



## Harvesting and Yield of Cassava

Cassava is ready to harvest 10 to 12 months after planting; however, short-duration varieties could be harvested in 6 to 7 months after planting. Mostly cassava is harvested by hand, lifting the lower part of the stem and pulling the roots out of the ground then removing them from the base of the plant by hand or with a cutlass.

The average yield of cassava in Guyana is around 19 t/ha although the potential yield could be around 30 to 60 t/ha.

## Postharvest Management of Cassava Tubers

After harvest, protect tubers from disease by dipping in a chlorine dip. Pack into crates with a moist covering material. 20-30 cm of the stem still attached to the roots in the ground. When this is done, sugars in the tubers are converted to starches, which protect the cassava from deterioration.

## Processing of Fresh Cassava Tubers

Cassava tubers are perishable and need to be processed as quickly as possible to avoid postharvest deterioration.



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# GROWING CASSAVA IN GUYANA







## INTRODUCTION

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) is the second most important food crop after rice in Guyana and supports the livelihood of a majority of its people. It is a major food security and income-generating crop for thousands of smallholder farmers around the country. It is an important source of dietary energy for over 500 million people in developing countries within the tropics and sub-tropics. In Guyana, production levels are estimated at 3,000 hectares, with an annual production of about 57,000 tons of fresh tubers.

### Cassava

Cassava is a member of the Euphorbiaceae family of flowering plants. It is a perennial and can grow to a height of 4.5 m (15 feet).

### Climate and soil requirements for cassava cultivation

Cassava grows best when the temperature is between 25 and 30 ° C with an annual rainfall range as high as 5,000 mm or as low as 500 mm.

Cassava performs well on light, sandy loams or on loamy sands, but it also does well on soils ranging in texture from sands to clays.

### Varieties

There are several cassava varieties under cultivation in Guyana. Some of these are Uncle Mack, NAREI 1, NAREI 2, Smokey prolific, M Mex 59, Bad woman and Red stem (Sweet cassava) Amazonian, Egg yolk, Red stem, and White stem (Bitter cassava).

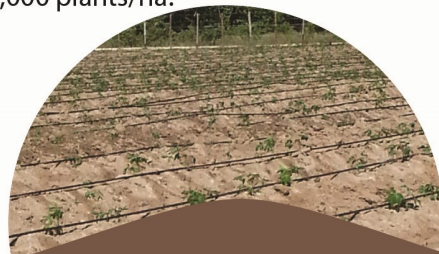
### Land Preparation

Land preparation should be deep enough to accommodate the tubers of cassava. since the crop cannot tolerate water-logged conditions, there should be adequate drainage. Soils should be ploughed, harrowed, and a ridged.

### Planting Materials and Planting

Planting materials should be selected from strong, healthy cassava plants between 8 and 18 months old. Cut stakes 20–30 cm (8–12 in) long with an average of 9–12 nodes. Sterilize cuttings in a 1% bleach solution before planting.

The main methods of planting are horizontal, slanted, and vertical with an optimum plant spacing of 1 m x 1 m with a plant population of 10,000 plants/ha.



### Fertilizer Requirements

As a general rule before applying fertilizers, the soil should be analysed to determine the type and amount to be used. If a soil analysis is not done the following rates of fertilizer elements may be applied.

ELEMENT	RATE OF APPLICATION
Nitrogen	- 68 kg/ha
Phosphorus	- 100 kg/ha
Potassium	-150 kg/ha

### Irrigation and Weed Management

Cassava is very sensitive to soil water deficit during the first three months after planting. Water stress at any time in that early period reduces significantly the growth of roots and shoots.

Plants should be free from weeds during the first three months after planting.

### Pests and Diseases in Cassava

The following are the most common pests and diseases found in cassava cultivation in Guyana; white flies, spider mites, grasshoppers, shoot flies, cassava bacterial blight, bud necrosis, brown leaf spot, Cassava brown streak disease, and Cassava root rot disease.

