

Mondstuk van die Suid-Afrikaanse aartappelbedryf • Mouthpiece of the South African potato industry

CHIPS

VOL 36 NO 2 • MARCH / APRIL 2022

**LIMPOPO-KULTIVARPROEF
ONDER BESPROEIING
OP DENDRON IN 2021**

**DIE AARTAPPELBLAARMYNER:
BEHEEROPSIES
TEEN DIE PAPIES**

**Kultivarprestasie op
varsproduktemarkte**

**A diversified approach
for greater liquidity**

**#PassThePotato:
Giving back is good business**



New partnership with development agency to develop farmers

By Louis Pretorius, Potatoes SA

There are many development agencies throughout South Africa, and to develop farmers from small beginnings into fully fledged commercial producers is the ultimate goal. This allows for selecting farmers who are passionate about what they do.

Moreover, starting small and developing into bigger enterprises also eliminates the risk of greater financial losses at the early stages due to the high input costs of potatoes and the learning curve early on for successful production.

The goal is to make a profit as passionate farmers develop into entrepreneurs and successful commercial producers. Joining development agencies makes



economic sense because a combined effort and joining of resources are very important, given the price volatility of potatoes at markets.

Expanding commercial production

Potatoes SA (PSA) and the Joe Gqabi Economic Development Agency (JoGEDA) signed a memorandum of understanding to develop black farmers in the Northeastern Cape, near the town of Ugie.

Mzamo Bobi from JoGEDA in Aliwal North identified four farmers near Ugie, who have the potential to develop into commercial farmers. PSA and JoGEDA embarked on a pilot programme late last year to plant two projects at Ugie to test the possibilities of expanding into commercial production in the future. The Ugie region is well suited for potatoes and is blessed with good soils and very high annual rain fall.

PSA sourced suitable cultivars for the project trials and implementation of the trials started at the farm of Ms Mkosana in November 2021. It was specifically done during this time, as rain is abundant in that month and the project was conducted under dryland conditions.



The training involved the following:

- **Land selection:**

How to choose suitable land considering soil sample results as well as potential deep soils with adequate drainage. This is necessary given the high input costs of potatoes. The land must also be fenced off to prevent animals from destroying it.

- **Land preparation:**

Demonstrating proper land preparation using a tractor and suitable implements. Potatoes need a well prepared, loose, fine seedbed with no excessive clots.

- **Planting process:**

- o Using a suitable implement to open rows for planting by hand.
- o Suitable cultivar selection.
- o Correctly calibrating fertiliser application before planting, taking soil sample results into consideration.
- o Correct seed potato spacing for the size of seed potatoes used.
- o How to include spraying rows to prevent damage during spraying that can cause blight infection.
- o Covering the seed potatoes with soil.

- **Use of chemicals:**

- o Demonstrating the application pre-emergence herbicides straight after planting.
- o Supplying all chemicals needed for the projects in terms of blight control and insecticides, with instructions for use.

PSA regularly visits the projects to assist farmers with managing the crop. After harvesting, an information day will be held to discuss the results achieved. 🟢

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