

Situation Report on Quality Assurance of Sweetpotato Seed Systems in Nigeria

SWEETPOTATO SEED STANDARDS

- Currently, there is no regulation for quality assurance in sweetpotato seed systems in Nigeria
- The Nigerian seed act of 1992 recognizes **breeder**, **foundation** and **certified** as sweetpotato seed classes
- Inspection system is functioning for other crops but is yet to be operational for sweetpotato seed systems.
- The farmers/ seed producers pay for seed inspection
- Inspection is conducted by the National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC)
- Inclusion of **QDPM** as part of the sweetpotato seed classes in Nigeria was advocated at the recently concluded sweetpotato seed quality control meeting. NASC on her side is reviewing their inspection procedure to bring in private inspectors in the seed inspection process.

DRAFT PROTOCOL FOR FOUNDATION SEED INSPECTION IN NIGERIA

Isolation distance(m)	60
Variety admixture (%)	100
Labeling tag	White
Maximum permitted ratoons	3
Pest and diseases	
SPVD (max.%)	0
Weevil (max.%)	0
Whitefly (%)	0
Aphids (%)	0
Army worm	0
Length of cutting (cm)	20
Harvesting age (months)	1-2
Harvesting age of ratoons (months)	1-2
Number of inspections	2
Validity of certificate	12

CAPACITY BUILDING & ROLL OUT STRATEGY

- The seed multipliers and field inspectors will be trained on diseases identification, threshold and conditions for production of quality seed classes. This will include the DVMs and community inspectors.
- The major actors in capacity building includes; Specialists from **NRCRI, Umudike** responsible for the training of subject matter specialists from ADPs, Private seed producers and NASC officials. Subject matter specialists from state **ADPs** responsible for stepping down the training at community level. Specialists from **NASC** enlightens the farmers on the conditions for seed certification. The **NGOs** responsible for market development
- All the actors meet during stakeholders meeting.
- Apart from **building of two screen houses at Umudike and Iresi**, net tunnels were given to DVMs who are mostly members of cooperative societies and NGOs. Sensitization of farmers through the ADPs during periodic meetings of farmers organisation.

END USERS AND BENEFITS

- Potential end users includes ; the DVMs, Root producers, and the NGOs who will benefit from the system through increased yield and income generations and the children and nursing mothers that will benefit from improved vitamin A intake
- We are yet to actually get the true stakeholders perception of the sweetpotato seed system since its not yet fully operational

LEVEL OF USE OF SEED STANDARDS

- Yet to be determined. However, pretesting of protocol for QDPM has been conducted in Osun state (one of the BNFB pilot states in Nigeria)

CRITICAL GAPS, CONCERNS AND NEXT STEPS

- Non recognition of QDPM as one of the seed classes by the Nigerian seed act
- High cost of Infrastructure(TC labs, inputs, screen houses etc) for the production of quality seeds which translates into high cost of vines at the farmers level
- Recycling of planting material is always a challenge in Vegetatively propagated crops therefore adequate awareness is needed
- Varietal characteristics is always a driver of demand therefore it should be considered.
- Registration of producers of different seed classes
- Decentralization of seed inspectors of different classes



Pix 1: Foundation seed at NRCRI screen house



Pix 2: Teaching farmers how to identify virus infected plants

KEY PARTNERS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Variety release committee; Responsible for registration of proven varieties
- NRCRI; Responsible for the production of foundation seed
- NASC; Responsible for inspection and certification of seeds
- DVMs: Bridges the gap between the certified seed and the quality seed that goes to the farmers
- Private seed producers/NGOs; Produces the certified seeds

