



SDI Review Form 1.6

Journal Name:	American Journal of Experimental Agriculture
Manuscript Number:	2014_AJEA_12404
Title of the Manuscript:	Effect of different types of mulching and plant spacing on weed control, canopy cover and yield of sweet potato (<i>Ipomoea batatas</i> (L.) Lam)
Type of the Article	Original Research Article

General guideline for Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound.

To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<http://www.sciencedomain.org/page.php?id=sdi-general-editorial-policy#Peer-Review-Guideline>)



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	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment
<u>Compulsory</u> REVISION comments	The author mentioned in the paper the effects of different management system on weed control of sweet potato. In general, they present some alternative methods available for the small farmers which they could afford without compromise the productivity. Introduction The authors should explain in the last paragraph (Lines 43-54) what would be the advantages and disadvantages of the methods they propose especially to conflict between herbicides and alternative methods. Materials and Methods Why did the authors use two kinds of herbicides combined with Fusilate? Did the fusilate act him self as weed control? (Lines 57-67) Please calculate the exactly amount of each element, N, P and K, applied to the soil. What does LAN mean? (Lines 75-79) Also, please explain in details on how you calculated the control effectiveness and canopy cover. If possible, write the formula used (lines 81-87) Lines 89-97 - Why did they set up a follow up trial? What were the objectives on that? Usually these experiments should be carried at the same time. In that case they should separate the data in two with different statistical analysis. Results and discussion The authors should improve the discussion with more literature review for each topic. Only one paragraph at the end makes the discussion very poor. The top legend ex: fig 1 - Canopy closure (2006) should be deleted in all figures. And in some figs the legend of the bars were missed The legend should be standard sized for all figures. Please add (LSD.....CV%.....) for all of them.	This was done by adding the sentence: "These might not be suitable for large-scale production and as effective as chemical control, however, can provide small-holder farmers with useful options." The use of Fusilate at two months after planting was explained in lines 67 – 69. We rephrased the sentence to emphasis it was applied 2 months after planting as post-emergence herbicide, whereas Eptam and Afolon were applied preplant. The total nutrient application was calculation and indicated. LAN was explained. Weed control effectiveness was calculated as percentage of area free of weeds. Lines 83-85 were updated. During 2006 it was not possible to determine the effect on root yield due to early frost and thus that was done in 2007. This was emphasized in lines 84-87. The data was analysed separately. The trials were named Trial 1 and Trial 2 to ease comprehension. A separate discussion session was made and updated extensively. Legends were standardized and the graph headings were removed on all graphs. LSD and CV% provided on all graphs



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	Fig 5. No need to insert in the text (t.ha-1) Table 1 -The letters for the statistical analysis in the Small, Medium and Large are missed	t ha-1 was removed from headings both in Fig 5 and 6 headings As indicated by the P-values these are not significant, while the * at Extra large shown significance indicated as F-probability significant at $P=.05$ in footnote
<u>Minor</u> REVISION comments		
<u>Optional/General</u> comments		We would like to change the order of authors to SM Laurie*, MN Maja, HM Ngobeni, CP Du Plooy