

## Sweet potato scientists win World Food Prize

14th October, 2016



Photo - Public Domain  
(via alunimasako on pixabay.com)

Four scientists have won the 2016 World Food Prize. The scientists are from the global agricultural research group the International Potato Center. They won the prize for enriching sweet potatoes. This has resulted in health benefits for millions of people across the world. The scientists developed a way to grow sweet potatoes that have extra amounts of Vitamin A in them. More Vitamin A means the sweet potato contains extra nutrition. One researcher said it was difficult to get farmers to help him with his work. Many farmers did not think it was a good idea. The researcher said: "They told me it was a bad idea. Their job was to increase yields, pest resistance and reduce poverty; it wasn't to improve nutrition."

The sweet potato could change the lives of many people across the globe. People without food can die of malnutrition – not having enough to eat. A lack of Vitamin A is one of the most harmful examples of malnutrition. Scientists say malnutrition affects more than 140 million children up to the age of four in 118 countries. It also affects more than seven million pregnant women. Scientists also say it is a big reason for children becoming blind in developing countries. Jan Low, from the International Potato Center, said the prize-winning sweet potatoes could make a big difference in making sure hungry people get enough Vitamin A. She hopes more scientists will focus on increasing nutrition in vegetables.

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [IowaPublicRadio.org](http://IowaPublicRadio.org) / [pulse.ng](http://pulse.ng)

## Writing

Scientists should not change vegetables or other food. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / global / agricultural / health / benefits / nutrition / good idea / poverty / lives / malnutrition / harmful / countries / pregnant / reason / developing / focus

## True / False

- Two scientists won the World Food Prize for 2016. T / F
- The scientists are from the Global Sweet Potato Agency (GSPA). T / F
- The new sweet potatoes have more Vitamin A in them. T / F
- Many farmers wanted to increase nutrition in sweet potatoes. T / F
- Scientists say the sweet potato will not help fight malnutrition. T / F
- Malnutrition affects 7 million pregnant women around the globe. T / F
- Malnutrition is a big cause of blindness in children. T / F
- A scientist said the sweet potatoes will help people get more Vitamin A. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>global</b>      | a. absence     |
| 2. <b>enriching</b>   | b. additional  |
| 3. <b>resulted in</b> | c. lower       |
| 4. <b>extra</b>       | d. lead to     |
| 5. <b>reduce</b>      | e. cases       |
| 6. <b>change</b>      | f. worldwide   |
| 7. <b>lack</b>        | g. certain     |
| 8. <b>examples</b>    | h. concentrate |
| 9. <b>sure</b>        | i. improving   |
| 10. <b>focus</b>      | j. alter       |

## Discussion – Student A

- How can sweet potato be used as a dessert?
- What can we do to end malnutrition?
- Why is there still so much malnutrition in the world?
- What is your favourite vegetable, and why?
- What can you do to help hungry children?
- What malnutrition is there in your country?
- How will nutrition in vegetables be different in 50 years?
- What questions would you like to ask the prizewinners?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Four scientists have won the          | a. of malnutrition                |
| 2. They won the prize for enriching      | b. for millions of people         |
| 3. This has resulted in health benefits  | c. poverty                        |
| 4. the sweet potato contains             | d. more than 140 million children |
| 5. reduce                                | e. sweet potatoes                 |
| 6. People without food can die           | f. blind                          |
| 7. affects                               | g. Vitamin A                      |
| 8. pregnant                              | h. 2016 World Food Prize          |
| 9. a big reason for children becoming    | i. extra nutrition                |
| 10. making sure hungry people get enough | j. women                          |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How important are potatoes?
- What are three differences between potatoes and sweet potatoes?
- What food do you think should win a World Food Prize (and why)?
- What is your country's best food?
- Where do you get your vitamins from?
- How good or bad is the nutrition in the food you eat?
- How do you think the new sweet potato will help the world?

## Spelling

- uturarcillga research
- The scientists ledveepdo a way
- extra nmauots of Vitamin A
- Their job was to eneciras yields
- crduue poverty
- it wasn't to poermvi nutrition
- people across the ebogj
- die of mltioniarnu
- one of the most harmful elpemsax
- nntaergp women
- make a big nrfilefec
- nuhyrg people

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. b	5. c
6. j	7. a	8. e	9. g	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Sweet potato

You think sweet potato is the healthiest. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as healthy. Also, tell the others which is the least healthy of these (and why): milk, beef or spinach.

### Role B – Milk

You think milk is the healthiest. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as healthy. Also, tell the others which is the least healthy of these (and why): sweet potato, beef or spinach.

### Role C – Beef

You think beef is the healthiest. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as healthy. Also, tell the others which is the least healthy of these (and why): milk, sweet potato or spinach.

### Role D – Spinach

You think spinach is the healthiest. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as healthy. Also, tell the others which is the least healthy of these (and why): milk, beef or sweet potato.

## Speaking – Healthy

Rank these things with your partner. Put the healthiest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| • rice   | • sweet potato |
| • orange | • beef         |
| • water  | • spinach      |
| • salmon | • milk         |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.