

Increased Quality and Prolonged Storage of Sweet Potatoes in Israel

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The predominant sweet potato [*Ipomoea batatas* (L.) Lam] variety grown in Israel, 'Georgia Jet', is hard to store for longer than 1 month because of its low dry matter content (16%). Curing processing is a common pre-storage treatment for sweet potatoes to prevent decay. Although an effective disease preventative in other varieties, it was not effective with Georgia Jet. In experiments conducted during 1995–97 it was proven possible to store var. Georgia Jet for 5 months by means of disinfecting the roots with iprodione in conjunction with the curing procedure. At the end of the storage period, 14% of the roots had decayed following this combined treatment (Exp. 1): 9% suffered soft decay and had to be discarded, and 5% had dry decay, which left them suitable for the local market. Compared with these figures, decay levels following single treatments were 61% with curing, 60% with iprodione and 100% in the control group. Three methods of iprodione application were also tested (Exp. 2): dipping, spraying, and 'Tabor' Atomizing System fogging which produces an extremely fine mist (droplet size $< 10 \mu$). The fogging method proved to be the most effective, with 4% dry decay and 6% soft decay after 5 months of storage.

KEY WORDS: Sweet potato; *Ipomoea batatas*; storage; curing; iprodione.

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