»Harvesting and storing your sweet potato crop«

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Weevils infest sweet potatoes more often during long dry seasons due to soil cracks causing early crop harvesting which results into excess supply on market thus reducing crop value Therefore it is advisable to store sweet potatoes in stepped pits under cool dry sand in to prevent pest and disease attack and ensures food security and income constant income generation. However before harvesting tubers ensure that rains have completely stopped. Always the pit should be dug near home for monitoring. Storing sweet potatoes

Storage procedure

4 days before harvesting cut foliage leaving 20cm or cover freshly harvested potatoes with vines for 3 days to for potatoes to develop a thick protective skin. Also during harvesting time care should be taken not to damage sweet potato tubers. Also the harvested tubers should not be dropped to avoid bruising which increases chances of pest and disease infestation. Lastly, Do not wash potatoes after harvest but rather cover them keep them weevil and rot free for up to 6 months.

Building pit storage

Sweet potato storage should be built under shade and on a flat land to avoid water run offs. Normally, for 350 sweet potatoes storage pit, measure 150cm long by 60 cm wide, gather, grass, 2 stick 0f 100cm, 6 of 8cm and 8 of 2 metres. Thereafter, dig a pit of 25cm deep, dig other 25cm deep by 100cm wide, dig other 25cm deep by 50cm wide. Lastly, allow pit to rest after construction and build slanting roof in wind direction.

Filling the pit

Fill pit with undamaged potatoes, thereafter put 5cm of medium

sized cool, dry sand layer at pit bottom and sweet potato layer on top, add another layer of 5 cm on top of the laid potatoes until the pit is full. However, care must be taken to ensure that the potato tubers are not in contact. Also constantly monitor pit and sand box and in case the box smells unpack immediately.

Sand box

This is built inside thatched roof covering the storage pit to keep out animals and rain away. This should be 1 m wide, 50cm long and 75cm tall.