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ABSTRACT

Late blight (Phytophthora infestans) was the most damaging disease, though limited to the Central highlands of Ceylon Island. The testing of Mexican cultivars led to the development of resistant varieties Krushi and Sita. Spongospora subterranea was damaging to a very susceptible one of these cultivars. Fusarium oxysporum and F. solani caused dry rot of tubers stored for seed, which when planted in the hot irrigated lowlands at Kalpitiya and Jaffna peninsulas caused poor emergence or wilt. Sclerotium rolfsii was damaging to some tuber families tested for adaptation to Jaffna. Close by at Odduchuddan, Mullaittivu District, Choanephora cucurbitarum and Meloidogyne incognita damaged potatoes suffering drought.

Bacterial wilt (Pseudomonas solanacearum) was constantly present in paddy land of Badulla District and periodically infected potatoes through-out the highlands, from where it occasionally spread latent in tuber seed to the lowlands, not persisting there. Erwinia spp. caused blackleg throughout the potato growing areas, but incidence was very low.

PLRV developed from seed grown during drought years in Europe. Roguing eliminated it from subsequent crops. Mosaic symptoms were rare.

The mite Polyphagotarsonemus latus was most severe in Jaffna. The aphid Rhopalosiphoninus latysiphon was determined feeding underground at the highest elevation potato seed farm, Uda Radella.

