Contribution to the Study of Vegetative Reproduction of Yam: Plant Weaning and Tuber Pricking with *Dioscorea alata*

Author: P. Mathurin, INRA, Station d'Amélioration des Plantes, CRAAG., Petit-Bourg, Guadeloupe (F.W.I.).

ABSTRACT

Daughter plants of *D. alata* are often separated from the mother tuber, which is pricked out to obtain regrowth. The earliest stage of separation giving acceptable production was determined. The effect of shoot removal on the number of successive flushes of regrowth was also analysed.

More prickings were possible with a whole tuber than a seed piece of the same weight, and with greater tuber weight. At least two prickings were obtained from mother tubers weighing between 100 and 500 g.

The initial weaned plant yielded as much as a normal plant. The cumulative yield from successive plantings was much greater than a normal planting, but individual yields declined over the succession. This decline was also observed with unweaned controls used with the successive plantings, suggesting an effect of tuber aging or ecological evolution.

The cumulative yield of successive weaned plants from a common mother tuber seemed to be lower than the cumulative yield of simultaneous plantings of seed pieces from a mother tuber of equivalent weight.