

“YAM FARMERS TO BENEFIT FROM INCREASED YIELDS WITH HI-PRO’S NEW YAM PROGRAM”



Hi-Pro is continuing its “Grow with Hi-Pro” Program, and working with farmers to improve their profits through increased output per acre.

Following recent success in boosting profits and yields within the coffee and peanut sectors, the Division’s focus expanded to include Yam, recognized as Jamaica’s third most important cash crop.

Through the “Grow with Hi-Pro” Crop Program, the Hi-Pro agronomy team worked with yam farmers to identify current challenges and provide relevant solutions. The aim was to increase profits by improving yields.

“We examined the main causes for crop loss and identified fungal and soil nutrition issues,” explained Hi-Pro Technical Agronomist Garvin Abrahams. “We worked extensively with local farmers, and conducted year-long demonstrations applying

BASF's Regnum Fungicide, Diamond R Fertilizer and Break Thru to enhance yam production. We are extremely pleased with the results."

The yam crops were reaped in October 2016; records indicate the average lbs of yam per hill from the regular plots weighed 9lbs, while the average yams per hill from the Hi-Pro treated plot weighed 16.3lbs.

The Hi-Pro treated plot yielded a total of 16,910lbs per acre- a difference of 7557lbs more than the regular acre. At a wholesale price of \$70.00 per pound, yield from the regular plot resulted in gross earnings of \$654,720.00, while gross income for the Hi-Pro treated plot surged to \$1,183,696.00. The Hi-Pro plot cost \$331,670 to treat- just 3% more than the cost of the regular plot at \$323,432.00. The increase of 3% in cost for the Hi-Pro plot resulted in a profit increase of 157% or \$520,738 for total profit of \$852,026.00 compared to the \$331,288 of profit earned from the regular plot.

"The farmers are excited about their yields and our products. Regnum Fungicide stands out for its ability to help the yam plant adjust to environmental stressors including drought conditions and flooding," Abrahams emphasized. "When combined with Diamond R, the program has the two-pronged effect of improved yield through better plant health and improved nutrition."

"This program has positive economic implications for our agricultural sector. We have taken our yam farmers to a point where they are able to produce twice the amount of yam, with little difference in cost per acre," said Conley Salmon, Hi-Pro's Vice President of Marketing and Agricultural Supplies.

"The cost-benefit analysis is simple," continued Vice President Salmon. "With a 3% increase in costs to account for these chemical and fertilizer inputs, you can benefit from a 157% increase in straight profit. Now we just have to spread the good news!"