

# POTATO NEWS



## ***In This Issue:***

- ***Packing Shed Upgrades***
- ***Keeping Your Soil Covered***
- ***CanadaGAP Audits***
- ***Seed Promotion***





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Prince Edward Island

# POTATO NEWS

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Tel: 902-892-6551 Fax: 902-566-4914  
Email: potato@peipotato.org  
Website: www.peipotato.org

## Fox Island Elite Seed Farm

Mark Pridham.....Farm Manager  
Eleanor Matthews.....Lab Manager

Tel: 902-853-2619 Fax: 902-853-3962

Please return undelivered copies to:  
PEI Potato Board, 90 Hillstrom Avenue,  
Charlottetown, PEI, C1E 2C6

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Cover: PEI Potato Board Chariman, Darryl Wallace (left) and PEI Minister of Agriculture Robert Henderson (right) talk potatoes to schoolchildren during Ag Literacy Month in March 2018. Photo courtesy PEI Ag Sector Council.

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# Chairman's Comments

by Darryl Wallace, PEI Potato Board Chairman



This March I had my first opportunity to attend the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) Annual General meeting in Ottawa. Gary Linkletter was a long-time PEI Potato Industry representative at CHC and I can see now that it would take attendance at several meetings to get a full understanding of all the issues covered at this forum - both potato specific issues, such as CFIA regulations and trade requirements as well as issues that impact the entire horticulture sector, such as crop protectant registration, labour and business risk management programs. It is through cooperation and involvement with CHC that we are able to have a louder voice and be effective in some of our dealings with government. Our staff representatives provide good continuity at these meetings; however, grower involvement is very important. There are commodity specific grower representatives for CHC, such as myself and Donald Stavert who attended for the potato industry, and there are region specific grower representatives. Alvin Keenan (an Atlantic region rep) was CHC President in 2017-2018 and he will now serve as Past President. The Atlantic region's representative from New Brunswick stepped down this year and his position will be filled by Boyd Rose of PEI for the rest of this term. At the annual banquet, it was nice to see longtime CHC member John MacDonald of Souris receive the Doug Connery Award for service and dedication to the organization. Although the meetings can be dry, there is much work that takes place at this level that impacts our daily operations on the farm from the crop protectant products we are able to use to programs such as crop insurance. It was an interesting week.

On a local level, chip growers are in the second year of a two year contract with WD Potatoes and a contract offer for 2019 is in the approval process. There have been two grower meetings to obtain grower feedback in preparation for contract negotiations with Cavendish Farms. Two

negotiating sessions have been held with Cavendish Farms and the team moves into the mediation process the first week of April. There have been gains in the base price in western Canada and US regions and growers here are looking to follow suit.

Due to the drought experienced in areas of the Island in 2017, holdings for fresh potatoes are down 23%. We have been seeing steady movement and strong pricing - the fresh weighted average (FWA) is up 17% over the same week last year. As noted later in this issue, packers have been upgrading their facilities in recent years and this sector is well prepared to meet future demand.

Although there were a few surprises, in general the Post Harvest Test lab results for our Island produced seed came back very well again this year with an overall pass rate of 88%. Seed is moving to off-Island markets now and soon our roads will be busy with trucks as we prepare for the 2018 planting season.

We are pleased to welcome two new faces to Board operations this spring. Mark Pridham has joined the Board as the new Farm Manager at Fox Island and Caleb Jarvis is on a six month part-time term in the Market Information Department. These gentlemen will be filling vacancies that have developed over the past year. We hope that you will join the Board Directors in welcoming them to these positions.

Although it still feels like winter with all the snow we have on the ground in the Western end of the Island in late March, the days are getting longer and before we know it we will be working the fields and planting the 2018 crop. As always we encourage growers to plant for known markets. Overproduction hurts us all.

We have had many opportunities this winter to learn about new products and the latest in technology and agronomic practices to help improve our marketable yields. I am sure we each have something we will try a little differently this year. I wish everyone a safe and successful planting season.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Darryl Wallace'.



