

drought resistant will replace season."

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Lominda Afedraru

Tomato is a vegetable from the solanaceae family and it is one of the popularly grown vegetables by Ugandan farmers for commercial purpose.

The choice of a tomato cultivar is based on fruit quality, adaptability and reliability as well as susceptibility to diseases and pests.

The most common varieties grown by farmers in open fields across the country include cherry, money maker, bonny best, marglobe, rio grande, tengeru 97, amateur rodade, heinz and new fortune maker F1.

Tomatoes give good results when grown in well managed sandy loam and heavy clay loam free soils that are packaged in pans or pots.

Julius Peter Ahaganna an agronomist from Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute Kabanyolo (MUARIK) majoring in growing Nemo-netta tomato variety commonly grown in green houses encourages Ugandan farmers to grow this type.

He explains that it is important for farmers to plant tomato seedlings on erased soils and the soil must be fertile meaning application of NPK fertiliser and manure is essential.

However, farmers growing Nemo-netta tomato variety are advised to do it in a green house.

The soil put in pans has to be sterilised by steaming it in heat comprising 180 degrees centigrade. This will enable all the soil borne pathogens to die.

In the greenhouse the ground soil

has to be covered with polythene paper and the soil in the pans are placed on erased blocks of soil.

This will prevent germs from the ground soil crossing over and mixing with the soil in the pans. The plastic paper will also control weed growth.

Preparation of seedlings in the nursery is done using plastic trays where sterilised soil is filled to the cockpit.

The seeds will germinate and be allowed to grow for 21 days when they will be 15 metres tall ready for transplanting.

Constant application of soluble NPK on the seedlings at the nursery is essential.

In the greenhouse the pots or pans must be well laid at the irrigation line where there is a hole to supply the plant with water.

When watering the plants farmers are advised to mix the water with NPK as well as solution of calcium and potassium nitrate to avoid flowers from falling.

