



## New potato varieties for Malawi

*In support of the Malawian government's commitment to diversify and transform the country's agriculture into a sustainable and economically-viable sector, the International Potato Center (CIP), with funding from Irish Aid, is implementing a five-year project (2016 to 2021) entitled "Root and Tuber Crops for Agricultural Transformation in Malawi."*

The project goal is to strengthen the contribution of roots and tubers to a diversified, productive, and resilient agricultural sector that provides food security, nutrition, incomes and employment. Along the potato value chains, CIP and the Department of Agricultural Research Services in Malawi (DARS) are committed to develop high-yielding varieties that are tolerant to late blight diseases for increased potato productivity.

To this end, DARS and CIP have added to a list of available potato varieties for production in Malawi. The newly-released varieties have a good profile for late blight



**The newly-released varieties** have a good profile for late blight disease resistance

disease resistance – a disease that continues to negatively impact yields in most potato-growing areas of Malawi.

The varieties (Figures 1 to 4) were introduced by CIP's regional breeding program in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2013. They have been evaluated for adaptability and resilience to local environmental conditions and have high yielding potential. These varieties satisfy local Malawian potato farmer preferences, including storability, cookability, market appeal, and tolerance to major pests and diseases. Seeds of these varieties can be accessed through CIP and various stations of DARS.



## 1. Mpatsa

An early-maturing variety (90-100 days after planting), Mpatsa has a yield potential of greater than 36 tonnes per hectare. It has a cream-colored flesh and skin and the variety is good for cooking and frying (French fries/chips).

## 2. Mtukulapakhomo

Mtukulapakhomo matures quickly (90-110 days) and produces approximately 30 tonnes per hectare. It grows well in most potato producing districts of Malawi. The tubers are round, with cream skin color and white flesh. Mtukulapakhomo is good for boiling, mashing and French fries, and has moderate tolerance to the late blight strain, Chiwawu.

## 3. Ufulu

Because of its strong tolerance of late blight disease, farmers call this variety Ufulu (freedom). Ufulu matures in 90-110 days and produces up to 30 tonnes per hectare under normal growing conditions. The tuber are oval in shape, the skin is white, and the tuber flesh is cream-colored. Ufulu has a moderate dormancy period of (60 days) and has shown itself to be good for boiling, mashing and French fries.

## 4. Kaso

This new variety has a smooth appearance and good-looking tubers; for this reason farmers call it Kaso (appealing) Kaso produces 30 tonnes per hectare under normal growing conditions and matures within 90-110 days. This varieties dormancy period is 60 days, the tubers are big and oblong, and the skin is cream-colored with white flesh inside.

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