

# POTATO INDUSTRY REPORT



2016/2017





# POTATO CERTIFICATION SERVICE



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# VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

## VISION

Potato Certification Service's vision is to play a leadership role in the pursuit of a sustained supply of healthy planting material for the South African potato industry.

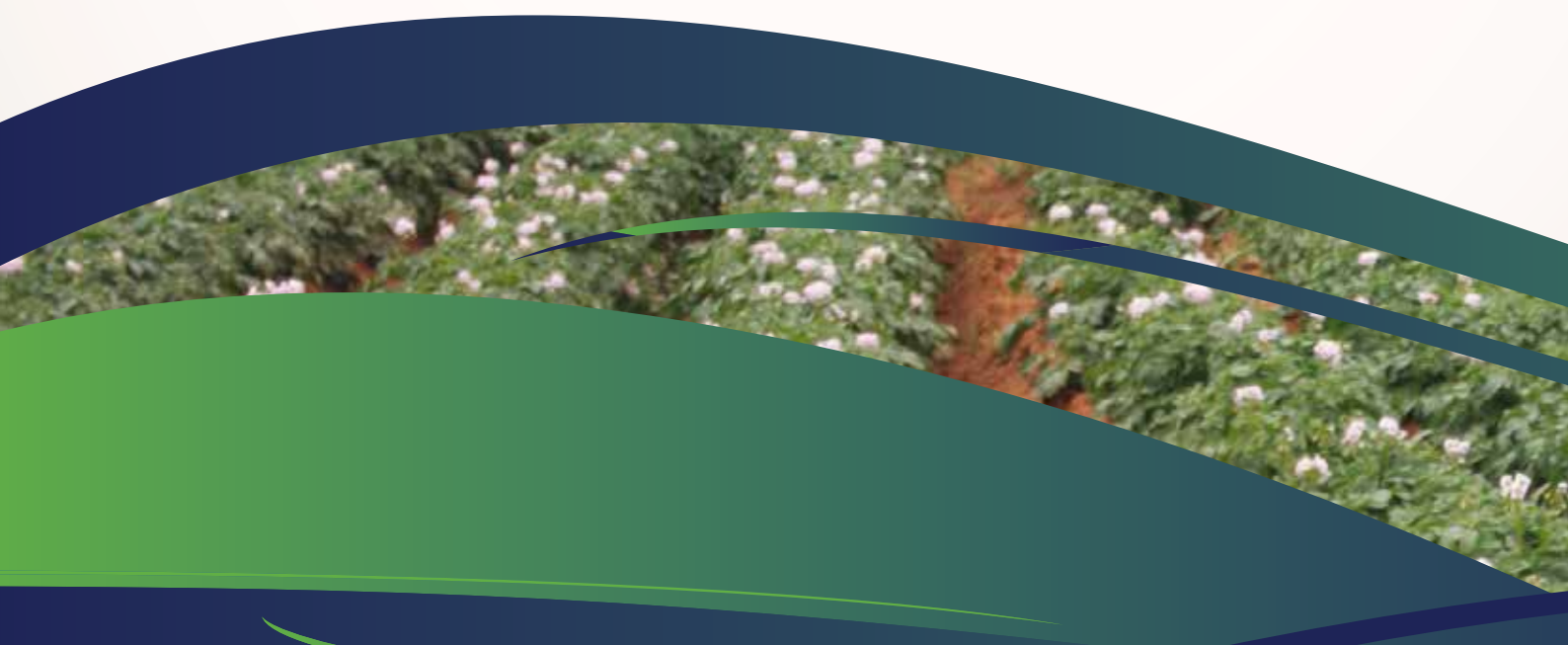
## MISSION

Potato Certification Service's mission is to be an industry-related service, which supports the South African potato industry to perform optimally by ensuring the availability of high-quality planting material.

## VALUES

Potato Certification Service strives towards excellence by living the following values:

- Client trust and satisfaction
- Effective utilisation of resources
- Equal opportunities
- Performance orientation





## REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

### GERHARD POSTHUMUS

Potato Certification Service (PCS) had a good year with a few highlights that stand out.

Over the past year, a lot of time, energy and money have been spent and passionate discussions held to review the industry's structures and the South African Seed Potato Certification Scheme (Scheme), to ensure the seed potato industry keeps pace with change and to determine the way forward for the structures to optimally serve potato producers and other role players.

It has been a little over a year since the ICCSP and PCS corporate governance process began, with wide consultation in the industry. Several workshops were held where an extended task team came up with proposals. Consideration was given to the merger of the authority in terms of the Scheme and its service provider, PCS. Considering the legal implications, a new proposal has been formulated. The outcome of the process is that, as with the Scheme's evaluation a few years ago, the evaluation of operating structures is also necessary from time to time. I am convinced that the proposed structures will improve communication, resulting in mandated inputs and requests, which will bring about buy-in at all levels.

As a non-profit company, it remains a challenge to manage the finances of the company so that it remains affordable to certify seed potatoes. Over the past year, a total of 10 586 hectares were registered under the Scheme, which was 1 277 hectares more than budgeted. Consequently, it led to a surplus which contributed that no increase in the certification tariff was required. Given the value added by certification to your potatoes, approximately R2.88 per bag for certification costs, or 1.5% of the price, is a bargain.

The company has skilled staff who are well trained and capable of inspecting and certifying the 6.5 to 7 million bags of seed potatoes certified annually. The men spend long hours on the road, in the fields and stores to ensure that the seed potatoes that are certified, meet the requirements. In addition, the support of the administrative staff is invaluable. Despite resignations of staff with many years of service, I am grateful to report that all posts are filled and that the company is doing well. Staff, who have been promoted and newly appointed, are progressing well and I am sure we will take certification to the next level.

In respect of my Executive Committee and Co-Directors, I would like to express my special thanks and appreciation for the cooperation the past year. We are entering a new

phase where the board is likely to be much smaller, but taking on their responsibilities with the same commitment and passion. The nomination and appointment of directors for a company like PCS brings great sacrifice and responsibility as you are accountable for the good management of millions of Rands. However, it brings great satisfaction to say that the finances are managed and spent well and responsibly. Thank you again.