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# POTATO BOARD NEWS

## Communication Survey Results

Many thanks to everyone who completed our communication survey at the PEI Potato Technology Expo in Charlottetown in February. There seems to be general satisfaction with the Board's current strategy to communicate with growers which includes a combination of text and email messages, regular mail and articles in the PEI Potato News magazine.

A few points that came out in the survey:

- While the majority of those surveyed check their email on a daily basis, there are still some growers who do not use email.
- The preference is to receive information on an "as it happens" basis rather than summarized in a weekly newsletter.
- Growers access the PEI Potato Board website primarily to view the Seed Directory or 'Seed Available for Sale' page, and increasingly for Agronomy information on [www.peipotatoagronomy.com](http://www.peipotatoagronomy.com).
- Growers prefer to receive the PEI Potato News magazine through regular mail rather than having it posted solely on the website.

Anyone with suggestions for how the Board can improve its communication with growers is welcome to contact staff or directors at any time. We welcome your feedback.

## New Staff

The Potato Board is pleased to welcome two new staff members to fill vacancies that have developed this year.

Mark Pridham of Montrose joined the Board on March 4 as our new Farm Manager at Fox Island Elite Seed Potato Farm. He fills a vacancy left as current manager Matthew Ramsay moves to pursue personal business interests. Mark will be responsible for carrying out all the day to day farming activities at Fox Island in a very hands-on manner. Mark spent 15 years farming with his father and brothers growing potatoes and livestock before he moved to a career in transportation. Mark is glad to be returning to his farming roots in the potato industry. He will have an opportunity to work alongside Matt during the grading and shipping season and is looking forward to the 2018 growing season.

The Marketing and Market Information Sections of the PEI Potato Board are undergoing some changes. Kendra Mills, our Marketing Director, is moving to a half time position and Market Information Officer Mark Phillips will be stepping in to assist with some of the marketing activities in addition to

his market information responsibilities. To free up some of Mark's time to take on these additional responsibilities, the Board is pleased to welcome Caleb Jarvis to the team. Caleb is a student in Business Administration at Holland College who will be graduating this spring. He lives with his family in Charlottetown and attended Colonel Grey High School. Caleb has been with the Board for several afternoons a week since late February and many of you may have been introduced to him over the phone during this time. He will be with us Monday to Friday afternoons beginning March 19 for a six month term and is looking forward to learning about more about the industry.

## Canadian Horticultural Council AGM

This meeting was held in Ottawa from March 12 to 15. It is the Board's regular opportunity to meet with provincial potato organization counterparts from across the country and address national potato issues as well as issues that cut across horticultural crops. Board representatives in 2018 included Board General Manager Greg Donald, Board Chairman Darryl Wallace, Assistant General Manager Brenda Simmons, Seed Coordinator Mary Kay Sonier, and PEI Potato

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Industry rep Donald Stavert. Lorraine MacKinnon, PEI Potato Industry Coordinator also attended representing the PEI Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Alvin Keenan was the CHC President for 2017-2018 and did a tremendous job of representing potato and other horticulture crop issues with elected and non-elected federal officials throughout the year.

Meetings held during the week included:

- The United Potato Growers of Canada AGM
- Potato Task Force (preparing an industry response to the CFIA Cost Recovery Initiative)
- Canadian Potato Council and Seed Potato Sub-Committee
- Canadian Horticultural Council Annual General Meeting and associated committee meetings

There were many topics covered during the various meeting and a few are highlighted below that are of primary interest to PEI potato farmers:

- CHC Crop, Plant Protection and Environment Committee – discussions on the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) reevaluation schedule and proposed decisions on many crop protectants used routinely by Canadian potato growers such as Capture,

chorothalonil, EBDC fungicides, Linuron, imidacloprid and other neonicotinoids, etc. Responses to PMRA are developed through CHC and the Canadian Potato Council.

