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Farmers' Knowledge on the Sweetpotato Cultivars Grown in the Teso Sub-Region, Uganda

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The farmers' knowledge of the cultivars to use in increasing sweetpotato productivity is critically important. A study was carried out in the Teso Sub-region to investigate the role of education in sweet potato production. Using an ex post facto design, 24 out of 51 sub-counties were purposively selected applying district-county strata and used to determine the perceptions of sweetpotato farmers and of their agricultural advisers. Through interviews, observations and questionnaires, the survey covered 288 farmers randomly selected and a whole population of 33 agricultural advisers, while 329 community leaders purposively selected and farmers randomly selected were engaged in focus group discussions. A total of 650 persons participated. Data were collected on farmers' knowledge of sweetpotato cultivars grown capturing selected attributes. Analysis of data was done qualitatively using open and axial coding and quantitatively using means, frequencies, percentages, ANOVA and multiple regressions at a confidence level of 0.05 (?). Using selected attributes, farmers identified 139 cultivars grown. The best performing cultivar was Araka yielding a range of 19,001-29,000 kg/ha but was susceptible to the sweetpotato weevil and drought. Araka also stores poorly as dried chips or sliced. The least performing cultivars were Elany ikokolak, Epaku & Ocaka amani with yields below 5,000 kg/ha but less susceptible. Commercialising the crop with value addition, farmers need up-scaling of their scientific knowledge of cultivars and production as basis for better multiplication & selection of vines for higher yields needed in processing the crop for its several uses.

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