It goes without saying that 2016 has been a most special year for those who believe in the power of orange-fleshed sweetpotato to help combat vitamin A deficiency and food insecurity. It is recognition of many years of work by many people and has helped raise the global recognition of the potential for biofortification.
The 2016 World Food Prize was awarded to 4 scientists for their work on biofortification on October 13th at the State Capitol in Iowa. From left to right, the folks with the statues are Jan Low (CIP), Robert Mwanga (CIP), Maria Andrade (CIP) and Howdy Bouis (Harvest Plus). It was the 30th anniversary of the Prize.
Talk, talk, talk. During the Borlaug Dialogue week, the co-laureates spoke at Iowa State (b) and on a panel chaired by Jeff Raikes (a); then Jan gave talks at the University of Minnesota (c), where a new statue of Dr. Borlaug was unveiled, and the School of Advanced Intl Studies (SAIS) in DC (e), then Jan and Howdy participated in a day long biofortification workshop at Cornell University (d).
In February 2016, CIP (Maria Andrade) and the national institute of Mozambique (IIAM) released 7 new sweetpotato varieties: 4 orange-fleshed and 3 purple-fleshed— the first purple-fleshed released in SSA. Purple-fleshed varieties are rich in anti-oxidant anthocyanins.
Floods followed by widespread drought in Mozambique and drought in Southern Ethiopia resulted in both countries receiving funds for emergency vine distribution efforts…
The Seed System Community of Practice meets twice yearly under the guidance of Margaret McEwan. National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARI) in 11 SSA countries are expanding their pre-basic sweetpotato seed production. Ten institutions have started to implement their business plans; of which six institutions earned revenue from the sale of seed, to start their revolving funds.
Use of OFSP purée (steamed and mashed roots) continues to grow with OFSP bread now being made in Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Ghana. Research led by Tawanda Muzhingi (CIP) and Antonio Magnaghi (Euro Ingredients Ltd) made progressed, and we are able to store preservative-treated, vacuum packed purée for 3 months at room temperature. They also made bread using high fiber purée from unpeeled roots, which adds additional dietary fiber, iron and zinc to the bread.
Preliminary impact assessment results showed 72% of direct farmer group participants growing OFSP in last 5 seasons, with high diffusion to neighbors: 36% growing during last 5 seasons. Children 6-23 months of age having minimum acceptable diet increased from 8.3% at baseline to 24% at endline.

HarvestPlus Uganda during 1st Phase (2012-2016) reaches 407,791 households in 25 districts!
Antonio Julio (photo) is 2 years old. In the past, he refused to eat anything, and only wanted to breastfeed. But the day that we practiced making enriched porridge of OFSP and groundnut, his mother tried to give him some. He not only kept eating, but he grabbed the spoon from his mother to eat by himself. Now his mother makes enriched porridge for him every day—and the rest of the family enjoys it, too.
The Jumpstarting OFSP project went into it final year, with school feeding in Osun State Nigeria (b), bread in Volta region (previous slide) and fresh root sales in Burkina Faso (c), showing particular promise. Nane and Kofi Annan continued to advocate for OFSP investment—shown here visiting Volta Region in 2016. The CIP-led project is financed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
The 10th Triennial African Potato Association meeting was hosted by Ethiopia this year in October, with almost 300 people in attendance. All articles will be published in Open Agriculture. CIP aligned its 45th Anniversary celebration with the APA meeting and a panel discussion with partners was held during the celebratory cocktail. The next APA in 2019 will be held in Rwanda...
Key findings from the Mama SASHA integrated Agriculture-Nutrition-Health Project (2010-2015) were presented at a half-day sponsored symposium at the Micronutrient Forum held in Cancun, Mexico in 18-22 October 2016. This is one of the major meetings for those working on micronutrient interventions. From left to right in the photo on the left: Amy Girard-Webb (Emory University), Carol Levin (University of Washington), Alan de Brauw (IFPRI), Cornelia Loechl (IAEA), Jan Low (CIP) and Fred Grant (CIP).
In November, Time Magazine cited OFSP as one of the 25 best inventions of 2016.... On November 22nd, CIP was awarded the Al-Sumait Prize for Food Security for its work on OFSP at the 4th African Arab Summit. What a Year!
LET'S KEEP BUILDING ON THE MOMENTUM
HELP KEEP ROASTING AFRICA

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