



Kibazanga (in checked shirt) handing over 2,400 bags of Irish potatoes to farmers. Photo by Job Namanya

# Govt donates Irish potatoes to farmers

## RUBANDA

By Job Namanya

The Government, through the agriculture ministry, has donated 2,400 bags of Irish potatoes to farmers in Rubanda district.

The potatoes were delivered on Friday at the Rubanda district headquarters by the agriculture state minister, Christopher Kibazanga.

Kibazanga said Government considered this offer as relief to Rubanda farmers who lost their crops during the September 2017 floods.

He asked the farmers to promote the growing of quality potatoes so as to meet the increasing demand for food globally.

"The demand for food currently is worth \$10 trillion globally. If we supported food production right from the grassroots, Uganda could benefit greatly from this demand," Kibazanga said.

He promised to take action against suppliers who engage in shady deals while delivering government items to the farmers.

Kibazanga asked farmers to focus more on commercial agriculture in order to boost their income.

He pledged continued government support for the farmers who prove to be development-minded.

"We shall provide solar-powered irrigation pumps to model farmers and farmer groups in order to boost quality production," he said.

Kibazanga asked farmers to regulate the draining of wetlands for agriculture.

"When government provides

## BETWEEN THE LINES

Kibazanga said the Government offered Irish potatoes as relief to Rubanda farmers who lost their crops during the September 2017 floods.

irrigation equipment, we will ask you to leave wetlands so that you utilise the water from wherever your gardens will be," he said.

Henry Banyenzaki, the director of economic monitoring in Operation Wealth Creation, asked farmers to form co-operatives in order to benefit from the Government.

"If you start co-operatives, expect serious government support. We need to have serious farmer groups that are aiming at development," he said.

Banyenzaki asked farmers to embrace locally available manure and avoid inorganic manure which, he said, was at times not good for their crops.

"If you applied animal dung to your gardens, it would do quite a good work compared to the manure you buy that is processed," he said.

Kenneth Jogo Biryabarema, the Rubanda district chairperson, said farmers face the challenge of fake agricultural inputs on the market.

"Our farmers have been struggling with poor quality manure and other agricultural inputs which have not yielded much for a long time. We hope the Government does something about it urgently," he said.

## KASESE

By John Thawite

Four people have been arrested in connection with the poisoning of 11 lions in the Queen Elizabeth National Park, Kasese district.

The Queen Elizabeth National Park Conservation Area warden, Edward Esalu, said on Saturday, the four suspects were arrested after a

