

PART 1. INVESTIGATION INTO THE STORAGE OF LISBON
YAMS (*DIOSCOREA ALATA* L.) AND CHINESE YAMS
(*DIOSCOREA ESCULENTA* L.)

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

Yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) are important root crops in the wet tropics particularly West Africa, the West Indies and the South Pacific Islands. They are largely grown by the peasant farmers in these areas and may form the main article of diet. Yams are normally produced once a year. They require a rich fertile clayey loam soil in which to grow, though they will do well on sandy loams, if supplied with plenty of vegetable matter. Considerable care is often given to their cultivation to ensure high yields.

Given optimum conditions of soil and climate an average peasant can produce enough yams to feed himself and his family, particularly during the period of harvest. At this time the farmer has more than enough yams and can afford to sell the excess. This he generally does at a very low price. He has little or no means of storage to tide him over the period of scarcity which coincides with the planting and growing seasons of the crop in the field. It is for this reason of alternating periods of scarcity and excessive supply that several institutions both in America and elsewhere started work on storage of root crops, in order to make them available for food all the year round.