

of Machete at the rates indicated above will cost the farmer about Rs. 450,00 per ha. whereas the application of 3.4 DPA will cost the farmer about Rs.800.00 per ha.

SPLIT APPLICATION OF POTASSIUM IN RICE

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The current fertilizer recommendation for the low country dry zone, intermediate zone, mid-country wet zone and up-country wet zone includes potassium (K_2O) at a rate of 44 kg/ha. This amount is given in two splits viz: at land preparation and at primordia initiation.

Since recently, there is acclaim by farmers as well as some extension personnel that the amount of K_2O recommended is insufficient and that farmers who have used TDM instead of urea have obtained higher yields. If the recommended quantity of basal fertilizer has been applied, this new practice amounts to a total of about 70 kg N and 62 kg hectare for a 3 or 3½ month new improved variety, i.e. a decrease of 16 kg/ha of N and an increase of 18 kg/ha of K_2O . Whether the claimed increase in yield is due to decrease in N or increase in K_2O is unknown. Furthermore, if the farmer is not applying the basal fertilizer (a practice common to many) yield increase due to substitution of urea by TDM is quite possible.

In order to investigate the efficiency of split application of K_2O , a series of experiments were conducted in sandy and sandy loam soils at Batalagoda.

In one experiment a 4 - 4½ month variety BG 400-1 was tested at four different levels of N (0.45, 95 and 135 Kg/ha) with 80 kg/ha of K₂O in two different splits i.e. 50:30 (basal; p.I) and 20:20:20 (basal; 2 wks ;5 wks ;8 wks after transplanting). In two other experiments, K₂O levels upto 90 kg/ha and different methods of splitting such as basal, half basal, half P.I. and one third each at basal, tillering and P.I. were tested.

It was found that there is a significant increase in yield with increasing levels of N, K₂O upto 30 kg/ha increases yield, but different methods of splitting has no effect at all.

**NEW SWEET POTATO VARIETIES FOR
LOW COUNTRY, MID COUNTRY, AND
UP COUNTRY.**

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The new varieties recommended (by the Root Crops Division of CARI) and submitted to the National Seed Committee for release are:

- I. CINCHI: A long vined variety. Its stem is green and petioles are purplish green. Leaves are trifoliate. Tubers are irregular in shape with light purple coloured skin. Flesh is yellow-, tubers- attain large size and tend to crack. Tuber texture is flourey and sweet in taste.

This variety is recommended for Low, Mid, Up-country areas. Yield ranges from 12 t/ha in 90 days to 20 t/ha in 120 days. This is a 3 to 4 month variety.