



NEWSLETTER



Capacity building for food security through sustainable potato value chain development in Rwanda (NICHE/RWA/185).

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Introduction

By **Carel Jaspers, Director Q-Point BV**



The project "Capacity building for food security through sustainable potato value chain development in Rwanda" is a project of the University of

Rwanda (UR) and the Q-Point consortium. The project's objective is that UR-CAVM contributes to sustainable food security systems in Rwanda through increased productivity of the potato value chain through provision of qualified graduates and relevant research programmes. Development of gender sensitive curriculum based on labour market needs and linkage of UR with private sector and other important stakeholders to collaborate in applied potato research projects are important elements of this project. We invite private companies to participate in this project.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.
Carel Jaspers, director Q-Point

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Development of free diseases plantlets

By **Obedi Nyamangyoku, project coordinator and Senior lecturer at former Higher Institute of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry**



I am working on potato since 2009, year of my recruitment, as Senior lecturer at former Higher Institute of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, now one of the Campuses under the College of Agriculture, Animal Sciences and Veterinary Medicine. For the project RWA 185, I was involved from the beginning; conception and proposal writing. The proposal was sent to NUFFIC for funding in 2012 and the acceptance

letter was obtained in March 2013. Then the decision for award has been obtained on April 2014.

The main constraints to potato production in Rwanda, are mainly:

- Inappropriate and degenerated seeds;
- Bad farming practices;
- Diseases and pests that ravage the field;
- Low nutrients content in soils.



For potato tissue culture the purpose is to produce free potato diseases plantlets by using meristem cells.

To contribute to solve these constraints, the setting up of quality seeds which resist to disease & pests and are adapted to the soil and climatic conditions seems to be a sustainable solution to all these problems. Therefore, before to get the award, activities on potato were conducted and were mainly focused on potato tissue culture, potato cleaning seeds, potato seeds production.



Potato offshoots.



Potato tissue culture.



Then get potato mini-tubers after cultivating plantlets in greenhouse.

Potato cleaning seeds was done mainly in farmer's field. As many varieties produced by farmers are degenerated due to viruses attack. It consists to establish farm demonstration experiment. As far as the impact of clean seed on potato production was concerned, plots of clean seed were established in parallel of unclean seed. The clean seed was produced by RAB (Rwanda Agriculture Board) while the unclean one was produced by farmers themselves or they bought it from their neighbors.



Evaluation in the field with farmers.

Training on Irish potato and curriculum development in Musanze

By Erno Bouma, HAS University of Applied Science, Den Bosch and Lecturer/coordinator Crop Protection and Crop production, Horticulture & Business Management



During the five day training period (February, 23–28) we trained the participants in practical and up-to-date scientific skills in sustainable potato production, on the following topic of the potato value chain:

- Soil management, soil fertility and fertilization;
- Seed potato production system;
- Cultural practices eg. Numbers of tubers and stems per hectare;
- Integrated Pest and Disease management;
- Potato quality, storing of potatoes, creating added value (grading/packing/processing);
- Relation between weather & efficacy of Plant Protection Products;
- Application techniques.



The Rwandese participants of training on Irish potato during a field trip in a potato field. The symptoms of a typical Potato fungus were shown.

Theory and didactics

During this training week, we did not follow the normal teaching principle of presenting the study material by oral lessons. We took another approach. First a part of the theory was explained. When this part was finished, a tailor made PBL (Problem Based Lesson) assignment was worked out by the participants in small groups, to implement the new theory in a practical assignment that has to be worked out.



During the field trip, the Rwandese participants could estimate the number of sprouts and stems of the potato tubers.

In this approach the participants could prove if they had really understand the theory, but also there was a social part of the training (to work together in groups). At the end of every PBL-session, one of the participants had to present the results of the PBL-training; so to give a solution of a Rwandese potato production problem.

Furthermore we have organized two field trips to Busogo Campus, to try to get more field experience by the participants. In the potato fields we showed the participants how one can recognize potato viruses, fungi like: *Rhizoctonia* and Late

Blight. But also how to count the number of stems per square meter/hectare and how one can control if the roots are infested with nematodes. By digging a hole in the soil, the participants could judge the soil texture and structure and the quality of the root system. It is also a simple way to judge if soil moisture content is still high enough for plant growth.



