FarmLens Ltd

Website: farmlens.africa | App: app.farmlens.africa | Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya

Crop details

Irish Potato

Solanum tuberosum

Family: Solanaceae

Categories

Roots & Tubers

Generated: 2026-04-11 06:48

Quick stats

Family	Solanaceae
Typical harvest	18.7 t/ha
Varieties	48
Pests and diseases	96
Seasons	48

Crop profile

Growth habit	annual
Days to harvest	110
Main uses	Boiled, fried, mashed and roasted potatoes, crisps, chips and animal feed from rejected tubers.
Pollination	self
Origin and where it grows	Irish potato (viazi mviringo) is mainly grown in cool highland and upper mid-altitude areas with good rainfall or irrigation.

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	15 - 20 °C
Rainfall	600 - 900 mm/yr
Altitude	1500 - 3000 m
Best pH	5.5 - 6.5
Soil type	Deep, loose, well-drained loam or sandy loam with plenty of organic matter. Irish potato (viazi mviringo) forms better tubers in friable soils.
Row spacing	75 cm
Plant spacing	30 cm
Planting depth	10 cm
Seed rate	2000 kg/ha

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is annual; it grows and is harvested in one season. Harvest typically starts about 110 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for boiled, fried, mashed and roasted potatoes, crisps, chips and animal feed from rejected tubers..

Pollination: Mainly self; healthy flowers and pollinators improve fruit set.

Where it grows: Irish potato (viazi mviringo) is mainly grown in cool highland and upper mid-altitude areas with good rainfall or irrigation.. Grouped under: Roots & Tubers.

Best climate: 15 - 20 °C; 600 - 900 mm/yr; up to about 3000 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 5.5 - 6.5; deep, loose, well-drained loam or sandy loam with plenty of organic matter. irish potato (viazi mviringo) forms better tubers in friable soils..

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

Planting	Use clean, certified or healthy seed tubers about the size of an egg. Plant Irish potato (viazi mviringo) on ridges when the soil is moist, placing tubers with the eyes up and covering with 5–10 cm of soil.
Transplanting	Planted directly as seed tubers; not transplanted from a nursery.
Irrigation	Keep soil evenly moist from emergence to flowering and early tuber bulking. Avoid long dry spells or heavy waterlogging, which reduces yield and quality.
Fertigation	Where drip or sprinkler is available, split N and K into several small applications. Potatoes respond well to balanced NPK but too much nitrogen delays maturity and lowers dry matter.
Pest scouting	Inspect fields weekly for late blight, early blight, aphids, potato tuber moth and leaf miners. Focus on lower leaves, stems and the soil around the base of plants.
Pruning and training	No pruning needed; earthing up (heaping soil around stems) helps protect tubers from light and pests.
Harvest	For ware potatoes, harvest when most leaves have yellowed and dried and skins are firm (do not peel off easily when rubbed). For seed, harvest a bit earlier and handle gently.
Postharvest	Lift Irish potato (viazi mviringo) gently to avoid bruises. Cure in a dark, well-ventilated place for about 10–14 days, then store in cool, dark conditions away from light to avoid greening.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal at planting	0	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	300 kg/ha	N: 51, P?O?: 51, K?O: 51	Apply in the furrow and lightly mix with soil before placing seed tubers.
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2	Topdress and earthing up	30	CAN 26% N + MOP (muriate of potash)	200 kg/ha combined	N: 40, P?O?: 0, K?O: 40	Apply along rows before earthing up Irish potato (viazi mviringo) plants.
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Nutrient requirements

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Basal	60	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	60	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	80	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	40	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	60	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	60	kg/ha
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N	Topdress_early	40	kg/ha
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P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	40	kg/ha

Field images

Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Shangi	KE	90	Very popular, early bulking, good for chips and boiling but shorter storage life.
Tigoni type	KE	110	Good yield, suitable for boiling and mashing, moderate dry matter.

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Local viazi mviringo landrace	KE	120	Traditional taste and adaptation; lower yield than improved varieties.
Shangi	KE	90	Very popular, early bulking, good for chips and boiling but shorter storage life.
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Fertilizer recommendations

Stage	Product	Rate	Notes
Basal	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	300	Provides balanced nutrients for early Irish potato (viazi mviringo) growth.
Topdress (N source)	CAN 26% N	150	Used at first earthing up on moist soil.
Topdress (K source)	Muriate of potash (MOP)	100	Supports tuber bulking and quality, especially in K-deficient soils.
Organic	Well-rotted farmyard manure	8000	Improves soil structure and water holding; apply before final land preparation.
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Pests and diseases

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Late blight	disease	Dark, water-soaked patches on leaves and stems of Irish potato (viazi mviringo), with white mould at edges in wet weather; tuber rots in store.	Use resistant varieties where available, spray protectant and systemic fungicides as recommended and destroy infected crop residues.
Early blight	disease	Brown spots with concentric rings on older leaves, leading to early defoliation.	Maintain good nutrition, especially nitrogen and potassium, and use fungicides where disease pressure is high.
Potato tuber moth	pest	Tunnels in stems and tubers, with frass and webbing. Damage worsens in store.	Earth up well to cover tubers, avoid cracked ridges and use fine mesh or covers in stores.

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Aphids	pest	Clusters of small insects on stems and leaf undersides, sticky honeydew and curled leaves; important virus vectors.	Use healthy seed, monitor often and control high aphid populations early.
Bacterial wilt	disease	Sudden wilting of Irish potato (viazi mviringo) plants without yellowing; brown ooze from cut stems and tuber rings.	Use clean seed, avoid planting in infested fields and rotate for several years with non-solanaceous crops.
Common scab	disease	Rough, corky spots and scabs on potato tuber skin.	Avoid very dry conditions at tuber initiation and keep soil slightly acidic (pH around 5.5–6.0).
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Yields

System	Typical	Min	Max	Notes
Smallholder rainfed (low input)	8	5	12	Local seed, limited fertilizer and basic disease control.
Smallholder rainfed (improved management)	18	12	25	Clean seed, recommended fertilizer and regular blight control.
High input / irrigated	30	20	40	High-yield varieties, fertile soils, irrigation and full spray programme.
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Season calendars

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Highland main season (long rains)	Mar–Apr	Jul–Sep
KE	Highland short-rains season	Oct–Nov	Feb–Mar
TZ	Northern and southern highlands	Apr–May	Aug–Oct
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Region suitability

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Central and Rift Valley highlands	High
KE	Highland parts of western Kenya	High
KE	Hot lowland areas	Low
TZ	Northern and southern highland potato zones	High
UG	South-western and Mt Elgon highlands	High

Source: **FarmLens Ltd** - farmlens.africa and app.farmlens.africa. Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya. This guide was generated from the FarmLens database.