

Ad-hoc ZOA presentation on potato cultivation



Minutes | March 7, 2024

- DATE:** 7 March 2024 (14:00-15:00)
- LOCATION:** online via Zoom
- CHAIR:** **Charles Hopkins**, Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSLC) Coordinator
Olga Kuntysh, ZOA Deputy Programme Manager
- AGENDA:**
1. Potato growing as a national crop industry in Ukraine.
 2. Increasing potato yield at the household level.
 3. Recommendations for growing potatoes in private households.
 4. Potato sowing calendar.

Over 40 participants representing more than 17 organizations attended the FSLC partners meeting. Thanks to all the partners who attended in person and online.

Organizations who attended the meeting: GoodWill, WHH, GEM, ERC, PHK, Shchedryk, Mavi Hilal Ukraine, Women's Consortium of Ukraine, Pavel Vyshniakov CF, DRC, HELPUA, ZOA, WFP, FAO, ICRC, Corus International, I Am Kherson, Lighthouse of Revival and others.

ZOA: "Potato growing in homestead plots and Potato Cultivation Calendar"

According to FAO statistics, in 2022 **Ukraine was ranked 3rd in the world in potato production:** 20.9 million tonnes out of 375 million tonnes. Vinnytska, Zhytomyrska and Lvivska Oblast among the **biggest potato harvest in Ukraine.**

In some regions of Ukraine, potato crops occupy 40%-80% of the land area of private households.

ZOA developed **recommendations** for private households **on potato growing** with the following contents:

- Potato Planting Area, the Concept of Monoculture and Crop Rotation
- Applying Fertilisers
- Soil Preparation
- Potato Varieties
- Seeding Material and its Preparation
- Dates and Methods of Potato Planting
- Crop Care
- Harvesting and Sorting for Seed Purposes

ZOA also presented the **Potato Cultivation Calendar**. Usually, the season starts in late April-May, but it depends on the weather conditions and location.

The importance of using new high-quality seed material:

- potatoes accumulate diseases over the years, which affects the yield.
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- the harvest from high-quality seed material is better stored.

Seed materials of the 1st and 2nd reproduction are recommended for renewal or cultivation of new potato varieties at the private household level.

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Applying fertilizers:

- **Mineral fertilisers** (industrial, ash, chalk)
Mineral fertilisers are mostly applied in spring (except for potassium chloride). Complex mineral fertilisers, such as nitroammophoska, are the most common and convenient to use.
- **Organic fertilisers** (manure, humus, peat).
Organic fertilisers are applied both in spring and autumn, depending on the type of soil and the type of organic fertiliser. Organic fertilisers have the ability to release nutrients not only in the year of their application, but also in the following year.

Recommended **protection against diseases and pests:**

- **Insecticides** - for pest control. Most often used to control the Colorado potato beetle.
- **Fungicides** - to combat fungal diseases. The most common are blackleg and soft rot.
- **Herbicides** are used to control weeds. Mostly used at the farm level, use at the household level is not desirable.

Key points that can potentially strengthen the project and make it as high-quality as possible:

- **Cooperation** with the authorities and engagement of agricultural specialists.
- **Cash assistance** for seeds and fertilisers should be provided with information on what seeds, fertilizers or protection products the funds can be used for.
- **Analyse** potential suppliers of quality planting material in the regions where cash assistance is planned.

Meeting materials can be accessed via the link: <https://fscluster.org/ukraine/event/fslc-ad-hoc-meeting-presentation-zoa>