My sincere thanks and appreciation also goes to the authority, namely the ICCSP, who appointed PCS as service provider, which is satisfied with our service delivery, as well as the Registrar of the Plant Improvement Act and the rest of the directorates at the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Please allow me the privilege to make special mention of Dr. Keetch and Les Kügel, as co-chairmen of the ICCSP. Your availability, support and input are greatly appreciated.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to Potatoes South Africa (PSA) for the opportunity that PCS

had in managing the administration of the seed potato industry for the past decade. Although it was good at that stage, it is time to hand back the administration to PSA. We wish you all the best and success. However, I believe it will bring about greater understanding, buy-in and commitment of the entire industry. Thank you for the difference you make in the industry at various levels.

Last, but not least, thanks to the seed growers who take the interest of the industry to heart and literally do everything you can to produce good quality certified seed potatoes. Good quality plant material is not negotiable in the production of potatoes. You deliver a product of vital importance to food security.

Kind regards

**G. Posthumus**  
Chairperson





## REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

### SANETTE THIART

Potato Certification Service (PCS) was incorporated on 14 June 1995 as an Article 21 Company without share capital with the first founders as members. The purpose of the company was the certification of agricultural products and, in particular, the certification of seed potatoes. Since then, the Companies Act has been revised and PCS is currently incorporated as a Non-Profit Company without members.

After celebrating 21 years of service delivery to the potato industry, PCS embarked into the future with the theme: "Certify for the Future".

**Looking back over 21 years of certification**, we know where we are coming from, giving us the insight to sensibly determine the way forward.

Prior to the **establishment** of PCS, the Potato Board and Potato Producers Organization's (PPO) Certification Committee was responsible for the certification of seed potatoes. Dr. Pierre Nortjé was responsible for Certification and Research, with Mr. Gerrie de Jager as Head of Certification under the leadership of Mr. Jerry van Vuuren as Chief Executive Officer of the PPO and later Potatoes South Africa (PSA).

The **Scheme** was developed over time, leading to the South African Seed Potato Certification Scheme (Scheme) to be promulgated under the Plant Improvement Act 1976 (Act No. 53 of 1976) in 1998. An official scheme gives international recognition and credibility to certified seed potatoes and promotes trade between countries. It not only allows for export of seed potatoes, but importing promising varieties with plant breeders' rights is only

possible under an official scheme. PCS has the privilege to meet regularly with foreign counterparts, enabling us to compare the Scheme and its application to other schemes.

In June 1997, prior to officiating the scheme, the Minister of Agriculture made it clear that the PPO could not be the **authority** to apply the Scheme, as Potato Seed Production (PSP), where the basic material was produced, belonged to the PPO. The Independent Certification Council for Seed Potatoes (ICCSP) was then designated as the Authority. The ICCSP also received approval from the Minister to use the government logo on its correspondence and certification labels. Mr. Jerry van Vuuren acted as chairman of the first ICCSP meeting, after which Dr. Keetch took over as chairman in February 1998. Although PCS has been appointed as the ICCSP's service provider from the outset, a formal written agreement was first signed on 14 November 2012.

At the inception of the Scheme, the staff and finances were managed by the Agric-Admin Company. As a result of an investigation and PSA's financial crisis, the companies in the potato industry unbundled and PCS registered as employer with SARS in 2001 and took over its own staff and finances to make the company completely independent of PSA. During that time, seed potato producers contributed financially by means of loan levies to keep PCS running.

In 1997, consideration was given to the establishment of a **Seed Potato Growers' Forum**. The Forum was then funded by PSA levy money. Due to the gap between the regional seed potato committees and the Forum, the National Seed Potato Committee was founded on 12 June 2001. The National Seed Potato Committee is the

place where seed potato matters are discussed before referring aspects to the various structures. The ICCSP determines policy and is responsible for the management of the Scheme and PCS's Board looks after the finances and staff of the inspectorate. Mr. Pieter Laubscher was the first chairman of the National Seed Potato Committee and a levy on seed potatoes was based on the number of seed potato bags certified. PCS took over the management and administration of the seed grower meetings from PSA in 2006.

The **independence** of the ICCSP was questioned from time to time, due to the number of seed growers serving on the Council, even though it is not in the interest of the seed growers to relax the Scheme, as they are just as dependent on good quality plant material for sustainable and profitable farming as table growers. The criteria for councilors are continually questioned and reviewed. It was again asked in 2010 whether the seed traders and processors should also have membership, on which PSA was invited to nominate a processor to serve on the ICCSP. In 2011, the National Seed Potato Committee confirmed that it is not necessary to give processors membership, but a second table producer was appointed.

Over the years, PCS staff, seed potato growers and other role-players in the industry have played a leading role in further **developing the Scheme** and improving service delivery to the industry. In 1993, tubers with powdery scab from all regions were collected to determine the extent of the problem and in 1995 it was determined how to deal with Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus and Golden Cyst Nematode. It was also decided in 1995 that post-control virus and variety purity samples should be drawn separately. Due to the major financial implications when post-control results exceeded, it was decided in 1998 to apply the post-control virus per seed lot, instead of the entire block. The diffused light sprout technique for determination of variety purity was phased in over the next 2 to 3 years. DNA fingerprinting for the identification of varieties was also developed.

**Tolerances** for disease occurrence have been tightened over time, but where necessary, dispensations have also been granted to facilitate the management of certain diseases. One such example is the dispensation for the treatment of Silver Scurf / Black Dot. Dispensations give the seed potato growers and the authority the opportunity to gather information and data for possible changes to the Scheme. Any amendment to the Scheme must be scientifically founded and technically justifiable.

**Voluntary downgrading** of seed potatoes was for the first time requested in 1999. In 2008, the request was again rejected and finally granted in 2009 under a dispensation for one generation initially, on 1 July 2014 for more than one generation and on 25 March 2015 also in class. After the dispensation ended in June 2016, it was incorporated as a Scheme amendment.

