



# Potato Production

## ❖ Variety Selection

- Factors to consider:
  - ✓ Yield potential (low, moderate and high)
  - ✓ Maturity period (early, medium or late)
  - ✓ Disease and pest tolerance
  - ✓ Tuber characteristics (skin colour, flesh colour and tuber shape)
  - ✓ Purpose (table or processing)
- Potato can be grown from True Potato Seed (TPS), plantlets or tubers.
- Use of tubers is the best method for potato production.
- Use of high quality seed is very important.
- Certified seed will produce 15 – 20% higher yields than standard seed.

## ❖ Planting Periods in Zimbabwe

- Summer (rain fed) November
- First winter- Feb – April
- Second winter- July- August

## ❖ Planting Material

- Obtain seed from a reliable source (Seed Potato Coop, Kutsaga, National Tested Seed and Prime Seed)
- Requirements per ha- 80 x 30kg pockets

## ❖ Sprouting

- Natural sprouting (3- 5 weeks)
- Forced sprouting (2-3 weeks)

- Use Gibberellic acid (GA)- 32ml/ 100litrs of water/ ha

### ❖ Planting

- Basal Fertiliser
- ✓ Seedbed fert (S) / Compound S / Tobacco fert (C) - 1300- 1500kg/ha
- Nematode Control
- ✓ Culturally – rotations
- ✓ Nema-cur 10G 100kg/ha
- ✓ Nema-cur 480 EC 25 L/ha
- ✓ Temik 40kg/ha
- Spacing
- ✓ Spacing 1.2mx 0.23m
- ✓ Optimum plant population 37 000
- ✓ Depth of planting 5-10cm
- Top dressing/ Ridging
- ✓ 300kg/ha,
- ✓ Applied three weeks after emergence
- ✓ Top-dress - Ridge - Spray
- ✓ Second top dress – re-ridge – Spray
- ✓ Ensure that the tubers are well covered to avoid Greening and Potato Tuber moth

### ❖ Pest Management

Problem	Product	Application Comments	Product/ ha
Mainly Grasses	Lasso 48 EC	Pre-emergent to weeds and crop	3.5 – 4 lt
	Dual Magnum	Pre-emergent to weeds and crop	0.7 – 1.2 lt
Broad leaf weeds	Sencor 480 SC	Pre-emergent	1 lt
	MCPA	Pre-emergent to crop and weed	4 lt

Grasses only	Agil 100 EC	Annual grasses.	Small 0.5 lt and larger 1 lt
		Perennials grasses. Post emergent	1.5 lt
*****	Metribuzin	Pre- emergent	1 lt
*****	Fusilade Forte	Post emergent	0.58 – 6.7
Combinations: 1asso 3lt + Sencor 0.7 lt/ Dual 960 1lt + Sencor 0.7 lt/ Lasso + MCPA 3.0 lt			
Early blight	Bravo	Preventive	2.lt/ ha
	Dithane M45	Preventive	200g/ 100lt water
	Folicur	Curative	500ml/ha
	Score	Curative	250ml/ha
Late blight	Bravo	Preventive	2lt/ ha
	Dithane	Preventive	200g/ 100 lt
	Ridomil/ Miltraz	Curative	2.5 kg/ ha
Early & Blight	Copper Oxychloride 85 WP		2.5kg/ha
	Polyram DF		2.5kg/ ha
	Antracol 70 WP		1 – 4 kg/ ha
Bacteria Wilt	Copper Oxychloride	Weekly sprays, rogue infected crop	2kg/ ha

### ❖ Irrigation

Soil class	Hot months	Cold months	Irrigation required
Light soils	3 -4 days	5 – 7 days	25 – 30mm
Heavy soils	5 – 7 days	10 – 12 days	30 – 35 mm

### ❖ Harvesting and Storage:

- ✓ Remove the haulms when 50%+ defoliation has occurred
- ✓ Leave the crop for two weeks before lifting
- ✓ Lifting can be done manually with a hole or mechanically
- ✓ Grade and pack by size
- ✓ Storage area should be well ventilated
- ✓ Average yields: 17 – 20 t/ha and winter yields: 24 -30t/ha