

CONSTRAINTS AND PROSPECTS OF YAM PRODUCTION IN NIGERIA

Emmanuel E. Bassey

Department of Crop Science, Faculty of Agriculture
University of Uyo, Uyo
NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

Yam is the most important food crop in West Africa, except for cereals. Nigeria is the largest world producer of yam with more than 45.004 million metric tonnes annually. Yam contributes more than 200 dietary calories per day for over 60 million people in Nigeria. It is the only crop which is usually celebrated during and after harvest. The production of yam is besets by many problems which include weed pressure, decline in soil fertility, soil borne pests and diseases, storage pests, high labour cost of land preparation and maintenance, staking and barn making among others. Effort so far made to improve yam production include breeding varieties for distribution to farmers, development of minisett technology for rapid seed yam production, development of alternative propagation materials through vine cutting, research into non-stake yam varieties, development of soil management packages and inputs distribution by the State and Federal Governments of Nigeria.

Keywords: *Dioscorea spp*, yam distribution, Production Trend, Constraints, Prospects.