In the case of **quarantine pests**, *ad hoc* committees were appointed for the management of these diseases. The most well-known committees were the Bacterial Wilt Committee and the *Ad hoc* Golden Cyst Nematode Committee. Since November 2014, these committees were combined in the Potato Quarantine Pest Committee, responsible for all quarantine pests infecting potatoes, as well as for making inputs regarding import requirements and emerging pests that may pose a threat to the South African potato industry, such as the tomato leaf miner, *Tuta absoluta*, and Zebra Chip.

Over the years, **measures** such as rotation periods, isolation distances and compulsory testing have been successful in reducing the number of Bacterial Wilt cases in SA in seed potato plantings from 35 in 1994, to none in 2016. This is certainly one of the biggest success stories of the Scheme. Since 1997, sites, where Biovar 3 of Bacterial Wilt is found, may no longer be used for seed potato production because of the long survival of the pest. At that stage, unregistered plantings could be made with registered plantings on the same unit. Since 1 July 1998, all plantings on the same production unit must be registered.

In 1998, the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) developed a **PCR method** for the testing of **bacterial wilt**, which was then made available as an additional test on a trial basis, which the growers could use voluntarily. The samples were processed at the Du Toit Groente laboratory, after which it was sent to ARC Infruitec for testing. False positives caused great damage and because of the unreliability of the test, it was terminated.

Although Bacterial Wilt is largely controlled and good testing methods exist, there was a major outbreak in table plantings in 2015 of which the origin could be traced to a source of certified seed potatoes. For the first time, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) issued orders and certified seed potatoes were destroyed. Bacterial Wilt is a devastating disease and everything must be done to combat the spread of this disease.

**Virus management** is complex and goes through cycles related to the climate, shift in varieties and the ratio between seed potato and commercial plantings in a region. When commercial plantings in a region exceeds seed potato plantings, the virus pressure increases to such an extent that seed production is only possible with the cooperation of all the producers in the region and applying extreme discipline. The occurrence of Potato Leaf Roll Virus (PLRV) decreased to such an extent that in November 2000 it was considered to treat PLRV the same as TSWV, which is only tested for, if observed. However, PLRV has increased again so that in November 2005, the cut-off value was tightened from 0.16 to 0.1. The prevalence of this virus has increased over the past decade, with 87% of disease-free samples in 2005, which has now decreased to 72% of samples with no PLRV infection.



In 2005, due to the tremendous **virus pressure** in the Sandveld, it was even decided that only plantings planted and killed-off between certain periods would be accepted for certification. In addition, the gene bank was audited to ensure that the virus did not originate from the gene bank. 10% of all Generation 0 seed potatoes were tested for all 7 viruses, and all imports from then on were tested with PCR for PVY and PLRV. The genebank and mini tuber results showed that the base of the seed potato industry is healthy. Now, all imported, and locally established material are tested for all 7 viruses, and PVY and PLRV are tested with PCR to ensure that our sources are disease-free.

The quantities of **uncertificated seed potatoes** planted, resulted in the review of the Scheme in 2010 considering provision for cheaper certified commercial seed potatoes. A task team came up with a proposal, but in 2012 it was decided that the proposed scheme is a change and not necessarily an improvement. The Scheme has passed the test of time and the *status quo* remained.

**Potato Laboratory Services** play an integral role in the certification of seed potatoes. We are privileged to have well-equipped laboratories with competent staff. Testing of samples from unregistered units or the testing of already certified material is constantly requested. The laboratories function under a very strict protocol and code of conduct that supports certified seed potatoes for the industry. Prior to the establishment of the Scheme, the Table System was developed for table potato producers who plan to do a single own multiplication of purchased certified seed potatoes thereby gaining access to the laboratories' expertise and tests. The table producer can use the Table System to help manage the virus situation in areas of high virus pressure, as only seed potatoes, of which the disease content is acceptable, will be planted.

Seed potatoes were originally sporadically **imported** from Scotland and the Netherlands, mainly to obtain better varieties. Due to the phyto-sanitary risk involved in the import of conventional seed potatoes, it was decided that after June 1997, imports of conventional seed potatoes are no longer allowed. Only *in vitro* plants and mini tubers, with zero tolerance for pests, can be imported. The importation of Technitubers® (G0 seed potatoes) caused great concern in 2005 as virus and *Pectobacterium* (Soft rot causing *Enterobacteriaceae* - SRE) were found in some consignments. To level the playing field for imported and locally produced mini tubers, all mini tubers infected with SRE's are destroyed instead of downgraded or allowed to be planted outside the Scheme. DAFF is currently busy with a Pest Risk Analysis as the import of conventional seed potatoes has been requested. The organized potato industry agreed that everything must be done to produce sufficient propagation material locally to meet this particular need and not to expose the potato industry to more risk.

Over the years, PCS inspected on average between 9 000 and 10 000 **hectares** of seed potato plantings and certified between 6 and 7 million 25 kg bags of seed potatoes. These seed potatoes are used to plant approximately 87% of the ±54,000 hectares of potatoes planted annually. Profitable commercial potato production is only possible when there is a continuous source of disease-free planting material. South Africa is in the privileged position that several severe pests does not occur here. *Phytophthora infestans* Mating Type A2, which is not in SA yet, was the cause of a tremendous late blight outbreak, leading to the famine in Ireland. Satisfying a short-term need might result in placing the entire potato industry at risk.

**Looking forward**, with the theme "Certify for the future!", the new era was entered with revisiting the structures in the seed potato industry, starting with governance aspects of the authority in terms of the South African Seed Potato Certification Scheme, the Independent Certification Council for Seed Potatoes (ICCSP). As a result, this impacted on the administration of the meetings, the regional delineation and the composition of the National Seed Potato Committee, which in turn will affect Potato Certification Service.

