

TAPIOCA PRODUCTION



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Tapioca: An Introduction

Cassava or Tapioca is a tropical tuber crop. It is also known as manioc, mandioca, and Brazilian arrowroot. It is a woody shrub native to South America where it is an important food crop. Cassava is consumed as a staple food in many tropical parts of the world. Tapioca tubers are rich in carbohydrates and usually consumed after boiling or baking. Cassava flour is used in making various types of breads. Cassava starch is used in the manufacture of paper and various other industrial products. Cassava is considered as a 'Food Security' crop in times of famine and food insecurity.

Taxonomy

- *Family:* Euphorbiaceae
- *Genus:* Manihot
- *Species:* esculenta

Varieties

There are "Bitter" cassava and "Sweet" cassava. Bitter types are easy to grow and resistant to insects and pests. Bitter varieties produce higher yields also; therefore these are popular among farmers and grown widely. Both bitter and sweet varieties of cassava contain anti-nutritional factors such as toxic glucosides. But these toxins can be eliminated from the food by proper boiling and cooking. Cassava tuber colour varies from white to reddish white or brown.

Climate Requirement

Cassava is a tropical crop and prefers warm, tropical climate. Cassava crop cannot withstand frost.

Soil Requirement

Sandy loam soils are the most ideal for cassava growing as it facilitates tuber production. Cassava crop prefers soils with neutral pH.

Other Growing Requirements

Manure Requirements: Cassava crop requires plenty of nitrogen for its growth. Farm yard manure or compost in large quantities may be incorporated into the top soil at the time of field preparation to replenish soil fertility.

Propagation: Cassava/Tapioca is propagated by stem cuttings. Cuttings about 15 to 20 cm long are taken from mature plants.

Planting: The cuttings are planted in shallow trenches at a spacing of one meter each way.

Harvesting: The tubers become ready for harvest in 8 to 12 months, depending on the variety. For home use, cassava tubers can be harvested in 6 months after planting. Cassava tubers contain up to 85% starch which may deteriorate if harvesting is delayed. Tubers may become fibrous if not harvested at right maturity. Before harvesting, the plants are cut back and tubers are dug out.

Yield: The yield per hectare varies from 25 tons to 35 tons of tubers. The tubers can be stored for several weeks in a warm dry place.

Nutritive Value of Cassava

(Per 100 grams of edible portion)

Moisture	59.4 g
Protein	0.7 g
Fat	0.2 g
Fibre	0.6 g
Calories	159 mg
Phosphorus	40 mg
Riboflavin	0.10 g
Minerals	1.0 g
Other carbohydrates	38.7 g
Calcium	50 mg
Iron	0.9 mg
Thiamine	0.05 mg
Nicotinic acid	0.3 mg
Vitamin C	25 mg



Tapioca Plant



Tapioca Plant

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