

ers



New variety of potatoes developed

KABALE

By Christopher Bendana

Researchers at the Kachwekano Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (KaZARDI) in Kabale district have bred an Irish potato variety resistant to late blight disease.

The new variety was incorporated with a gene from a wild potato from the Andean potato gene pool in South America that was developed by the International Potato Centre.

Late blight destroys the leaves and stems of Irish potatoes.

Dr Alex Barekye, the director of research at KaZARDI, told farmers at the institute on Saturday the region's potential to produce Irish potatoes was being hampered by the diseases that lead to losses of up to 60%.

Patrick Besigye, the Kabale district chairperson, said their hope was in the scientists doing more research on the Irish potato.

Godwin Nkwasiabwe, the acting district agricultural officer for Kanungu, said: "The new variety will give the farmers a good profit."

Abel Arinaitwe, the trial manager at KaZARDI, said: "From our assessments, we have good results."

He said the losses from the disease were about sh400b annually.