



# *The Tango Sweet Potato*

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# The Tango Sweet Potato

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## Origin and History of Development

The Tango sweet potato, recently released by the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station, is widely known among home and market gardeners in Missouri under the former designations B4570 and Missouri X.

Tango originated as a seedling selected at the Plant Industry Station, Beltsville, Md., in 1942 from a cross (Nancy Hall x Porto Rico 1-10) made at the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Baton Rouge, in 1941.

It has been tested by experiment station workers of the principal sweet potato states.

Because of its susceptibility to fusarium wilt, it has proven suitable only in areas where wilt is not a prominent problem. Because of its high yielding ability, excellent table and keeping qualities as obtained under Missouri conditions, it is considered worthy of release by the Missouri Experiment Station. It is recommended principally for home garden and limited commercial planting where the seed stock can be maintained nearly "wilt-free" by hill selection.

## Performance

Tango was developed by the Missouri Station primarily as a replacement for Nancy Hall, long a favorite in this area. Like Nancy Hall it is easy to grow, sizes its roots well and is an excellent keeper. It is considered superior in appearance and table quality to either Nancy Hall or Porto Rico.

In "maturity" it is earlier than Porto Rico, generally producing satisfactory yields of mark-

etable roots in 90 to 110 days. The yield of No. 1 and No. 2 roots will progressively increase with longer growing seasons, although some jumbo-sized roots will be formed.

The superior yielding ability of Tango on wilt-free soil over other prominent varieties of the soft-fleshed or "yam" type has been established in standardized tests by this station. These test results are summarized in the Table.

**COMPARATIVE YIELD OF U.S. NO. 1 AND U.S. NO. 2 ROOTS OF TANGO  
AND OTHER SOFT-FLESHED VARIETIES.**

Variety	Yields, Expressed as Number of 55-lb. Bushels Per Acre					Average
	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1951-1955
Tango	345	467	365	380	401	391.6
Unit I Porto Rico	251	359	276	338	377	320.2
Early Port	206	404	393	340	379	344.4
Gold Rush	232	293	246	369	252	278.4
All Gold	198	346	391	334	357	325.2
Kandee	---	---	286	287	302	291.7

Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station, 1951-1955.

## Variety Description

The roots have a slightly variable spindle-shape, but are of good general appearance, with tan to salmon colored skin, a moderate solids content and a carotene (pro-vitamin A) content superior to good strains of the Porto Rico variety. The percentage of marketable roots has been high due to the very low losses from ridging, veining, and cracking. The flesh has the fine texture, moistness, medium sweetness and agreeable flavor characteristic of other "yam" varieties. It requires a little longer cooking time than Porto Rico. The roots produce sprouts early and abundantly when properly bedded and the plants withstand transplanting shock well. With any variety, however, it is advisable to water well when transplanting.

Vines of Tango are purple or reddish in

color, vigorous, moderately coarse, and of intermediate length and have moderately short internodes. Leaves are large, smooth, light green, and are entire or toothed in outline, more or less resembling those of the Nancy Hall parent. Foliage is dense. This variety, therefore, should not be planted on highly organic soils or heavily fertilized with manure or nitrogen-rich commercial fertilizers as this encourages "going-to-vine" and long stringy roots.

Although Tango is susceptible to stem rot, it is moderately resistant to black rot. Its degree of susceptibility or resistance to scurf and surface rot is not known. These diseases have not been troublesome on the variety, however, in approximately 10 years of testing.