CUPGRAE Cambridge University Potato Growers Research Association

Seed rate recommendations

RESEARCH FOCUS

The right seed rate is essential to achieving the desired plant, stem and tuber population of any potato crop, helping growers maximise marketable yield. Many factors influence the size distribution of tubers in a crop including inherent biological characteristics of the variety, plant spacing, seed size and seed chronological age.

The general relationship between each of these factors has been distilled by NIAB CUF, in research funded firstly by CUPGRA, then by AHDB Potatoes.

Number of mainstems per 50 g seed tuber

Number of tubers per stem at 100,000/ha

Sensitivity of stem production to increasing seed chronological age

Sensitivity of tubers per stem to changes in stem density



Now parameters for the seed rate model can be derived for individual varieties using experiments which measure a set of key factors (stem population, tuber population, yield and mean tuber size). This enables reliable, varietyspecific recommendations of within-row spacing for given seed sizes to be made.

Within-row plant spacing



CUPGRA promotes the interchange of scientific research and field practice for innovative, sound commercial production of potatoes through its association with NIAB CUF and other research organisations, funding independent, high-quality research.



