



## Studies on awareness pattern and communication behaviour among potato growers in relation to different diseases and their control measures

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### ABSTRACT

Potato is an important tuber crop which is a staple food to millions of people in the world. The crop is attacked by several diseases, which not only affect production /yield but also affect its quality. For effective disease management strategy, an adequate knowledge of host, pathogen and agro-climate conditions is the pre-requisite. In the absence of proper knowledge with the farmers, most of the diseases remain beyond control inspite of readily recommendations and huge application of pesticides. A study on awareness pattern and communication behaviour among potato growers of Ambala and Kurukshetra districts were undertaken about different aspect of potato diseases. The results obtained indicated that almost all the potato growers were well acquainted with the symptomatology but only few farmers were aware about the weather factors and recurrence of the disease. In most cases, farmers were noticed to spray their crop as a routine practice adopted (*i.e.* after the appearance of disease symptoms) which was also a limiting factor in the perfect disease management. The study on information sources revealed that 75 per cent of farmers were well aware about the KVK's followed by fellow farmers (67per cent) television (56per cent), other sources(42.5per cent), State Dept.'s(32.5per cent), radio (26.7per cent), farm literature (30per cent) and ICT(13.3per cent) . As far as the evaluation of different sources of information is concerned, KVK was considered the most relevant source of information by the farmers.

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### INTRODUCTION

Vegetable crops have an important place in the agricultural economy of India. Potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) is one of the most popular and widely grown vegetables all over the world ranking first in the India. It is one of the most important and staple food crops, which ranks fourth in production after wheat, rice and corn and provides wholesome food (Rhodes, 1982, Shekhawat and Ezckiel, 1999).

Potato is an important commercial vegetable crop thriving well in Ambala and Kurukshetra districts. The vegetables grown in Ambala district are mainly potato followed by cucurbits, cauliflower, onion and radish whereas in Kurukshetra district the vegetables mainly grown are potato followed by leafy vegetables and tomato. In both the districts, the vegetable crops are far from being exploited due to several biotic and abiotic stresses. Occurrence of various diseases in potato crops

not only affect production /yield but also affect its quality (Khurana, 2000). Deformed / disease crops fetch very less/negligible price in the market and farmers had to bear huge economic losses due to poor management strategy (Arora and Khurana, 2006). In the absence of proper knowledge available with the farmers in respect of vegetable diseases, their causes and remedies the farmers suffer a great loss. Most of the vegetable diseases remain beyond control in spite of huge application of pesticides. Although most of the vegetable diseases are very old in their occurrence, studies in detail and informations are readily available in printed form but most of the vegetable diseases are not yet properly managed. The reason being, whether or not, this information has actually been made known to the farmers and in the absence of complete information available to the farmers about a particular disease and its different aspects, these diseases are not yet

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