

CHARACTERISATION, CLASSIFICATION AND PRELIMINARY EVALUATION  
OF SWEET POTATO ACCESSIONS IN ST. LUCIA

*(Caractérisation, classification et évaluation préliminaire  
de cultivars de patate à Ste. Lucie)*

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SUMMARY

A total of 54 accessions of sweet potato (*Ipomea batatas*(L.) Lam) were collected island-wide and grown under uniform field conditions. After thorough screening at the end of the first crop season, it was found that there are as many as 46 distinct cultivars in St. Lucia. These cultivars were classified into different categories based upon vine pigmentation, storage-root skin colour and flesh colour, crop duration and yield. The characteristics of all these cultivars were documented for ready reference and comparison against possible new introduction.

RESUME

Un total de 52 acquisitions de patate a été collecté à travers l'île et mis en culture dans des conditions de terrain uniforme. A la fin de l'année le tri soigneux établit l'existence de 30 cultivars distincts à Ste-Lucie seulement. Ces cultivars sont classés à partir de la coloration des lianes, des racines tubérisées (peau et chair), de la durée du cycle et du rendement. Les caractères de tous sont enregistrés pour être rapidement utilisés et prévenir des introductions identiques.

INTRODUCTION

The cultivation of sweet potato is widespread in St. Lucia because it forms a source of food for most farm households. This same tuber crop provides a major farm activity in the south-western parts of St. Lucia (agro-ecological zones IV and V), consequently, its contribution to farm family