

DISSERTATION.

VARIETY TESTS ON THE SWEET POTATO

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Introduction.

On account of its hardiness and short growing period, coupled with a fairly good yield, the sweet potato forms an ideal crop for the peasant grower. Consequently, we find that the crop forms one of the staple foods of the peasants throughout the West Indies.

In Trinidad, the sweet potato is not so extensively grown as it is in some of the other Islands. This is probably due to the high rainfall, and soil type, which causes the roots to be rather watery. There is no doubt, however, that some varieties are better suited to the conditions in Trinidad than others, so that sooner or later, a suitable variety will be found.

The experiments described in this paper are designed to continue the tests of some new varieties which were received from the Barbados Department of Agriculture two years ago. These varieties have already been tried, and as a result, several have been discarded. Unfortunately, no cooking trial was undertaken, so that some varieties with good cooking properties may have been discarded, while at least one of the high yielders is hardly palatable. In the writer's opinion, a cooking test is of the greatest importance, and should be done before any other tests.

Judging by the rapidity with which the crop on the College Farm has been sold this year, the Trinidad native welcomes the sweet potato as part of his diet, so that it could no doubt be grown more extensively.