

**Title** Effects of cultivar and harvesting conditions (age, season) on the texture and taste of boiled cassava roots

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### **Abstract**

Age of plant and environmental conditions during growing may affect texture (friability) and taste of boiled cassava roots. We investigated the quality of boiled roots of seven cultivars harvested at 10, 12 and 14 months in three different seasons.

Sensory taste (sweet or bitter) of boiled cassava root could not be correlated with sugar content and/or cyanide potential, which both interfere with taste perception; hence, bitterness is not a good indicator of the poisonous character of cassava roots. Improved cultivars generally showed lower friability scores, independently of plant age (10–14 months) or season. Rainfall before harvest directly lowers dry matter and mealiness of boiled roots. Cultivar and rainfall effects are discussed in relation to pectins (higher content for improved cultivars) that are suspected to be the major biochemical cause of vegetable mealiness.