

## POPULARIZING TECHNOLOGIES ON POTATO GROWING IN BAGS

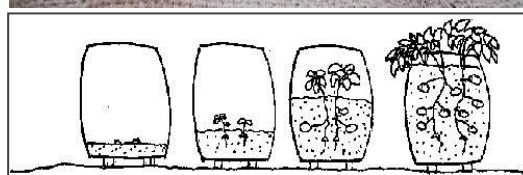
Well-known for the production of potatoes in the urban gardens and terraces, growing techniques in bags can be very useful in areas characterized by scarcity of water and arable land. The DEVNET international initiative in fact is [promoting these techniques in Zimbabwe](#) to form 300 women and also providing assistance to install and support the production of potatoes in bags.

The [Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre of Zimbabwe](#) collaborates actively to the initiative conducting experiments and trials of planting different varieties of potato seeds available in Zimbabwe, using different soil types and levels of nutrient management. To ensure good harvest, the Institute also recommend the right fertilizer to be applied. Based on the results of field trials, a comprehensive training module was developed to transfer the know how to women and men in communities. Successful trainees echoed their know-how to others through community outreach and training of more women. Potatoes are planted in 50 kg woven polythene sacks filled with top soil and grown in backyards and open public spaces.

These technologies are oriented in Zimbabwe to increase the income of women with limited land and limited formal training in horticulture. However, they can be utilized in different ways to increase basic food production. The significant advantages of these technologies, in fact, are as follows:

- Sack potato production can be done on a small piece of land and in public spaces.
- Sacks keep a lot of moisture, the water needed to water the plants is not dispersed in the soil and therefore is significantly conserved
- The cultivation of potatoes is facilitated because there is negligible loss of liquid fertilizer and it is easy to control pests and diseases.

Cultivation method is very easy. The bags can be in polythene or woven jute that is breathable and allows the soil to oxygenate and retain the right amount of water, avoiding stagnation. The bags, high enough to accommodate the growing potatoes that can measure 80-100 cm., are wrapped at the time of sowing and sprinkled on the bottom with a layer of terrain and possibly compost. The sprouted potatoes (3-4) are cut into slices, placed in the soil with the bud facing upwards, and covered with topsoil and compost. As the plants grow the lot is unrolled, adding more terrain and they shall simply be watered when the soil is dry. In two to three months cultivation can make up to 60 potatoes.



In 2008, declared [International Year of Potato](#), FAO published in the web page of the initiative a guide to grow potatoes in bags.

The simplicity of cultivation and the results that can be achieved in a short time in terms of production are the reasons why this method has proved a great success in Zimbabwe. Some other co-operatives are reported to be trying the method out on a medium scale and the national Commercial Farmers Union is promoting these methodologies in the country. The growing of potatoes in bags is becoming popular even in other African countries.

### **To know more**

[Article in DEVNET International website](#)

[Article in The Zimbabwean](#)

[Article in Potatopro Zimbabwe](#)

[Video about the method in Youtube](#)

[Video about the method in Youtube](#)

[Article in Desertification](#)

[Article about the method in Thompson&Moragan.com](#)

[Article about the method in Cursos de huerta orgánica](#)

[Article about the method in Farmcurious](#)

[Article about the method in Unwins](#)

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[Article in the Free State University website](#)