- CHC Trade & Marketing Committee - (PACA-like Trust) – despite initial negative government feedback, the Canadian fresh produce industry continues to push for the development of Canadian tool like PACA to protect sellers of fresh produce.
- CHC Labour Committee – working with federal government departments to streamline and improve the effectiveness of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers and Temporary Foreign Workers programs.
- CHC Business Risk Management Committee – push for changes to the Business Risk Management programs to make them more responsive to the needs of Canadian horticulture producers.
- CHC Potato Council and Seed Sub-Committee Meetings:
  1. PCN test requirements for export to the United States – CFIA and USDA are currently holding negotiations to make changes to this process to recognize the substantial body of negative test results that has been gathered over the past ten years.
  2. Reports and updates from the Canadian Potato Council Research Working Group and the Export Development Working Group.
  3. An update on the Potato National Research Cluster Submission.
  4. CFIA potato regulations and policies.

The PEI Potato Board forwarded two resolutions to CHC:

**2018-06 Proactive Measures to Reduce Pesticide Exposure:**

*WHEREAS the Pest Management Regulatory Agency uses models to estimate worker exposure in fields that have been treated with crop protectants; and*

*WHEREAS field workers often use protective equipment such as gloves when working in horticultural fields; and*

*WHEREAS the Pest Management Regulatory Agency has advised that it cannot recognize the protective nature of gloves in general as there are many different types of material in use; and*

*WHEREAS it appears research has not been carried out to determine the types of gloves that would provide the type of protection that the Pest Management Regulatory*



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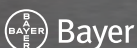


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Agency could recognize when estimating potential worker exposure,

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the CHC lobby CropLife Canada and its members to conduct the research required to develop the data that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency needs in order to determine the types of gloves that would provide appropriate protection for farmers and field workers active in horticultural fields.*

#### **2018-07 Truck Shortage**

*WHEREAS the North American fresh produce industry is currently experiencing a shortage of trucks to move perishable product to market in a timely manner to meet delivery deadlines; and*

*WHEREAS waiting times to unload at destination can be excessive, resulting in transportation companies billing shippers for the unproductive time, even though shippers have no ability to eliminate the unloading delays and/or recapture the additional fees; and*

*WHEREAS this inefficient use of drivers and equipment further compounds the truck shortage and puts the North American produce industry in a grave situation on truck availability,*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CHC work with the appropriate stakeholders to identify ways to minimize waiting times while loading and unloading fresh produce to alleviate this severe and costly inefficiency in the transportation industry.*

Both resolutions were supported by the Committee of the whole. As well the Board representatives voted on 22 other resolutions that came before the committee that cover a wide range of topics. These resolutions form the work plan for the CHC in the coming year.

Anyone wishing to see a full list of the 2018 resolutions or a progress report on the actions that took place as a result of the 2017 resolutions can obtain full information by contacting the Board office at 902-892-6551.

### **Presentation to the Standing Committee on Communities, Land and Environment**

The Board has been invited to make a presentation to brief the committee on the effect on our members of land speculation, land sales and the rising costs of real estate in the province.

We have also written a letter to Executive Council to express concerns we have heard from growers regarding

the sale of agricultural land to non-residents without allowing Island farmers the opportunity to purchase the land. The letter also requested that the provincial government provide more transparency regarding IRAC and Executive Council decisions on land purchase by non-residents to ensure that they are following the spirit of the Lands Protection Act.

The Board will be having a meeting with our elected representatives on this issue in the near future.

Individual growers with concerns about this issue and with specific case examples that have impacted their personal operation may also apply to make a presentation to the Standing Committee. The Board would also like to hear directly from growers about such concerns.

