WALI ALA, A PROMISING COLOCASIA GENOTYPE

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Wali ala is an early maturity, high yielding colocasia genotype selected from the native cocoyam germplasm collection. It was a cultivar which originated from the Galle district and was developed at the Central Agricultural Research Institute Gannoruwa with support from the International Development Centre, Canada.

Among the genotype existing in the local colocasia genetic stock, wali ala had the shortest plant stature and gave the highest cormel yield of 20 t/ha (under experimental conditions) in 3½ months. It is ideally suited for growing under coconut in the intermediate wet zone and in home gardens, producing 15 t/ha and 350-450g cormel yields respectively, while under farm conditions the yield ranged from 10-15 t/ha.

Wali ala had 22% cormel dry matter content and 2.8% protein content on dry weight basis, having soft and moist flesh when cooked. Wali ala produced 6-10 primary suckers and clustered form of cormel arrangement with more than 15 cormels per hill. It requires a lowland non-flooded condition and prefers light soil having high organic matter content. The optimum size of setts and planting density for wali ala were found to be medium cormels (10g) and 55000 plants/ha, (60x30cm spacing) respectively.