**FAQs**

**Potatoes and Sweet potatoes**

Which potato and sweet potato plantlets and mini tubers varieties are available at Kutsaga?

**Potato:**
- Amethyst, BP1, Garnet, Diamond, Mnandi, KY20, KY89, Montclaire, Mondial, BSS296, Jasper, Pimpernell

**Sweet Potatoes:**
- Mozambican White (white skin, white flesh)
- German 2 (Red skin, yellow flesh)
- Brondal (Red skin, white flesh)
- Chingovha (white skin, yellow flesh)

Place orders 4 months in advance

**Publications**

TRB Kutsaga Research Station Library has several publications which are available at a nominal fee that can assist in tobacco seedbed, field and curing management to maximize economic value for the tobacco grower.

**How can I pay for TRB products and services using Ecocash?**

A: Use TRB Ecocash merchant code which is 44902

**TOBACCO GROWING REGIONS**

**Key:**
- Fast Growing
- Medium Growing
- Slow Growing
- New Areas

**Slow Ripening Area (e.g. Ruwa)**
All Varieties, but, avoid late planting of slow ripening varieties like KRK29, T71.

**Medium ripening (Mvurwi)**
ALL varieties

**Fast ripening (Karoi)**
Avoid KM10 and its hybrids (KRK8, KRK22, KRK23, T61, K RK62)

**Phone:** +263 - 4 - 575 289 - 94
**Fax:** 263 - 4 - 575 288
**websites:** www.kutsaga.co.zw,
**email:** tobres@kutsaga.co.zw
**Econet caller service:** dial 144 using an econet line
SEEDBED

Can one establish seedbeds in December?
A: This is not permissible since seedbeds require 3 months before transplanting thus will fail to meet the 31st of December seedbed destruction deadline.

Which herbicide can I use in combination with a nematicide in the seed bed?
A: Command.

Can one use a mother bed for seedling production?
A: Yes and growers are urged to contact TRB for assistance.

What chemical can I use to control pests destroying my seedbed?
A: Bring a sample of the pest and damaged plant to the Kutsaga Plant Clinic for diagnosis before correct measures can be recommended. If not able to do the above send a close-up photo of the pest and damaged plant for possible advise.

Burning vs fumigation for tobacco seed bed.
A: Burning is not recommended as it usually results in poor weed control, poor nematode control and possible emergence of mushrooms.

Does TRB have a stop order facility for seedlings?
A: Yes, but only to credit worthy growers of which a 50% deposit is required at booking. Contact our Business Development office on 0712 886 946 or TRB general lines 575290-4.

TRB seed with purported poor germination.
A: Our seed undergoes rigorous germination tests before it is sold. However, growers should contact the TRB should they face any problems.

What is GLIS (Group Loan Input Scheme)?
A: Growers working in a group receive floatated system inputs from TRB for cash or through the stop order system and raise tobacco seedlings cooperatively with TRB technical support.

FIELD

Do you train new tobacco farmers?
A: Yes, training is available for free at TRB every Wednesday from 9 am to 12 noon, at nearest Tobacco Improved Productivity Sites (TIPS) on a calendar based program and on request from growering.

Where do I get a Grower’s number?
A: Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB)

Which varieties are giving the highest yields?
A: All Kutsaga varieties give high yields of 4 - 5 t/ha if managed well. The highest, however, are K RK64, K RK66, T71 and T72.

Which variety is best for my soil or area?
A: Choice of variety is based on growing region.

What soil types are best to grow tobacco varieties?
A: Most suitable soils for flue cured tobacco are sandy to sandy loams. The crop can be grown on heavier soils with proper nutrient management particularly nitrogen.

What are the fertilizer recommendations? Basal, AN
A: These are based on soil analysis, therefore samples should be brought to Kutsaga or seed selling points.

Is there merit in using foliar fertilizers?
A: There is no merit if the recommended fertilizer program is followed.

How much does a full soil analysis cost?
A: $31 for tobacco and $48 for non-tobacco crops. These can be paid for through cash or stop order facility.

What causes early flowering?
A: Any form of stress, drought, inadequate fertilizer, poor land preparation or seedlings kept for too long in the seedbed. Remedy- ratoon the crop and let the 2nd or 3rd bud from the top grow to give the required leaf number.

Can I plant all my fertilizer?
A: Yes, both the compound and ammonium nitrate (AN). However, it requires proper placement and close crop monitoring as AN might leach before plant uptake.

Can I apply lime in the planting hole?
A: No, our research shows that lime requires thorough mixing with the soil and ample reaction time for pH adjustment, thus it should be applied at least 2 months before planting by broadcasting and disking it in.

What rate of gypsum can I use for growing tobacco?
A: Rate is based on soil analysis, gypsum is only recommended where there is calcium and/or sulphur deficiency. Grower is advised to bring soils for analysis.

Is priming a good practice?
A: The general TRB recommendation is to only remove seed bed leaves. However, research on priming is being done and growers will be informed of recommendations based on the research results.

REAPING AND CURING

What ripening agent can I use?
A: Etherel, although this is not encouraged especially if the leaf is not physiologically mature.

My tobacco is turning black in the barn.
A: Excess nitrogen was applied in the field. Ensure leaf is completely ripe before harvesting.

What are the recommended curing temperatures?
Colouring: 28 – 32 C
Colour fixing: 38 – 40 C
Lamina drying : 42 – 68 C
Midrib drying: Maintain 70 C maximum

I have a problem of sponge.
A: This is caused by reaping overripe tobacco or holding low temperatures for too long in the early part of the curing process. Reap at the right time (fading of green colour, yellow along leaf margins spreading towards the midrib) and temperatures should be advanced as per standard curing practice.

What is the deadline for selling tobacco leaf?
A: Gazetted by the TIMB and is season dependent.

What are the tobacco prices today?
A: Go to option 1 (marketing services) on Ecofarmer.

PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL

Why are banned chemicals still on the market?
A: These chemicals are possibly still acceptable for use on other crops. Growers should check for a valid TRB number and can call the TRB PASS on 04 575289/95.

What chemicals can control Pythium?
A: Metalaxyl (trade names: Ridomil, Acomil, Crater), Fenamidine + Mancozeb (trade name: No blite).

What can control angular leaf spot and wild fire?
A: In the seed bed use Agrigold, all the coppers and Bion. In the field use Bion.

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