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# In Memoriam

## Melis Visser

January 26, 1965 - February 22, 2018

Melis Visser, “Crop Insurance Melis” as he was known in the PEI potato world, spent his whole life involved in the potato industry on Prince Edward Island. He grew up on a potato farm in Kinross, the oldest of six children, where getting off the school bus and going to the field or warehouse was commonplace. After attending the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Melis returned home and shortly after started work as a GRIP agent with the PEI Agriculture Insurance Corporation. He moved up through the system and finished his career as Field Supervisor for the Corporation. Melis was involved in many changes to the program over the years that made it more responsive to the needs of PEI growers, including the addition of the forage insurance program, the Elite Seed Program, the colour rider and the storage program for potatoes. For the 2018 crop year, he had drafted a new drought rider. Melis was a valuable person to have at the table in negotiations with his federal counterparts because he had such a good understanding of production systems on PEI and what would pass the Crop Insurance risk test to satisfy the program requirements. He was very direct and straightforward with growers about what the program could do for them and always made his opinion known that Crop Insurance worked well for those who remained part of the program for the long haul.

But work was only one part of his life. While at College, Melis met his wife Juanita Diamond, a girl from a potato farming family in Winsloe South. Winsloe South is where they settled and, although they did not farm themselves, Melis could regularly be found helping with harvest and



planting on Diamondale Farms with Juanita’s brothers. Family was the cornerstone of his life and Melis and Juanita were devoted parents to their two children, Kristyn and Zachary. They were supportive of all the children’s academic and extracurricular activities, always encouraging them to do their best at whatever they did. Sports played a huge role in their lives. Melis spent many hours coaching, not only his own children, but countless others through the Winsloe/Charlottetown Royals Soccer Club and the provincial soccer programs. When not working, Melis and Juanita were always heading off to practice or to watch a game or competition locally or out of province.

Melis influenced a wide circle of people from his wife and children, parents, brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews, potato people and soccer people. He was courageous throughout his battle with cancer and as was so well put by his son Zachary, “He lived life to the fullest every day.” He will be missed.



# Keeping Your Soils Covered: Environmental and Economic Benefit!

by Ryan Barrett, Research and Agronomy Coordinator

In the last few years, there has been more research and new information available on the benefits of cover crops in rotation. For a number of years, the industry has looked at cover crops primarily for fighting soil erosion. However, what is becoming increasingly clear is the added benefits to soil health and subsequent crop yield by integrating cover crops into your rotation.

## Cover Crop Research in Canada

One of the leading researchers in cover crops in Canada is Dr. Laura Van Eerd at the Ridgetown College campus of the University of Guelph. Dr. Van Eerd and her team have been investigating the agronomic and soil health benefits of cover cropping for a number of years across a series of different trials. One trial that started in 2007 looked at the impact of fall cover crops on the levels of soil organic matter. She found that after seven years of rotation, the use of cover crops following crops such as corn, soybeans, wheat and tomatoes led to significant increase in soil organic matter levels when compared to no cover crop usage. Increases of up to 0.4% soil organic matter were demonstrated in that time frame. Fall rye was the most consistent performing cover crop, but other covers such as oats, oilseed radish, or radish and rye combined were also shown to be effective cover crops. They also compared the impact of retaining or removing straw from a field on soil organic matter. In 2015, they saw a 0.1% increase in soil organic matter where straw was left on the field, but saw no statistical difference in 2016.

Another trial looked at the effect of planting a cover crop following winter wheat on processing tomato yields the following year. Cover crops were planted after wheat harvest in late July, and their sandy loam soil had average soil organic matter of 3.8% and 6.5 pH. They experimented with a series of different cover crops which had different levels of biomass in both the spring and the fall. The key finding was that no matter the cover crop, there was a significantly higher marketable yield in tomatoes following

a cover crop than without. In 2016 trials, this ranged from a 14% increase in yield following fall rye to a 38% increase in yield following oilseed radish. In addition, treatments where cover crops were used generally had better scores for soil health tests, including a measureable increase in soil organic matter after only one year for some cover crops.

