

Accelerated value chain development (AVCD) program Root crops component

Guide for storage of ware potato

Only store the best potatoes

Storing quality potatoes begins in the field during the growing season

- Only store good quality potatoes. If any potatoes are rotting, damaged or coming from diseased fields, these potatoes must be eaten or sold at harvest
- Storing only a few rotten potatoes can result in great losses in storage
- During the growing season, mark areas infected with bacterial wilt to avoid storing potatoes harvested from these infected areas
- Do not store potatoes from plants infected with bacterial wilt, these potatoes should be sold right after harvest
- Do not store potatoes that have been damaged during harvest or are starting to rot, these potatoes should be sold right after harvest



Potato infected with bacterial wilt



Potato plants after de-hauling

Harvest practices for better storability

- Only store potatoes harvested from mature plants
- De-haulm plants 10 – 15 days before harvesting
- De-haulming is killing the plant above the soil – usually by cutting the stem at the soil line
- De-haulming is essential if potatoes are to be stored as this allows the skin to thicken to protect from handling and transport injury, as well as postharvest diseases
- De-haulm during dry conditions
- Harvest potatoes gently, most injury to potatoes occurs during harvest

In case of late blight infection

- If a crop shows symptoms of late blight it is important to avoid storage of the potatoes becoming infected with late blight
- De-hauling will assist to stop potatoes from becoming infected with late blight
- If a crop is infected with late blight, de-haulm when 20 – 25% of foliage is killed by late blight
- Potatoes infected with late blight can rot in storage



Potato infected with late blight

How to store potatoes inside the stores

- After following the good practices of the previous page, it is still important to select good quality potatoes for storage and remove all rotten, damaged and diseased potatoes
- **Do not store any potatoes suspected of being rotten, diseased or damaged**
- Keep potatoes in the dark to slow down sprouting → exposure to light promotes sprouting
- Monitor stored potatoes regularly and remove all rotten potatoes and those adjacent to any rotten potatoes

Crates

- Store in crates if possibility of rotten or damaged potatoes. Thus if some potatoes are rotten the crates will limit the spread of rot to more potatoes in the store
- Crates also make it easier to trace when different harvest lots are put in the store
- Suitable for long term storage, 2 – 3 months



Bulk

- Potatoes can be bulk stored if all potatoes are of good quality and there is low risk of a few rotten potatoes creating a rotten nest in the middle of the piles
- A bulk pile up to 2 m in height
- Bulk piles can be right up to the walls, no need to leave a space between the pile and a wall
- Bulk piles are suitable when it is not necessary to trace certain potatoes to a harvest lot or owner
- Suitable for long term storage, 2 – 3 months



Bags

- Potatoes should only be stored in bags for short term storage, maximum to 3 weeks
- Store bags upright, not on their side
- Only store good quality potatoes in bags
- Bags restrict air flow thus if a rotten potato is in the bag, the remaining potatoes can rot quickly



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Funded by United States Agency for International Development, the three-year Feed the Future Kenya Accelerated Value Chain Development (AVCD) project program seeks to widely apply technologies and innovations for selected value chains in order to competitively and sustainably increase productivity, contributing to inclusive agricultural growth, nutrition and food security in the country. Focusing on the livestock, dairy, and staple and root crops value chains in 21 counties in Kenya, AVCD aims to lift 326,000 households out of poverty. The potato value chain component, managed by CIP, seeks to expand the seed system, increase production and productivity of smallholder farmers, and support coordination in the value chain by developing farmer institutions to support marketing for member farmers.