

# Weenen regional meeting highlights

By Damien da Cal, Potatoes SA

The Weenen regional meeting took place on 19 September this year, focussing on updates in the potato industry, research, marketing, transformation initiatives, and regional news. The meeting was aimed at addressing issues raised in the previous session and providing updates on hectare reports. It was well attended by both producers and market agents.

Key discussions included the input cost model and daily stock levels that will be featured on the Potatoes SA app, as well as the impact of black frost on fresh produce markets.

## Research and marketing

Discussions covered topics such as tuber moth, pepper ringspot virus, the *Fertilisers, Farm Feeds, Seeds and Remedies Act, 1947*

(*Act 36 of 1947*) which is nearing retirement, and ongoing trials in KwaZulu-Natal. The value of the kota market was also highlighted.

During a discussion on bag manufacturers and breathable bags, points raised included that paper bags prevent greening in potatoes and that there is a shift from 10 to 7 kg bags. Export opportunities and areas of innovation were also explored.

## Regional news

Producers were generally optimistic about this season. A key issue identified was a shortage of certain cultivars' seed. It was agreed that marketing within the potato industry should be increased. Producers in some areas of KwaZulu-Natal were planting later because of concerns over another cold spell. The hectares planted this winter were slightly more



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than last year, thanks to reduced load shedding. Producers who irrigate were planting full instead of half pivots, as was the case in 2023. Seed quality, according to a few producers, seemed good.

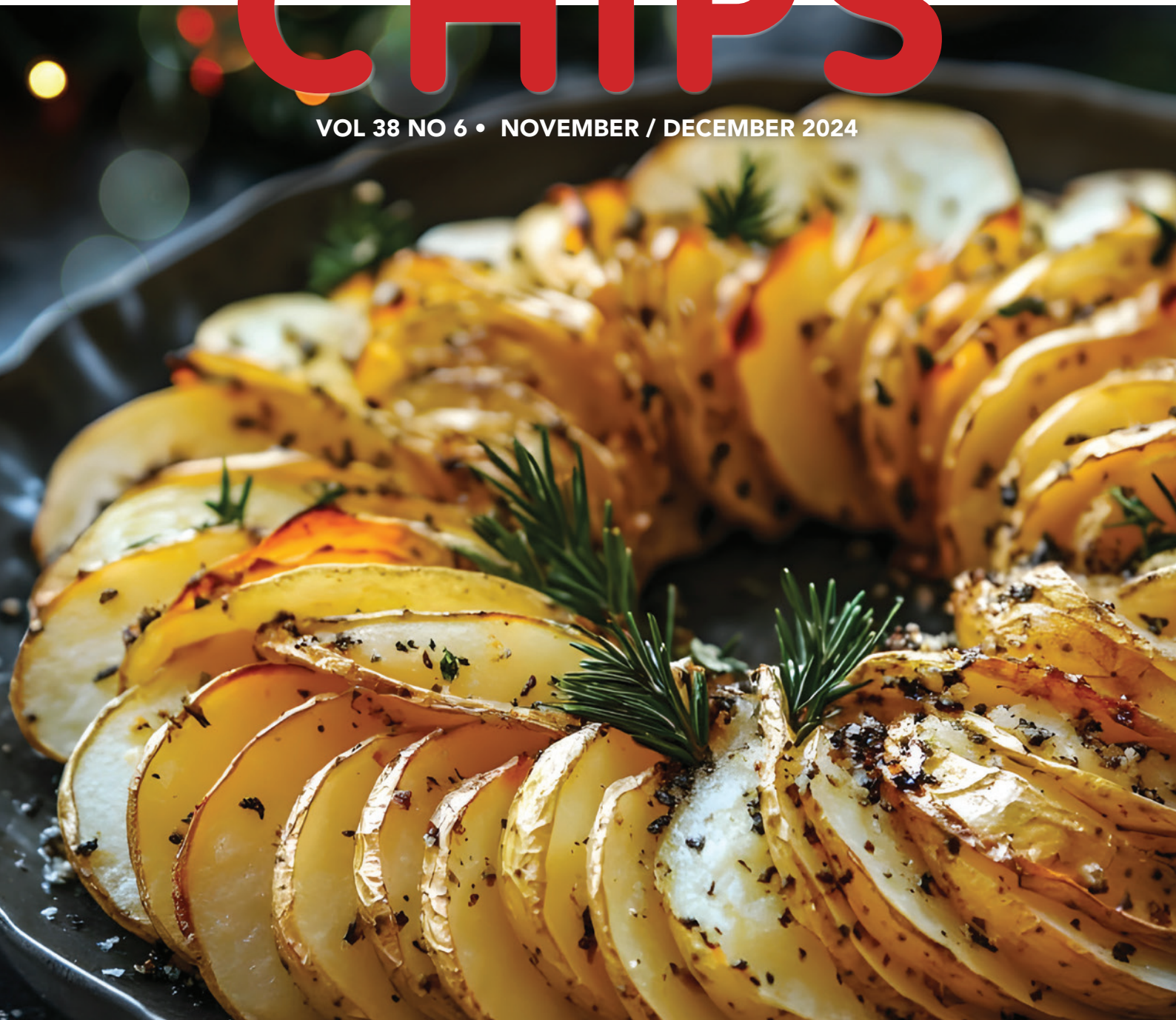
Potatoes SA would like to thank all attendees, as well as Subtropico from the Durban Market for donating the food. 🍌

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VOL 38 NO 6 • NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2024



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