Besides the normal focus on ensuring good quality planting material, several workshops on the governance matters were held, followed by industry-wide consultation to ensure the best possible environment for good communication, allowing mandated requests and inputs resulting in of well-motivated submissions for objective consideration and approval if in national interest. The input from the regions, as well as the legal team's input regarding proposals for change were discussed at the meetings in June 2016 and was incorporated in the final proposal for adoption by the Seed Potato Growers' Forum.

It was clear that the ICCSP should be empowered (resourced) to execute its purported role to the benefit of the Potato Industry at large. The structures and flow of communication should promote both effectiveness (meet purpose) and efficiency (cost effective), as well as corporate accountability (credibility, integrity and risk management) with arm's length between structures, allowing for balanced and objective views resulting in scientifically sound and technically justified decisions resulting in credible outcomes. It was furthermore emphasized that mandated inputs from stakeholders through official structures will result in the buy-in from growers. The proposed structures should also address fiduciary responsibility and ensure financial transparency.

It has been a challenging year, given the revisiting of the industry structures amidst the normal day to day business. I am extremely grateful for the well-thought through proposals on the way forward. We have embarked on this journey like the Israelites of old with God leading the way. I am proud of the work done and look forward to seeing the benefits of the new structures.

I am immensely grateful to report that PCS ended the financial year (1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017) with a surplus of R2 133 886 after tax, instead of the budgeted surplus of R91 570. The budgeted hectares for the year were 9 309. In total, 10 586 hectares were registered, which was 1 277 more than expected, resulting in this surplus. Thank you to all staff who worked together to get all the work done. PCS is still a going concern and continually strives to deliver a professional and cost-effective service amidst fluctuating hectares.

Each committee member is thanked for valuable inputs assisting us in our endeavours. Without your insight and support we will not be able to do our work properly. To the respective chairmen, Mr. Gerhard Posthumus of the PCS Board of Directors, Mr. Llewellyn de Kock of the National Seed Potato Committee, and Dr. Dave Keetch and Adv. Les Kügel of the ICCSP, thank you for your competent guidance and commitment to the industry. A special thank you to our Executive Committee, Mr. Gerhard Posthumus and Vice-Chair, Mr. Jakkie Mellet, for sharing your knowledge and valuable inputs made in support of our staff.

Despite some regions suffering severe challenges, I wish all the seed potato growers of South Africa a good and productive year. You are again reminded to apply basic good seed production practices, namely: begin with planting the best possible seed source, protect it from infection, rogue from start to end, sort properly and pack the right quantities. You, as the seed potato grower, oversee your seed potato plantings and see the whole process from selecting your seed source to planting, managing, harvesting and presentation of your seed lot for certification. PCS verifies, inspects and certifies the seed potatoes based on findings at certain intervals during the whole process.

Let us work together to Certify for the Future!

**Sanette Thiart**  
Managing Director



# BUSINESS REPORT

Potato Certification Service (PCS) is a Non-Profit Company (NPC) without members, established in 1995, with the mandate to certify seed potatoes.

PCS's vision is to play a leadership role in the pursuit of a sustained supply of healthy planting material for the South African potato industry.

PCS's mission is to be an industry-related service, which supports the South African potato industry to perform optimally by ensuring the availability of high-quality planting material.

PCS strives towards excellence by living the following values:

- Client trust and satisfaction
- Effective utilisation of resources
- Equal opportunities
- Performance orientation

Potato Certification Service (NPC) is contracted as the service provider by the Independent Certification Council for Seed Potatoes (ICCSP), appointed as authority by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. PCS is audited

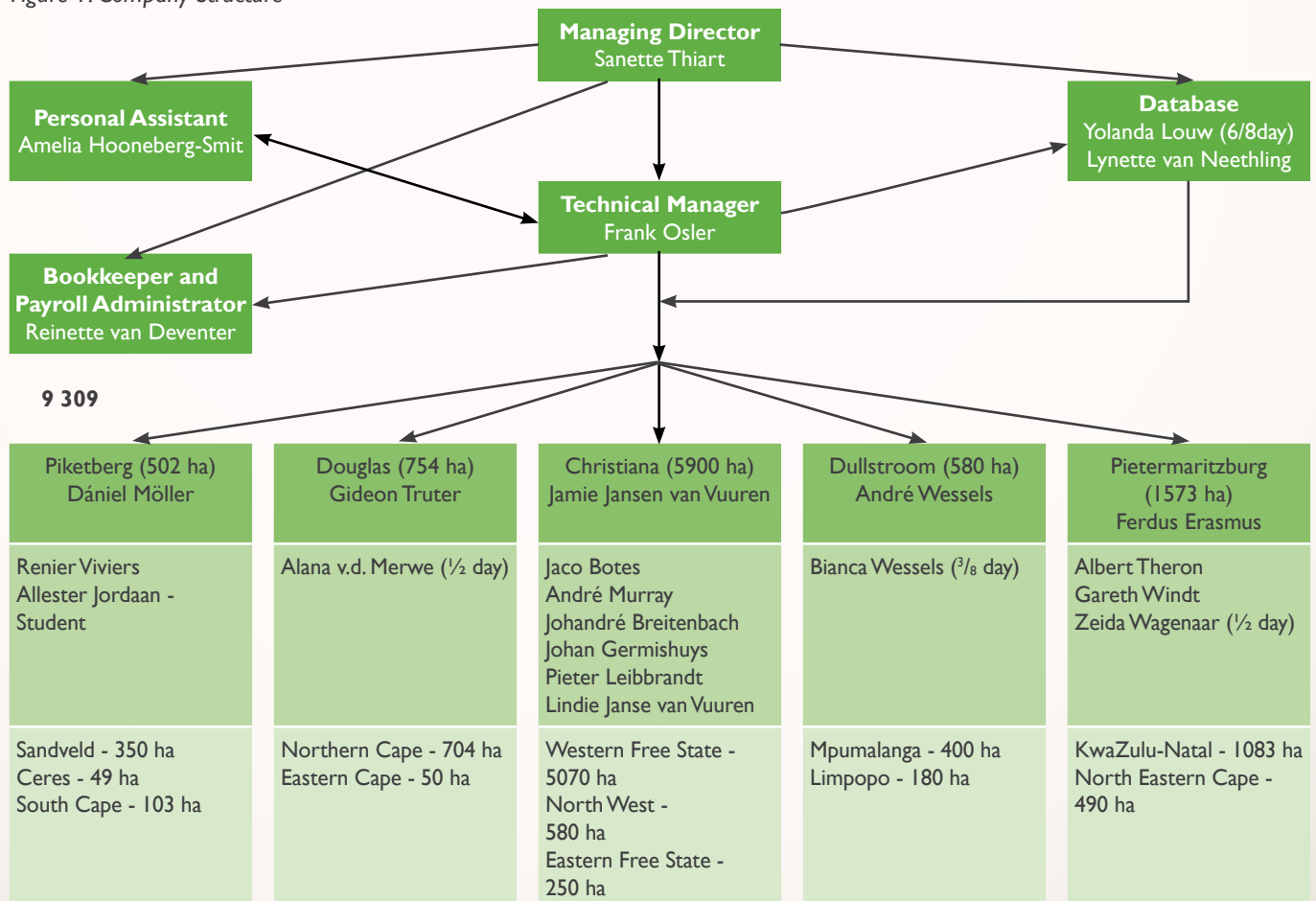
by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), as PCS performs the functions and duties in terms of a statutory scheme. The South African Seed Potato Certification Scheme (Scheme) was promulgated in terms of the Plant Improvement Act, 1976 (Act No. 53 of 1976).

