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Topic: Food and nutrition security

Title: THE CONTRIBUTION OF IRISH POTATO TOWARDS HOUSEHOLD DIETARY CONSUMPTION AND FOOD SECURITY IN DEDZA DISTRICT, MALAWI

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The Food and Agriculture Organisation ranked Malawi as the largest potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) producer in Sub-Saharan Africa. Government statistics reveal that potato is the third most important food crop in the country after Maize and Cassava, indicative of its potential as an important contributor towards household food and nutrition security. However, the extent to which the potato contributes towards household dietary consumption is seldom quantified. The purpose of this study was to determine the contribution of the potato towards household dietary consumption in Dedza district in Central Malawi. In this case, the study aimed at describing potato preparation and consumption patterns in the study area determining the frequency and amount of potato consumption in the household in comparison to other available foods and assessing the contribution of potato consumption towards household food security. A cross sectional design covering 100 households was used to determine potato consumption patterns and correlations with socio-demographic and food security variables. It is anticipated that results yielded from this study will provide an understanding of the patterns and levels of potato consumption in rural Malawi. This will give indications of possible healthy potato food combinations that can be promoted to increase the frequency of consumption in the household among other strategies aimed at improving household food and nutrition security.