield of base crop + yield of intercrop), higher cropping intensity
- Reduced pest and disease incidences
- One crop provide shelter and physical support to other crop.

**Disadvantages of intercropping**

- Creates obstruction in the free use of machines for intercultural operations.
- Sometimes yield decreases because of adverse competition effect.

2) **SEQUENTIAL CROPPING** : Growing two or more crops in sequence on the same field in a farming year. The succeeding crop is planted after the preceding crop has been harvested.
a) Double, triple and quadruple cropping: Growing two, three and four crops, respectively, on the same land in a year in sequence.

b) Ratoon cropping: The cultivation of crop re-growth after harvest.

The various terms defined above bring out essentially two underlying principles, that of growing crops simultaneously in mixture, i.e., intercropping; and of growing individual crops in sequence, i.e., sequential cropping. The cropping system for a region or farm may comprise either or both of these two principles.