

# Soil Protection

MANZI Roger

Most of the people of Rwanda are farmers. They like growing many different crops, including food crops such as corn, beans, Irish potatoes\*, sweet potatoes, and sorghum; cash crops such as tobacco, soy beans, pyrethrum flowers\*, tea, coffee, and bananas; and trees that help the soil, such as eucalyptus and calliandra\*.



The soil is very important, and we must take care of it so plants can grow. We make the soil

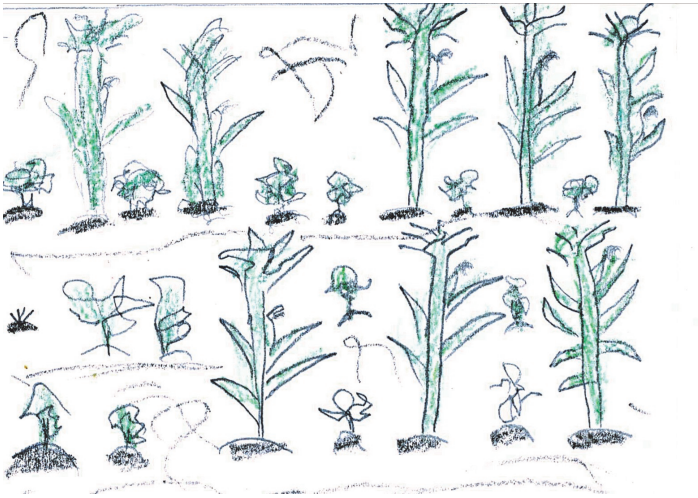
\* The term “Irish potatoes” is sometimes used to distinguish them from sweet potatoes. In the US Irish potatoes are simply called “potatoes.”

\* Pyrethrum is used as a natural insecticide in Rwanda.

\* Calliandra is a native flowering plant in Rwanda.

healthier using natural fertilizer, which is made out of compost from dead plants and manure, which is dung from animals.

To make the crops grow well, we carry the fertilizer to the fields in baskets or a wheelbarrow and add it to the soil, but the crops need other things. We fight against



diseases and insects. In the rainy season we till the land, and during the sunny season we water the soil.

A good harvest helps us buy school supplies, kitchen items, and furniture, like



chairs, and also helps to pay our school fees.

When the crops grow extra well, we get money for buying clothes, building houses, or buying seeds.

One of my favorite crops is Irish potatoes. Sometimes when I am eating with my brothers, I play a game of trying to get the big potatoes. If they are not in front of me, I try to turn the plate with the big potatoes toward me.

Everybody should join me and take care of our soil by respecting all steps of its preparation.



MANZI Roger is 13 years old and in P.6A. He loves Rwanda's environment and the gorillas, and wants to be a driver when he is older.