



Field Test for maturity

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Introduction

This protocol was produced in the framework of the EUCABLIGHT concerted action (2003-2006). The objective was to develop a harmonised method for testing plant maturity in the field, therefore facilitating the comparison and compilation of data.

Facilities required

A field where the potatoes can be grown. Fungicides (protectants) are recommended to protect the crop. To avoid premature senescence, irrigation in periods of drought is preferred.

Plants

Seed tubers should be used - they provide the best plants. The crop should be given the usual treatments in terms of manure and weed and pest control.

Field lay-out

Plot size is at least 5 plants but can be adapted to your own preference as long as all plots are the same size. The field should be organised in randomised blocks.

Replication

The minimum number of replicates is two.

Controls

Include standard cultivars for comparison. For example the standard Eucablight cultivars are Eesterling, Gloria, Bintje, Escort, Alpha and Robijn.

Scoring

A minimum of 7 weekly maturity scores over time should be taken. The first reading is taken when the early standard (e.g. Eersteling) is at a 5% maturity score. Maturity scores should be given in % for three combined items, yellow leaves, necrotic leaves, and drooping stems.

