

## FUSION FARMING TECHNOLOGY FOR POTATO PRODUCTION

### The Problem

- Potatoes are Kenya's second most important food crop, yet the estimated potato crop area in Kenya is far below the country's potential.
- Most smallholder potato farmers realize poor quality produce and low yields, which negatively impacts on nutrition and farmers' livelihoods.
- Low access to inputs, poor seed quality, credit risk, and moisture stress/frost risk present a challenge to ensuring improved potato quality and yield for smallholders.

### The Innovative Solution

*Viazi Power* ("Viazi" is Swahili for potato) is a fusion-farming technology aimed at improving productivity while ensuring allowable residue levels for food safety. The innovation works by taking the best of synthetic chemical and fertilizer products, and combining their application with the best "bio-control" products in a holistic fusion of seed treatment and leaf application.

The technology helps farmers increase yield and crop quality at a sustainable cost, while preserving soil fertility and helping to generate economic yields in adverse environmental conditions and poor soils.



### About the Award

Following an open and competitive process in 2013, Lachlan, Ltd., was the only innovator - among seven initial program awardees - to win direct funding from USAID under Feed the Future Kenya Innovation Engine program.

**Award Duration:** April 2014 – April 2016

**Award Amount:** KES 30.6 million (\$359,630)

**Technical Assistance:** Marketing and distribution strategy, strategic business plan and market study

**Implementation Counties:** Meru and Bomet

**Targeted Value Chain:** Horticulture

### About the Innovator

**Richard Stone-Wigg** is the Founder and CEO of Lachlan Kenya, Ltd. His nearly 30 years' experience includes technical development, positioning and marketing of crop protection and crop nutrition products, and setting up distribution systems to get new molecules to market. Set up in 2000 as a local distribution company, Lachlan, Ltd., has grown to a 50-strong work force with branches in Kenya and a sister company in Tanzania. Richard is the visionary and driving force behind Lachlan's 'Fusion Farming' mission to educate and encourage environmentally-intelligent farming aimed at ensuring sustainable, quality yields for smallholders, even in adverse growing conditions.

## Achievements under the Award

- Over 6,300 farmers recruited and trained on improved agricultural practices and use of the innovation.
- Almost 800 farmers had adopted the innovation by March 2016
- With appropriate use of the technology, farmers piloting the innovation are reporting bumper harvests of **at least 50% more than the usual yields.**
- Some farmers have realized **more than double** their usual yields as a result of using the innovation.

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**Joseph Johna shows off what his family terms as the largest, healthiest potatoes they have ever seen from their 0.063 hectare farm in Meru County. The September 2014 harvest of 11 bags was more than twice the previous season's yield!**