Dr. Van Eerd's research into effects on other crops has also shown improvements on marketable yield following a cover crop. She has seen snap bean yields increase by 0.37 T/acre following a cover crop, and has seen corn yields increase by as much as two tonnes per acre following a cover crop. Her team has also looked at the total economic impact of integrating cover crops into rotation. When comparing a four year rotation of sweet corn, wheat, field tomatoes and grain corn with cover crops each year against the same rotation without cover crops, the net profit from using cover crops was \$104 per acre, including all costs of cover crop management. Therefore, establishing a cover crop is not only environmentally beneficial but also economically justified as well!

Here in Prince Edward Island, the Potato Board has been funding research with Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada at the Harrington Research Farm to assess the merits of different species for late season establishment, particularly following potato harvest in October. The most consistent establishing cover crop in these trials has been fall rye, which has been shown to establish quickly at lower temperatures and develops a strong root mass in a short time period. Fall rye will of course aggressively regrow in the spring, so it needs to be managed appropriately if planning to plant a commercial crop the next year.

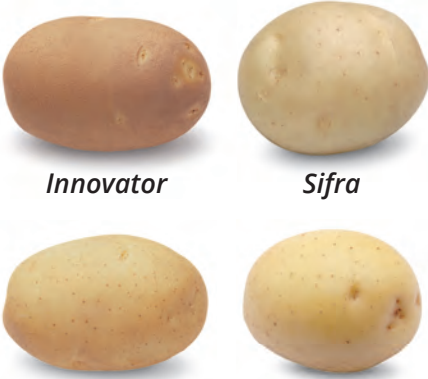
## Selecting a Cover Crop:

Many factors have to be weighed when determining what cover crop species or mixture to use. Your choice should be dependent on your crop rotation, timing of establishment, and the relative benefits of that crop/mixture on soil health, nutrient availability, and diseases and pests.

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winter wheat can act as its own cover crop. It can be planted following early potato harvest or following an early harvested field crop like green peas. In this case, you get the benefit of having your soil covered for the winter as well as planting a commercial crop to be harvested the following year. Due in part to this dynamic, winter wheat acreage has increased in Prince Edward Island in recent years.

As mentioned above, a crop that is harvested late in the fall such as potatoes or grain corn can reduce the options for fall cover crops. As shown in PEI research with AAFC, fall rye has been shown to be a quick establishing cover crop in cold conditions. It can be grown out as a commercial crop the following year if you have a market for rye; otherwise, it can be killed in the spring and then another crop can be planted, either no-tilled into the dead rye or planted after tillage. If planting a cereal crop such as barley, wheat or oats, be alert for volunteer rye to avoid multi-species contamination of your crop at harvest.

For crops that are harvested in the mid to late summer or early fall, the options for cover crop establishment increase substantially. One tool that may prove very useful for growers in making decisions on cover crop choices is the

Eastern Canada Cover Crop Decision Tool, which can be found online at <http://decision-tool.incovercrops.ca/>. This tool shows the crop establishment window under PEI growing conditions for a range of different cover crops and mixtures, as well as factsheets for each crop providing seeding rates, management profiles, and additional beneficial properties for the crop.

### Taking Aim at Wireworm and Early Dying

Is wireworm a major consideration for you? Research by Dr. Christine Noronha at AAFC Charlottetown and others has shown that growing brown mustard and buckwheat before potatoes can lead to reductions in wireworm damage. Some studies have focused on two years of double cropping these crops under heavy wireworm pressure. Some other trials have shown reduction in damage after just one year of usage. To get the biofumigation effect of brown mustard on say Verticillium or nematodes, it must be incorporated as a green manure before it goes to seed. However, Dr. Noronha has seen evidence that the glucosinolates present in brown mustard roots still has some positive effect on reducing wireworm damage. She has also determined in recent studies that buckwheat can have a beneficial impact on wireworm just by growing in the field without needing to be incorporated. Both mustard and buckwheat establish quickly in warm soil conditions and can go to seed in as little as 60 days. However, both crops planted late in the summer will not normally have enough hours of sunlight to

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go to seed and can act as cover crops with the potential to assist with wireworm suppression as well as improving soil texture and weed suppression. Buckwheat is also known as a phosphorus scavenger, making P more available for crops the following growing season.

