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Chair in Plant Health



Introduction to potato production practices The Course Presenter: Prof Martin Steyn

Martin Steyn is a Professor in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences at the University of Pretoria. His research focus is on the agronomy and water requirements of field crops and medicinal plants. He specializes in potatoes and has been involved in potato research for the past 35 years, first at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), and the last 22 years at UP. His current research focus is on the improvement of effective irrigation water management, potato production in a changing climate and the development of more sustainable crop production practices. Prof Steyn collaborates with scientists, research organisations and companies nationally and internationally. He has presented numerous lectures as speaker and invited speaker at national and international congresses and also presented training in sustainable irrigation practices to potato agronomists, field staff and growers from countries such as Australia, Egypt, Russia, India, the Middle East and various African countries.

Programme

Day 1: 9 September 2026

08:00 Arrival and Registration

08:30 - 10:30

- Welcome
- The origin and history of potatoes
- The South African potato industry
- Potato crop growth stages and basic physiology

10:30 - 10:50 Tee/Coffee break

10:50 - 12:45

- Seed quality, physiological age and seed handling
- Plant and stem population
- Soil selection, soil preparation and cultivation practices
- Available cultivars and cultivar selection

12:45 - 13:30 Lunch

13:30 - 15:00

- Fertiliser requirements and nutrient deficiencies
- Fertiliser requirement calculations

15:00 - 15:20 Tea/coffee break

15:20 - 16:00

- Input resource use efficiencies of the South African potato industry

Day 2: 10 September 2026

08:30 - 10:30

- Overview of the most important bacterial diseases
- Overview of fungal diseases
- Overview of viral diseases

10:30 - 10:50 Tea /Coffee break

10:50 - 12:45

- Overview of the most important potato pests
- Water requirements and irrigation management
- Irrigation management tools

12:45 - 13:30 Lunch

13:30 - 15:00

- The prospects of potato production in a changing climate - what can we expect for the future?
- Questions

15:00 - 15:30

- Quiz
- Course evaluation

15:30 Closure



Presenting type: In person

Date: 9 & 10 September 2026

Price: R5500 per person

Closing date for registration: 3 September 2026

Click here to register for the course

agritraining.co.za

**For more information and registration:
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