



Factsheet

Potato Sector Rwanda

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Rwanda is a small landlocked country in East Africa. It is bordered by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the west, Tanzania to the east, Uganda to the north, and Burundi to the south. According to World Bank data, the population of Rwanda is approximately 11.61 million, of which 52% are women. Between 2001 and 2015, real GDP growth averaged at about 8% per annum. In 2009, agriculture contributed for 34% to the GDP and employed 80% of the Rwandan population. Potato is the second major food crop after banana and the second most important source of calorie intake after Cassava (FAOSTAT, 2010)

Facts and Figures

- The highland areas account for 75% of land under potato production and 93% of production.
- Overall production has increased to around two million tons due to increased land under production.
- Potato annual consumption has increased from 34Kg/person/year in 1986 to 125kg/person/year in 2010 (FAO 2010) and is increasing
- Since 1966 up to 2010, the cultivated area has increased from 9,500 to 130,000 hectares
- The production area increase was followed by production increase from 57,300 to 1,300,000 MT.
- In Rwanda, potato geographical distribution covers at least 7 Districts (Musanze, Burera, Nyabihu, Rubavu, Gicumbi, Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru). The potato seed production is concentrated mainly in Musanze District.
- Production of G3, G4 and Quality Certified Seed (QCS) is done mainly by small land holders. QCS are produced through Farmer Field Schools, supervised by facilitators trained and coached by BTC.

- The new Seed Law includes protection of varieties and breeder rights. (link to gazetted law: [Law No 003/2016 of 30/03 establishing and governing maternity](#))
- Currently, Rwanda has over 70,000 potato farmers grouped in 30 cooperatives that produce over 19,000 tons monthly during the harvesting season.



Picture: potato harvesting of NPT trials of Dutch varieties

Table: Key Irish potato producing districts in Rwanda (2014)
(MINAGRI, Irish Potato Development Strategy)

District	Harvested area (Ha)	Annual Production (MT)	Average Yield (MT/ha)
Nyamagabe	4,293	33,386	7.8
Nyaruguru	8,185	68,100	8.3
Gicumbi	9,081	136,370	15
Bulera	15,726	178,852	11.4
Nyabihu	23,774	430,073	18.1
Musanze	15,215	306,079	20.1
Rubavu	15,985	251,227	15.7
Rutsiro	10,573	128,132	12.1
	102,832	1,532,219	13.6

Challenges

- There is a shortage of Quality Certified Seeds on the market resulting in farmers using poor quality in potato production.
- The intensive use of poor quality seeds and improper crop rotation have contributed to spread of diseases in potato production fields; particularly the late blight disease (*Phytophthora Infestans*) and the potato bacterial wilt (*Pseudomonas solanacearum*).
- The increased disease pressure has led to low potato productivity, reduced food security and increased poverty among potato growers and traders.
- Potato seed production is facing limited private investment in the potato seed production sector and a weak seed certification system
- The changing demand in potato quality attributes leads to an unstructured potato seed market.
- Currently, there is an important gap between the potato seed demand and production. Seeds produced under the formal system represent only 2% while 98% is made of farmer's own saved seeds (informal).

Opportunities

- Farmers are looking for high-yielding, improved varieties to optimize their yield potential.
- The potato sector is in need of improved seed production, variety development, improved production techniques, disease and pest management, marketing, storage and processing


Table: Gap potato seed production

(MINAGRI, Irish Potato Development Strategy)

Season	2015 B	2016 A	2016 B	2017 A	2017 B	2018 A	2018 B	2019 B
Seed Category	Plant lets		Mini - tuber s		G2: Pre- basic		G3: Basic	G4: Cert ified
Target	722,0 83		7,220 ,833		1,73 3 MT		10,40 0 MT	62,5 00MT
Current capacity	165,0 00		1,650 ,000		600 MT		3,596 MT	10,5 00 MT
Difference	557,0 83		5,570 ,830		1,13 3 MT		6,804 MT	52,0 00 MT

The Embassy

The Embassy of the Netherlands in Kigali offers active support to Dutch companies already present in Rwanda and to Dutch companies interested in doing business in Rwanda. In addition, the government of the Netherlands has developed several business support instruments, including financing for demonstration projects, feasibility studies and knowledge acquisition. For more information please visit <http://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-programmes>. You can also contact the Embassy by sending an email to kig@minbuza.nl or calling to +250 280280281.



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