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Zimbabwe | Smallholder Technology  
& Access to Markets Program (STAMP)

## SNAPSHOT

# Smallholder Farmer Becomes Certified Seed Producer

**With support from USAID-STAMP, table potato producers diversify into lucrative seed potato market.**



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Godfrey Muwi is the first program-supported farmer to receive official certification to grow seed potatoes. He expects to earn more than \$3,000 from his first harvest of the seed.

**“I started growing seed potato this season and I am happy to become the first communal certified seed potato producer thanks to USAID-STAMP.”**

Godfrey Muwi  
Smallholder farmer

**Telling Our Story**  
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One of the main constraints facing potato growers is the lack of virus-free, high-quality seed. In order to address this challenge, the USAID Smallholder Technology and Access to Markets Program (STAMP) has partnered with the Seed Potato Co-op, a Zimbabwean seed certifying agency, to help smallholder farmers meet the stringent requirements for seed production.

Seed potato production has higher earning potential than growing table potatoes alone, but has long been the domain of large-scale producers. With help from USAID-STAMP, smallholder farmers are entering this lucrative business. The program is working with 245 potato farmers, 20 of whom will become registered seed growers.

Godfrey Muwi, from the Nyanga district, is the first program-assisted farmer to be approved as a seed potato producer. Muwi was able to meet all the criteria and his crop recently passed a final inspection. Criteria for certified seed production include minimum rotation periods, isolation bands, pest and disease control, and ensuring all plants are true to type.

“I started growing seed potato this season and I am happy to become the first certified seed producer thanks to USAID-STAMP,” he said.

Certified seed potato fetches a much higher price than table potatoes. Through the partnership with the Seed Potato Co-op, Muwi is guaranteed the sale price of \$24 per 30 kilogram bag of seed. With an expected yield of more than five tons this harvest, Muwi stands to net more than \$3,000 after paying off his initial investment of \$986. This kind of increase in income is truly transformational for rural farmers.

By following the good agricultural practices he learned from USAID-STAMP, Muwi will be able to produce at least two crops per year. His yields of 21 tons per hectare are on par with large commercial producers, who yield between 25 and 40 tons per hectare.

Muwi is only the first of many growers who plan to become certified seed producers. His success is proving to other farmers that they too have the potential to produce and sell high-value goods, creating a sustainable cycle of economic development.

USAID-STAMP is also working with table potato growers in the area to help improve their yields and incomes through the introduction of good agricultural practices. These growers expect to achieve a 50 percent increase in yield.