

# Invest in Orange-fleshed Sweetpotato to Improve Food Security in Nigeria



An estimated 41% of Nigerian children under 5 are stunted and 23% are underweight<sup>1</sup>. Food security requires not only increased food supply, but also availability, access and proper utilization of food by men, women and children.

Sweetpotato, with its broad genetic diversity, provides drought tolerant varieties of many flesh colours (yellow, white, cream, purple and orange) and skin colours (yellow, white, cream, purple and orange). This, combined with its flexible harvest and planting times, can contribute to food security in our changing environment.

## Food availability

- Sweetpotato provides higher yields per given area in a shorter time when compared to yam, cassava, and maize
- The crop can be produced on marginal soils and can be easily integrated into many cropping systems
- Improved, early maturing sweetpotato varieties are ready in 3- 5 months



OFSP Harvesting

## Food access

- Sweetpotato has relatively low labour requirements compared to other crops
- Some varieties can be stored in the ground for some time. Improved post-harvest techniques can improve storage life

and access to fresh roots among urban consumers

- Bakery products, replacing 20-40% of wheat flour with sweetpotato flour, and other products, improve the accessibility and shelf life of this nutrient-rich crop



Cookies

## Food utilization

- Unlike white or yellow varieties, orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) provides significant amounts of Vitamin A, which is critical for child survival
- Both the roots and leaves of sweetpotato are highly nutritious
- A wide range of OFSP-based processed products such as bakery products, juice, chips, crisps, flour, cereal and noodles can open up new markets for the food industry



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<sup>1</sup> Nigeria Demographic Health Survey, 2008