Harm Brinks (DLV-Plant) explains the Rwandese participants what important points should be taken into account before the choice of the parcel to grow Irish potatoes.

Practical training on sustainable potato value chain development in Rwanda

By Harm Brinks, Coordinator Organic Agriculture DLV Plant



In the framework of the Niche Program "Capacity building for food security through sustainable potato value chain development in Rwanda", development of specific Irish Potato curriculum and courses and short term training are main activities. The first training on sustainable crop management of potatoes for staff of CAVM and extension officers took place from 23 to 28 February.

Topics in the training were:

- Soil management and fertilization;
- Crop protection;
- Cultural practices and seed quality;
- Harvest and post-harvest treatment of potatoes;
- Requirements for processing industry.



The training was a mix of theory and working with the theory, based on the concept of the Problem Based Learning method. It is the first step towards the development of a curriculum. The training materials, the skills and knowledge will be used for curriculum development and potato courses.



Soil analysis, soil fertility, choice of fertilizers and organic matter are discussed. Participants calculated a mineral balance and soil organic matter balance.



Soil management and fertilization.



Soil properties were discussed in the field. After digging a hole, soil texture, soil structure, rooting depth, compacted layers are made visible.



Crop protection.



The principles of integrated pest management in potatoes were the key issue. Quality of seeds, control of potato late blight and virus control in seed potatoes are crucial points on the way to higher yields and better quality of potatoes in Rwanda. Certified seeds are requested by farmers, but only for 10-15% of the total acreage certified seeds are available.



The participants did a field monitoring in two potato fields, judging the infection rates of late blight, virus, rhizoctonia, alternaria and presence of vector for virus transmission.

Training “Leadership and People Management” and “Change Management” in July 2015

By Victor Volkerts, trainer Q-Point BV



The University of Rwanda unites seven previously independent institutes, which implies organisational changes in structure, procedures, style and culture, and therefore personal change for leaders and staff of the university. The senior and mid-level managers participating in the training, as well as their staff, had just heard in which position and location they serve henceforth, and may be happy and/or sad about their new location and role. While training in “Leadership and People Management” (LPM) and “Change Management” (CM) always aim to help leaders to achieve more with their staff and deepen their job satisfaction, in the context of the posting decisions and on-going change process, the training was

particularly timely to help the participants cope with the changes they face.

The two programmes, LPM and CM, were jointly offered by Diederik Prakke from MDF and Victor Volkerts from Q-Point respectively. Both trainers focused on transformation and experiential learning, rather than simply exposing the participants to information and ideas.



Work as a team and consider the advices of the others and work together.



The participants of the Training "Leadership and People Management" and "Change Management" together with trainers Victor Volkers (front row) and Diederik Prakke (back row).

Project management meeting

By Olivia Ansenk, trainer Q-Point BV



I had the fortunate opportunity to be involved in fruitful meetings and discussions with CAVM during our mission in October 2014 to agree on the project approach (Logical framework, Workplan etc.) and the MOU (memory of understanding) (with annexes). Project management staff of CAVM smartly involved CAVM staff members that are actively involved in other projects to critically look at the project plan to harmonize and compliment all activities in

projects involving CAVM. The new relations were blessed by a dinner and some drinks, to be continued in a linked in discussion group. The purpose of this linked in group will be for linkage and streamlining activities through sharing the TORs of all TA missions that will take place under the various CAVM projects, thus sharing information and exploit possibilities to join activities or even divide activities between the projects on cross cutting outcome levels.



Workshop MOU(memory of understanding).



Workshop MOU.



Workshop MOU.



Projectteam.

Partners



Q-Point BV
The Netherlands



DLV Plant
The Netherlands



HAS Den Bosch
The Netherlands

Requesting organisation



**College of Agriculture, Animal
Sciences and Veterinary
Medicine(CAVM)
Busogo Campus in Rwanda**

Donor

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Colophon

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