

# One potato, two potato, three potato, four, seed potato, good potato, grow potato more!

Potato is an important food security crop in East Africa that yields much faster than maize. To get a good potato harvest farmers need to plant healthy seed potatoes and, in recognising this need the NGO, AT Uganda, has established, through project R8104, a sustainable system of farmer-led seed potato multiplication for improved varieties. Seed potatoes can fetch a higher price than ware potatoes. All group members in the project area (more than 1000 farmers) have received clean planting material and have learned how to multiply and store healthy seed from season to season using Seed Plot System (SPS). Healthy improved seed potato has been loaned to commercial multipliers for two consecutive seasons. Repayment is three times the amount received and has been 99%; this repaid seed is then distributed to farmer groups.

The Kapchorwa Seed Potato Production Association (KASPPA) has established local



*Inspection of potato multiplication fields*

In 2002, Fred Chemutai planted 10 bags of Victoria variety and harvested 130 bags of seed potatoes – the following season he got more than 150 bags. Through careful management of the potato garden and commitment to seed potato production he has realised his dream of becoming a landowner. With this land he is increasing his potato production as well as laying the foundation for his permanent house.

Takwar Charles and Edward Cherut multiplied a new variety (Nakapot 5) in addition to Victoria and each received more than 1 million shillings (£284) for the seed they sold. They also planted potato for ware production. Because the community appreciated the improved seed and quality, the demand for seed was so high that they ended up selling the ware potato as seed and each received more than 1.5 million shillings (£426). This season they are growing even more potatoes. Potato multiplication has enabled Takwar to pay secondary school fees for his four children.

disease thresholds, and a quality control committee conducts regular joint field inspections. This has remarkably improved crop management. KASPPA is proud that it has kept the bacterial wilt (BW) level of its seed below 1.0% (almost as good as the national system). Simple on-farm tests have been very effective in identifying BW. This is exciting because it means that BW monitoring is reliable, easy, cheap and accessible to every seed producer. Seed bags are labelled according to the multiplier, which ensures farmers have redress in case of any quality control problems.



*KASPPA seed loaded for delivery*

**R8104:** Promoting potato seed-tuber management for increased ware yields in Kapchorwa District, eastern Uganda

**Contact:** Rita Laker-Ojok, AT Uganda, Uganda