

**INFLUENCE OF MATURITY STATE OF CASSAVA STEMS ON
CROP ESTABLISHMENT AND TUBER YIELD OF CASSAVA**

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Planting material is one of the most important factors in popularization programmes of new varieties.

In branching varieties which have minimum of three branching levels, due to high proportion of younger stem tips, multiplication ratio appeared to be lower than non branching varieties with only one branching level. Three kinds of planting sticks taken from three different regions of the plant such as lower, middle and upper stems were tested for percentage of germination and yield variability in replicated yield trials.

Results indicate that, in a non branching variety (CARI 555) which has less number of younger parts show early establishment of the crop by giving 90% germination within 10 days. Low percentage of germination leads to low plant populations which is common in branching varieties like "Wagolla". Crop establishment did not occur beyond 95% even after 20 days of planting in this case. At the time of harvesting (9 months after planting), there was no significant difference in yield to maturity state of planting material, but low plant population often experienced by planting young stem cuttings of branching varieties will decrease the yield. Upper cuttings of "Wagolla" gave lowest yield (1 t/ha) in this experiment. It can be concluded that the multiplication ratio of non branching varieties is higher than branching varieties. In this regard improvement of developing non branching plant type will benefit the farmer in rapid multiplication of cassava.