

How Growing 75 Acres Of Sweet Potatoes In Ghana & Exporting Makes Us Rich

Soil pH is a critical chemical attribute that significantly influences crop yield. For sweet potatoes, the ideal pH range is typically between 5.8 and 6.5. Within this range, soil fertility is optimized for plant nutrient uptake. Lower pH levels can lead to reduced nutrient availability for plants.

Sweet potato cultivation involves both nursery and multiplication phases. The parent material is used for the initial multiplication, resulting in the first generation of plants that are then further multiplied. Using disease-free parent material is crucial for maximizing yield, as cutting vines from potentially diseased sources can negatively affect crop performance.

Tips for Successful Cultivation

1. **Soil Preparation:** Ensure the soil is adequately moist for planting. You can either plant immediately after soil preparation or wait for one to two weeks, during which time weeds may grow. Use herbicides like glyphosate to manage weed populations. Weeds may re-emerge within a month, so timely weed control is essential.
2. **Crop Rotation:** Implement crop rotation, especially among different plant families. This practice helps break the cycle of pests and diseases. Pests and diseases that affect one plant family are less likely to affect others. Starving disease organisms by changing crop families can help create a safer environment for replanting.
3. **Bed and Ridge Specifications:** Create ridges with a width

of about 1.3 meters, while the bed should be 40-50 cm high and 50 cm wide. Adequate ridge spacing prevents overcrowding of plants, while the bed's height ensures a loose and friable soil structure for healthy plant development. Proper planting depth and node positioning beneath the soil surface play a vital role in determining potato yield. More nodes below the soil surface generally lead to better performance.

4. Soil Analysis: Perform soil analyses to determine the soil characteristics, which will guide your fertilization decisions. The type and amount of fertilizer needed can vary based on your soil's composition.
5. Fertilization: Consider using the split application method, especially when it's raining, to minimize leaching. Applying fertilizer once during the growing cycle may lead to nutrient loss. Split applications allow for better nutrient utilization by the crop.