

MONITORING, DE-SPROUTING AND PLANTING OUT YOUR TRIPLE S ROOTS

F: Monitoring your Triple S stored roots

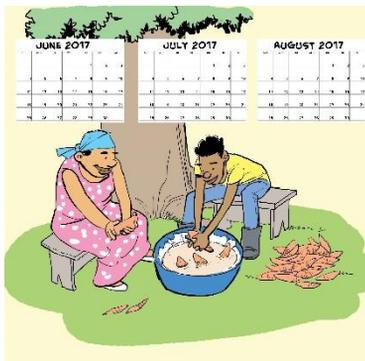
Every month, check your Triple S.

Unload all the roots, one-by-one and discard any that are rotten or weevilled. Reload the

Triple S basin as per at set-up.

The newspaper layer may need replacing.

Keep records of any observations and actions.



G: De-sprouting of sweetpotato roots in Triple S

Only de-sprout your roots if your dry season is more than 4 months long.

If dry season is 5 months, de-sprout at 2 months

If dry season is >5 months, de-sprout at 3 months.

De-sprout by breaking off the sprouts by hand. It usually takes 4 weeks for new sprouts to grow.



H: Preparing the root bed

Triple S roots should be planted out 6-8 weeks before the rains are expected to start.

Prepare the root-bed in a fertile area that is easy to water and monitor. Fence the root-bed to protect it from grazing livestock. The root bed can be a flat or a raised bed.

Root spacing: Plant the Triple S roots at a spacing of 60 x 60 cm (~2ft x 2ft) and a depth of 10cm below soil surface with sprouts facing upwards.

One Triple S basin of 40-50 roots will require a root bed of about 6m x 2m, or 3m x 4m.

In areas where water is severely limited, you may want to plant roots at 30 x 30 cm (~1ft x 1ft) and form a depression between every 4 roots for watering.



I: Watering your Triple S root bed

At the normal spacing of 60 x 60 cm, form a small depression above each root to help conserve soil moisture.

Water roots at planting, and then twice a week for 2 weeks, after this watering should be reduced to once per week. 40 roots will require about 3 watering cans (10 litre capacity/can) of water each time.

When the rains are thought to be 1 to 2 weeks away, watering should stop to help harden the vines.

By two weeks after planting, shoots will become visible.



J: Vine production from your Triple S roots

Staking the vines of spreading varieties, can help increase vine growth, and pinching out the growing tip can force the plant to develop more side shoots.

Vine harvesting from Triple S roots can usually start 6-8 weeks after planting, but should not be done until the start of the rains.

To harden the vines before harvest, watering should be stopped 1 to 2 weeks beforehand.

The field area where the cuttings will be planted should be prepared prior to vine harvesting so that the time between vine harvesting and planting is as short as possible.

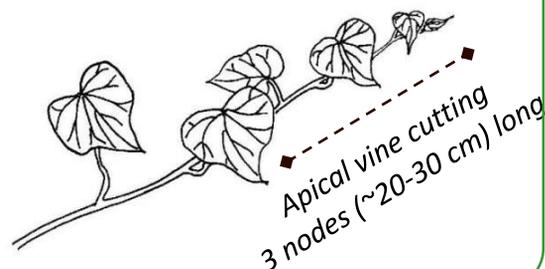


K: Vine harvesting and planting

Use top/ apical 3 node long (~20-30cm) portion of vines of healthy plants as planting materials. This part most easily recovers from cutting and planting shock, establishes fastest, and is more likely to be free of insects.

If the vine is long enough, several cuttings each 20-30cm long can be taken. But leave a 15cm long portion of the plant's stem above soil level to produce the next vines.

Leaves can be removed from cuttings to reduce water loss. Plant the cutting upright or at a slant at a spacing of 3 cuttings/m², with at least two of the nodes buried under the soil, to encourage faster growth.



Triple S planting material supply calculations:

50 Triple S roots will each produce ~40 cuttings at 6-8 weeks after planting = ~2,000 cuttings.

Three cuttings are planted per square metre.

So, 2,000 cuttings are sufficient to plant an area of ~650 m² (~20 x 32m or ~0.15 of an acre).

Then 1 month later, the second vine harvest will provide another 2,000 to 2,600 cuttings, enabling an additional 0.15 acre or more to be planted or the cuttings can be sold.

So a Triple S basin of 50 roots can provide enough cuttings to plant 0.3 acre.

Notes: