

# NARO develops high yielding upland maize

**TORORO**

By **Faustine Odeke**

Scientists from Buginyanya Zonal Agriculture Research Organisation (BUGIZARDI) have developed a high-yielding variety of upland maize and barley that are expected to increase farmers' production.

Dr Lawrence Owere, the director of research at BUGIZARDI, said the maize variety is the first of its kind to be developed in Uganda and has the potential to produce between seven to nine tonnes of maize grain per hectare.

"We have been depending on Kenyan highlands and this is the first time Uganda is developing highland maize. The NARO 731 and NARO 733 take a shorter time to mature and are high yielding," Owere said.

Owere also said the researchers have developed maize that is resistant to striga weed. He said the Imazipar resistant maize has a gene that is resistant to the herbicide.

Owere made the remarks while presenting a paper during the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS)/ Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) review and planning workshop organised by the agriculture ministry for Bukedi

sub-region. The workshop was held at Rock Hotel in Tororo on Tuesday.

He said the researchers have also developed an ambient store which can store Irish potatoes for a period of three months without it rotting. He said farmers who used to sell their potatoes cheaply during the bumper harvest can smile since a solution to their storage problems has been developed.

"What makes it ambient is that we use simple technology of grass and cement surrounded by a dark interior with good circulation of air," Owere said.

## **BETWEEN THE LINES:**

■ The NARO 731 and NARO 733 take a shorter time to mature and is high yielding.

He said although it is a little bit expensive, it is worth having than making losses during the bumper harvest. He said they have embarked on modifying traditional stores which can also keep Irish potatoes fresh for up to two months.

BUGIZARDI, an arm of NARO, covers 24 districts comprising the four sub-regions of Sebei, Bugisu, Bukedi and Busoga. It conducts research and develops agricultural technologies.

