

Development of Bioassay Method and Microtubers of Yams(*Dioscorea alata* L.)

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Yam belonging to the *Dioscorea* genus is a starch crop of which tuber or aerial tuber is used for food and medicine. The *Dioscorea* genus includes 600 species which are distributed in the world. Among them, 10 species including *D. rotundata* Poir native to West Africa, *D. opposita* Thunb native to China, and *D. alata* L. native to East Southern Asia have been known mainly. In Japan, *D. opposita*, *D. alata* and *D. japonica* are being used. *Dioscorea japonica* which is native to Japan is valuable as a raw material of snack and ground food(Dororo). *Dioscorea opposita* was introduced from Korea and has been cultivated for a long time. There are now many varieties and landraces of *D. opposita* in Japan.