

**O-57 (58)****POTATO SEED CERTIFICATION SCHEME IN IRAN**

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Plant diseases are one of the most important factors affecting the quality and quantity of agricultural crops. Some of important plant pathogens from different taxonomic groups (viruses, bacteria, fungi and nematodes) cause significant impact on edible and seed potato production worldwide. Certification schemes for plant propagating materials including seed potatoes concerning on plant pathogens, play important roles to decrease yield losses and to prevent down grading of tuber seeds or rejection from seed classes. Potato seed production in both private and public sectors as well as certification programs have well developed in Iran during the last decade. In accordance with the Act no. 4B, the Iranian Seed and Plant Certification and Registration Institute, as a governmental authority, is responsible for certification of Iranian plant propagating materials including potato tuber seeds for health status. Certification programs start with selection of appropriate fields and expert producers within potential provinces for potato production, cultivation practices, crop management, harvesting, processing, seed health analysis for potato pathogens, as indicated in the national potato seed standards and end with labeling of certified seeds. Specifically, during the crop management steps, surveys for diseases symptoms and weeds as important sources of infection, control strategies for insect vectors of potato viruses and laboratory analysis of leaf/tuber samples for potato pathogens, play key roles in certification programs. The present study focuses on plant diseases prevalent in Iranian potato seed production industry, potato seed quality standards and on field and laboratory investigations for potato diseases during the last five years in Iran.

**Keywords:** Potato, seed, certification, plant diseases