

SWEET POTATO

By
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Introduction

Sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) originates from Tropical America and belongs to the Convolvulaceae family. Presently, in Sarawak, sweet potato is planted mostly for home consumption. It is ready for harvesting in 3-8 months after planting. The exact duration of the crop varies with cultivar and with the environmental conditions under which it is grown. Most sweet potato cultivars are rich in carotene. The cultivars with yellow flesh contain a much higher amount than those with white flesh. Most of the carotene is beta carotene. Sweet potato is also a good source of ascorbic acid and vitamins B complex.

Research on Sweet Potato Varieties

The Research Division of the Department of Agriculture Sarawak had studied a number of sweet potato varieties. These studies indicated that 'Cina', 'Gendut' and 'Unggu' produced higher yields than other varieties. All three varieties are suitable for fresh consumption. 'Cina' and 'Unggu' are also suitable for making chips.

Plant characteristic of 'Cina', 'Gendut' and 'Unggu'

Characteristic	Variety		
	Cina	Gendut	Unggu
Colour of young shoot	Yellowish green	Light green	Greenish red
Colour of petiole	Purplish green	Green	Greenish purple
Leaf shape	Heart-shaped	Heart-shaped	Heart-shaped
Colour of stalk	Purple	Green	Purplish green
Tuber skin	Rough & thin	Smooth & thin	Smooth & thin
Tuber skin colour	Orange	Yellowish brown	Yellowish brown
Tuber flesh colour	Orange	Yellow	Whitish purple
Mature	4 months	4 months	4 months
Yield (mt/ha)	20-25	20-25	20-25
Uses	Fresh consumption & chips	Fresh consumption	Fresh consumption & chips

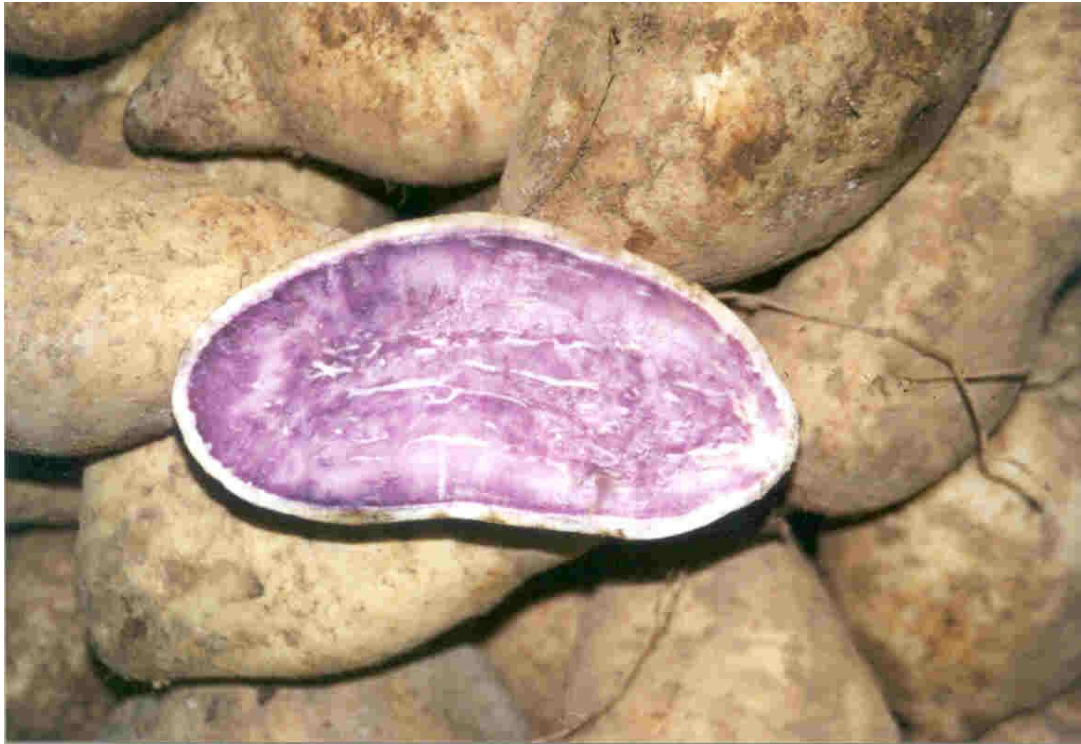
Nutrient content of 'Cina', 'Gendut' and 'Unggu' (on dry matter basis)

Nutrient	Variety
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	Cina	Gendut	Unggu
Ash (%)	3.08	3.00	2.10
Fibre (%)	4.23	2.59	2.40
Fat (%)	1.16	0.76	0.83
Carbohydrate (%)	92.00	92.54	94.62
Protein (%)	3.76	3.69	2.45



Established Sweet Potato Field



'Unggu' variety



'Gendut' Variety



'Cina' variety