The purpose of certification is to certify seed potatoes of which the phyto-sanitary status in terms of diseases and pests falls within predetermined norms and that are true to type. To ensure the sustainability of potato production in South Africa, the Scheme is based on disease-free material as starting material.

## Personnel

The company's Head Office is in Potato House in Persekor Technopark, Pretoria, with five regional offices located throughout the country, namely in Piketberg, Douglas, Christiana, Dullstroom and Pietermaritzburg. The regional offices and staff members are strategically placed to render the best possible service in the most affordable manner to growers. The structure of the company is reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Company Structure



In the reporting period, the Technical Manager, Frank Osler, one certification official, Renier Viviers, an administrative assistant, Bianca Wessels, as well as the Data-Administrator, Yolanda Louw, have resigned. We wish them all the best with the changes in their careers. André Wessels has been promoted to Technical Manager, Albert Theron was promoted to Regional Manager: Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng with relocating the office to Middelburg. Marlé Theron was appointed as part-time administrative assistant to support Albert, with Sél-Mari van Oordt appointed as Data-Administrator. Johan Germishuys was transferred to Pietermaritzburg to fill the gap left by Albert's promotion. Leon Zietsman was appointed as trainee certification official in Christiana from 1 January 2017. Congratulations to everyone who were promoted and appointed. I trust that you will soon settle in and enjoy a fruitful career in certification.

Once again thank you to all the staff for your tireless assistance of our seed potato growers in producing good quality certified seed potatoes. I am extremely grateful for an exceptional team of committed people who work together to serve the industry.

## COMMITTEES AND FORUMS

The committees and forums within the potato industry constitute organized platforms where most of

Table 1: Board of Directors

Director	Position	Representative for:
Gerhard Posthumus	Chairman	Western Free State
Jakkie Mellet	Vice-Chairman	Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng
Frans Engelbrecht	Director	North West
Llewellyn de Kock	Director	Ceres
JJ van de Velde	Director	KwaZulu-Natal
Niekie Visser	Director	Sandveld
André Coetzee	Director	Northern Cape
Guybon Osler	Director	Eastern Free State
Garrick Christiane	Director	North Eastern Cape
Sanette Thiar	Managing Director	Potato Certification Service

The directors are thanked for their valuable contributions during the consultation process in coming up with a final proposal to the Seed Potato Growers' Forum. Thank you for availing your time and knowledge to the good of, not only the seed potato industry, but the entire potato industry. Whilst revisiting all the structures in the industry, it is envisaged that the Company's Board of Directors will consist of less directors, representative of all the seed growers.

communication with growers and other stakeholders in the industry take place. Aspects that need to be considered at the National Seed Potato Committee are tabled by the regional seed grower meetings. The various aspects are then debated and, if it is in the national interest, the committee refers recommendations and resolutions to the relevant bodies and committees involved in the seed potato industry.

## Board of Directors

The management of the company is set out in the company's Memorandum of Incorporation and Board Charter. The Board Charter is evaluated and reviewed annually to ensure that PCS is managed in accordance with good corporate governance.

The Board of Directors had no resignations in the past year and comprised of nine non-executive directors with one executive director in the Managing Director position. Mr. Gerhard Posthumus was re-elected as Chairman of the Board, with Mr. Jakkie Mellet re-elected as Vice-Chairman. The Executive Committee consists of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director.

The directors comprise of the chairmen of the respective seed production regions, as reflected below.

## Independent Certification Council for Seed Potatoes (ICCS)

The Independent Certification Council for Seed Potatoes (ICCS) is designated as the authority by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The Council comprises of democratically elected seed potato growers, representative of the respective production areas; two table potato producers appointed by Potatoes South Africa

(PSA); a representative from the Agricultural Research Council (ARC); a representative of the Forum for Nucleus Material Producers (NUMPRO), a representative from Potato Laboratory Services (PLS) and the managing director of PCS. The Council has an independent chairman,

appointed by the seed growers serving on the ICCSP. Three representatives of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) attend Council meetings but do not have voting rights. Table 2 below reflects the present composition of the ICCSP.

Table 2: Composition of the ICCSP

Council Member	Position	Representative for:
Dr. Dave Keetch	Chairman	Independent
Adv. Les Kügel	Co-Chair	Independent
Gerhard Posthumus	Vice-Chairman	Western Free State
JJ van de Velde	Member	KwaZulu-Natal
Jakkie Mellet	Member	Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng
Johan Greyling	Member	Western Free State
André Coetzee	Member	North- and Eastern Cape
Niekie Visser	Member	Sandveld
Llewellyn de Kock	Member	Ceres
Frans Engelbrecht	Member	North West
Guybon Osler	Member	Eastern Free State
Garrick Christiane	Member	North Eastern Cape
Sanette Thiart	Member	Potato Certification Service
Marieta Botha	Member	Potato Laboratory Services
Dr. Diedrich Visser	Member	Agricultural Research Council
Dawie Ras	Member	NUMPRO
Jan van Zyl	Member	Table potato producers
Rudi Heinlein*	Member	Table potato producers
Wouter van Amstel	Member	Table potato producers

\*Resigned

The seed potato growers are organised in regional seed potato grower meetings, which in turn, have representation on both the ICCSP and the National Seed Potato Committee in terms of the number of hectares registered, the number of bags certified, as well as the number of seed growers per region. During the period under review, Mr. Rudi Heinlein resigned and Mr. Wouter van Amstel was nominated by PSA's National Council to represent the table potato growers.

Once the proposed structures have been approved by the Seed Potato Growers' Forum, it is envisaged that Advocate Les Kügel will take over the chairmanship as Independent Chairman.

The ICCSP is responsible for the formulation of policy guidelines in respect of the Scheme, as well as to ensure that the Scheme is run efficiently and sustainably in the interest of the potato industry as a whole. It is furthermore the ICCSP's duty to continually evaluate the Scheme and propose amendments where required. The evaluation of

the Scheme in legal terms were finalised and is currently with DAFF for consideration and publication. The Protocol received considerable attention and is in the process of being finalized.

### Regional Seed Grower Meetings

Regional seed grower meetings ensure communication from ground level upwards to the various organisations responsible for the different aspects that need to be addressed, as well as communication and feedback down to ground level. The Chairmen are elected by the growers in the region to serve as the mouthpiece of that specific region and currently still serve on the National Seed Potato Committee, the ICCSP, as well as the PCS Board of Directors.

### National Seed Potato Committee

The National Seed Potato Committee is a committee of PSA and considers matters related to the seed potato

industry, the demand for seed potatoes and issues related to the trade in seed potatoes. The identification of research and marketing needs in respect of seed potato production is also the committee's responsibility. The committee furthermore makes recommendations to the ICCSP about national requirements in respect of the

certification of seed potatoes and proposes amendments to the Scheme. It is envisaged that the composition of the National Seed Potato Committee will include members of all role players in the seed potato industry and that PSA will take back the administration of all seed potato grower meetings.

Table 3: National Seed Potato Committee

Committee Member	Position	Representative for:
Llewellyn de Kock	Chairman	Ceres
Gerhard Posthumus	Vice-Chairman	Western Free State
JJ van de Velde	Member	KwaZulu-Natal
André Coetzee	Member	North- and Eastern Cape
Johan Greyling	Member	Western Free State
Niekie Visser	Member	Sandveld
Jakkie Mellet	Member	Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng
Frans Engelbrecht	Member	North West
Guybon Osler	Member	Eastern Free State
Garrick Christiane	Member	North Eastern Cape
Jan van Zyl	Member	Table producer
Rudi Heinlein*	Member	Table producer
Wouter van Amstel	Member	Table producer
Johan Moolman	Observer	Seed Potato Traders' Forum

\*Resigned

The Chairman of the Seed Potato Traders' Forum or delegated person attends the National Seed Potato Committee meetings as an observer, to address the interests of seed potato traders.

The Chairman of the Seed Potato Growers' Forum is also Chairman of the National Seed Potato Committee and represents the seed potato industry on the National Council and Board of Directors of PSA.

Mr. Llewellyn de Kock was elected as Chairman of the National Seed Potato Committee and the Seed Potato Growers' Forum. Mr. Gerhard Posthumus serves as Vice-Chairman. The two-year term expires at PSA's Congress and the Seed Potato Growers' Forum in September 2017.

### Seed Potato Growers' Forum

The Seed Potato Growers' Forum (Forum) serves as a discussion forum in respect of resolutions related to the seed potato industry. The Forum is responsible for the:

- determination of needs within the seed potato industry;
- identification of research needs;

- identification of needs in respect of the certification of seed potatoes;
- identification of needs in respect of the selling of seed potatoes;
- making recommendations to the National Seed Potato Committee and the ICCSP regarding amendments to the Scheme;
- referral of resolutions to the respective committees;
- for the dissemination of information.

The eighteenth annual Seed Potato Growers' Forum was held at the Gateway Hotel in Umhlanga Ridge, KwaZulu-Natal, on 6 September 2016. The respective chairpersons of the National Seed Potato Committee, Potato Laboratory Services and the PCS Board of Directors provided feedback on the activities of the past year. At the Forum, PCS celebrated 21 years of service delivery to the potato industry.

Mr. JP van den Berg (L 017) was awarded the Bayer Seed Potato Grower of the Year Trophy, with Mr. Frans Engelbrecht from Firna Boerdery (L 002) and Messrs. Kiewiet Möll and Willie Goosen from W&K Boerdery (W 025) as finalists.

## Seed Potato Certification

During the period under review, 10 297 hectares were registered (planting date) by 117 seed potato growers, which included 79 hectares registered for mini tuber production. Currently there are 158 active seed growers. The active seed growers are all the growers who have, for

the past 4 years, registered plantings for certification of seed potatoes under the Scheme.

Table 4 indicates the hectares registered per production region for the planting dates, 1 July until 30 June each year, as well as number of 25 kg bags certified on those plantings.

Table 4: Registered hectares and certified yield

Region	2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016		2016/2017*	
	Planting (Hectares)	Yield (25 kg bags)	Planting (Hectares)	Yield (25 kg bags)	Planting (Hectares)	Yield (25 kg bags)	Planting (Hectares)	Yield (25 kg bags)
Sandveld	487	330 734	644	297 850	339	175 344	204	13 860
Ceres	160	104 826	126	37 036	37	35 690	65	33 438
Northern Cape	581	385 875	674	491 597	849	462 953	1 163	525 841
Eastern Cape	54	20 887	51	29 538	95	68 591	132	20 3002
Western Freestate	4608	2 963 864	4 961	2 923 555	4 996	3 189 880	5 195	959 788
Eastern Freestate	160	119 294	296	235 853	273	73 203	366	256 684
KwaZulu-Natal	1401	1 029 918	1 432	1 081 961	1 417	733 028	1 211	968 625
Mpumalanga	464	362 545	468	389 632	365	211 051	330	292 723
Limpopo	90	76 108	207	171 558	126	99 272	217	105 119
North West	424	887 115	509	973 588	597	1 083 705	717	1 171 559
N Eastern Cape	260	182 805	336	336 952	541	162 695	630	246 977
Southern Cape	89	47 908	76	65 439	149	66 972	66	45 563
<b>RSA</b>	<b>8773</b>	<b>6 511 879</b>	<b>9 780</b>	<b>7 034 559</b>	<b>9 784</b>	<b>6 362 406</b>	<b>10 297</b>	<b>6 640 493</b>

\*Not complete

The Western Free State region currently produces 50.1% of the seed potatoes certified in South Africa. Not all the seed potatoes from the hectares registered in the period under review have been certified.

The **certified yield** per annum varies between 6 and 7 million bags. The number of mini tubers certified annually is more than 11 million, with 11.6 million last year. At present, there are seven mini tuber production facilities that are approved by the ICCSP. They are Rascal Seed Research Laboratories, Potato Seed Production, Advanced

Potato Propagation, Ceres Aartappels, Super Spud Seed Potatoes, Maluti Mini Tubers and Griekwaland-Wes Bpk.

The **generation distribution** indicates that Generation 1 to Generation 4 seed potatoes form the biggest portion of certified seed potatoes (89%), with the G6, G7, G8 and Standard Grade certified at 11%. These figures might change slightly as the final number of bags of seed potatoes certified on the plantings registered late in the reporting period is not yet available.

Table 5: Generation distribution

Generation	2006/2007	2016/2017*
Distribution	25 kg Bags	25 kg Bags
G1	205 461	174 813
G2	555 017	1 023 925
G3	1 536 474	1 685 217
G4	1 792 852	2 447 870
G5	1 144 562	643 577
G6	326 842	408 159

Generation	2006/2007	2016/2017*
G7	97 687	100 573
G8	139 655	131 444
Standard Grade	17 657	24 915
Total	5 816 207	6 640 493

\*Not complete

If one looks at the **variety distribution** of the top ten varieties that were certified during the past ten years, as reflected in Figures 2 and 3 below, tremendous changes took place. Where BPI was the second largest planted variety ten years ago, it is replaced by Sifra. The top ten varieties consist of varieties with Plant Breeders' Rights, except for Up-to-Date, which is an open commercial variety.

Figure 2: Variety distribution as in 2006/2007

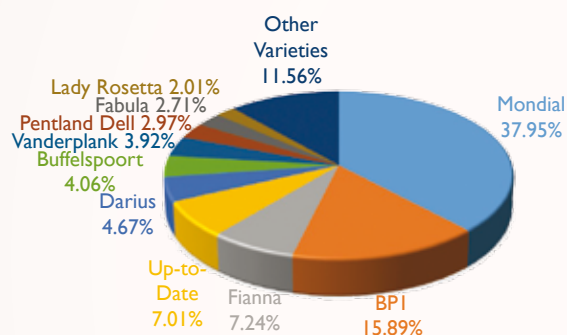
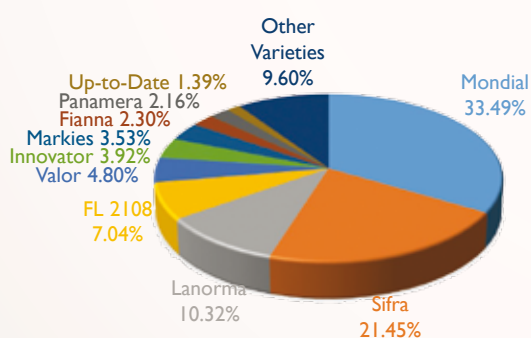


Figure 3: Variety distribution as in 2016/2017\*



The other **smaller varieties** planted are indicated in Figure 4 (2006/2007) and Figure 5 (2016/2017\*). Ten years ago, there were still two ARC bred varieties, namely Caren and Mnandi, but during the period under review there is none.

Figure 4: Composition of other smaller varieties in 2006/2007

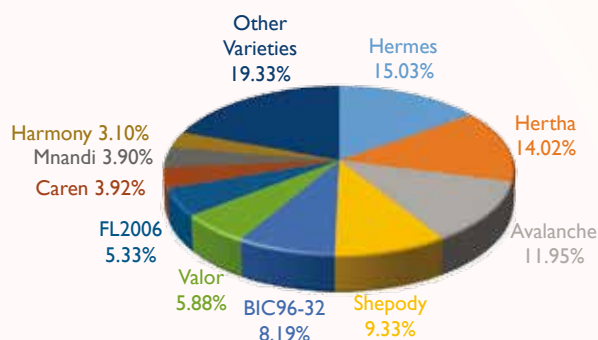
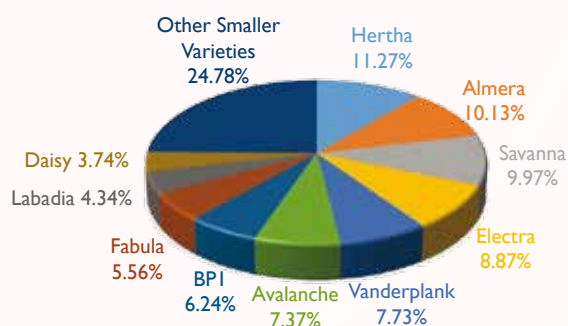


Figure 5: Composition of other smaller varieties in 2016/2017\*

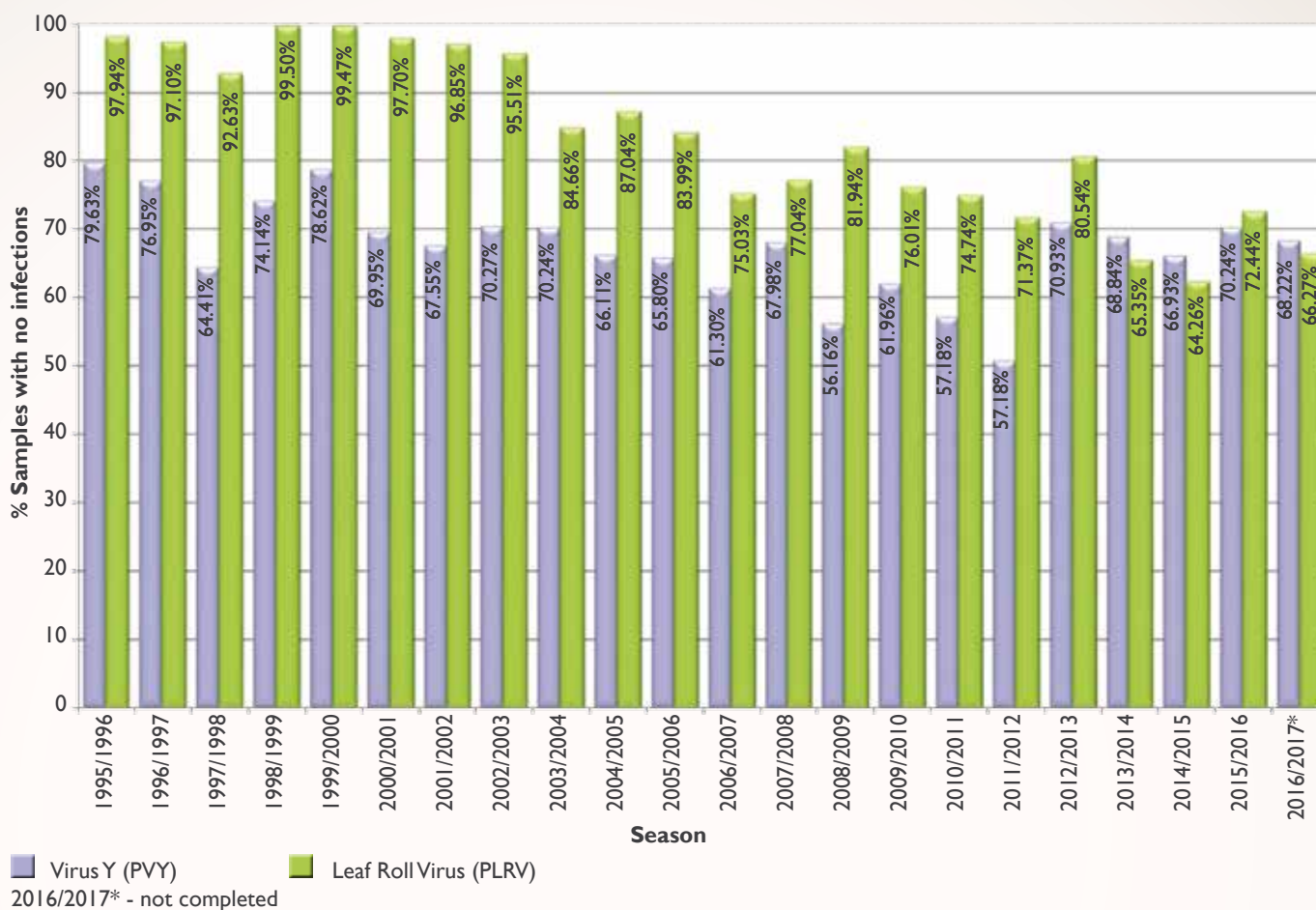


\*Not complete

Regarding **diseases**, Figure 6 shows the percentage of virus free samples nationally. There was a decline, but it seems to be stabilising.



Figure 6: RSA:VIRUS OCCURRENCE (Field samples: G0 – G7 planted)



For the past 4 years, no seed potatoes with Potato Tuber Necrotic Ringspot Disease (PTNRD) were found.

As part of the dispensation for the treatment of seed potatoes for Silver Scurf / Black Dot, record is kept in respect of all certified seed potatoes treated to use this data for motivation when the dispensation expires in November 2017. During 2015/2016 (complete year) 240 172 x 25 kg bags of certified seed potatoes were treated. Most regions treated seed potatoes, except the Northern Cape, North West and Eastern Cape. No complaints were received with regards to treated seed potatoes.

In the reporting year, no *Ralstonia solanacearum*, the bacterial wilt-causing organism, was found in seed potato plantings.

The Potato Quarantine Pest Committee, under the chairmanship of the Directorate Inspection Services, DAFF, is the watchdog of the potato industry for quarantine pests. Bacterial wilt, caused by *Ralstonia solanacearum*, Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN - *Globodera rostochiensis*) and wart disease, caused by *Synchytrium endobioticum*, are officially controlled in terms of the Scheme. Import regulations and biosecurity also falls under the jurisdiction of this committee.

The Scheme is based on phyto-sanitary status, as well as variety purity. Mixing of varieties was only found in 0.14% of all seed certified. Where mixing took place, the growers were notified in writing and the necessary corrective action was instituted. Out of the 7 million bags certified, mixing detected affected only 9 001 bags.

Owners and agents of varieties, were made aware of the labelling required for unlisted varieties and that the labelling must indicate that such material is for evaluation purposes only.

The South African Seed Potato Certification Scheme is scientifically proven, technically justified and provides the reassurance that seed potatoes were certified by qualified personnel, backed by laboratory results. Sustainable potato production starts with planting of certified seed potatoes.

Please visit us at [www.potatocertification.co.za](http://www.potatocertification.co.za).



# PLANTOVITA

