**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

***Potato infected with bacterial wilt***

* Do not store potatoes that have been damaged during

harvest or are starting to rot, these potatoes should be sold right after harvest

**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

***Potato plants after de-haulming***

* 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-haluming 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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