Sweet Potato Cultivation Guide

Introduction

Sweet potato is a nutritious and energy-rich tuber crop widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions.

It thrives in warm climates with well-drained, sandy loam soil. Sweet potatoes are valued for their high carbohydrate, fiber,

and vitamin content, making them an important food crop.

Step-by-Step Cultivation Process

1. Land Preparation

Plow the soil well to ensure proper aeration and drainage. Form ridges or mounds for better tuber growth.

2. Planting Material

Use vine cuttings (slips) from healthy, disease-free sweet potato plants for planting.

3. Planting

Plant the slips 30-40 cm apart on ridges, burying two-thirds of the vine in the soil. The best planting time is the start of the rainy season.

4. Irrigation

Sweet potatoes require moderate watering. Water regularly but avoid waterlogging to prevent root rot.

5. Fertilization

Apply organic compost and balanced fertilizers rich in potassium and phosphorus for better tuber formation.

6. Weed Control

Weed manually or use mulch to suppress weed growth and retain soil moisture.

7. Pest and Disease Management

Common pests include sweet potato weevils and caterpillars. Fungal diseases like black rot can be managed using proper crop rotation and fungicides.

8. Vine Management

Avoid excessive vine growth by pruning to encourage better tuber development.

9. Harvesting

Sweet potatoes are ready for harvest in 90-150 days when leaves start yellowing. Carefully dig out tubers to avoid damage.

10. Post-Harvest Processing

Cure sweet potatoes by drying them in a warm, well-ventilated area for 7-10 days to enhance sweetness and improve storage quality.

Conclusion

Sweet potato is a highly nutritious and resilient crop that provides food security and economic benefits.

With proper soil preparation, irrigation, and pest control, farmers can achieve high yields and quality tubers.

It remains a staple food with various culinary and industrial uses.