

Processing of yam for export

Miriam Ahunna Ofoeze

mimiofoeze@gmail.com

National Root Crop Research Institute Umudike

Abstract: I am a research scientist in National Root Crops Research Institute Umudike NRCRI. I work as a postharvest processor to add value and develop new products from food crops. Most farmers and entrepreneurs that deal on crops suffer huge postharvest losses and this food loss and waste have many negative economic and environmental impacts. Currently my research activities are focused on reduction of postharvest losses in yam. Nigeria is the major producer of yam in Africa. Over the years attempts has been made to make yam one of the export crops to gain foreign exchange in Nigeria. However due to short shelf life and poor packaging, this has not been achieved. My research is focused on how to delay Postharvest physiological deterioration in yam long enough to survive shipping and still retain the quality. This is being done in collaboration with famers, stakeholders and entrepreneurs. So far, the research is still on the Market evaluation stage where the study is being conducted by experts to know the possibility of export. I also advocate for Agri-Park where SMEs that cannot afford processing factory can go and process their products until they are able to acquire theirs.