Mustard crops are being used in many places around the world as a biofumigant crop to battle soil-borne diseases and pests such as verticillium and nematodes as well as wireworm. It should be incorporated a peak flowering as a green manure in the presence of adequate soil moisture (ideally just after a rain) to get the maximum effect of the biofumigation.

At local AIM meetings in February 2018, Dr. Mario Tenuta from the University of Manitoba shared with growers that sorghum sudangrass has shown to be effective as a trap crop for Verticillium. It is a non-host that triggers the Verticillium spores to germinate, helping to reduce populations in the field. In a similar vein, forage pearl millet has been shown to reduce populations of root lesion nematodes. Both crops are warm season forage crops that should be established after June 15th, but can also be established later in the summer depending on your rotation. Ideally, these crops (alone or in mixture) should be cut at least once to allow the root mass to expand and to maximize the amount of biomass being returned to the field. These crops can also be harvested for livestock feed if trading land with dairy or beef producers.

### Improving Soil Health and Organic Matter through Cover Cropping

Perhaps your greatest concern is improving soil health and soil organic matter. We know from recent reports by the PEI Department of Agriculture that soil organic matter has been trending downward in the province over the past twenty years, and some areas of PEI show very low organic matter percentages as has been happening in other provinces as well. While additions of manure and compost have shown to be the fastest way to improve soil organic matter, the use of cover crops and maximizing the amount of time that a field is home to a growing crop can also help conserve and build organic matter, along with reducing tillage.

Presentations by Blake Vince (a cash crop farmer from Southern Ontario) and Guy Forand (with Belisle Dairy Nutrition in Quebec) at the PEI Soil & Crop Improvement Association Conference in March 2018 highlighted

the many benefits of forage-based cover crops for improving soil health, water holding capacity, soil structure, nitrogen fixation, and more. Mr. Vince advocated for the use of diverse cover crop mixtures with ten or more species in the mixture, citing research indicating that crop diversity leads to not only higher biomass accumulation but also improved microbial activity and diversity in the soil. Blake uses mixtures that combine grasses (ie. oats, sudangrass, ryegrass), legumes (ie. alfalfa, faba bean, peas, crimson clover, balansa clover, chickling vetch), brassica species (ie. oilseed radish, tillage radish) and other crops (ie. buckwheat, phacelia). These crops can be planted as a full season cover crop or can be planted following a summer harvested crop. If you desire a mixture that will serve as a two year cover crop, you should ensure sufficient species in the mixture will overwinter to grow in the second year.

One area where I see increased potential for cover crop adoption is following tillage in the late summer or early fall in preparation for potatoes the next year. Many producers are using residue tillage equipment such as Lemken or Synkro machines in the late summer or fall instead of using a moldboard plough. Once again, this provides ample opportunity for using a cover crop to keep topsoil on the field, holding nutrients like nitrogen and potassium in the soil, as well as having a growing crop to help build organic matter.

Broadcasting or sowing barley or oats on tilled fields would cost-effectively accomplish this. This is also an option following ploughing as well, provided ploughing does not occur too late in the season. According to presentations made by Dr. Judith Nyiraneza and Dr. David Burton at the AIM Nutrient Management Workshop in January 2018, fall tillage that is not followed by a cover crop significantly increases the risk of nitrate leaching from the field, particularly following a legume crop like clover or alfalfa. This negates much of the benefit of growing these crops if much of that nitrogen is lost from the soil before the next year.

As you can see, there are many factors to consider when deciding how to integrate cover crops into your rotation. Nonetheless, there is substantial evidence, both scientific and anecdotal, that supports utilizing cover crops as much as possible on your farm. Not only does it have benefits for the environment, it builds trust with our non-farming neighbours and has both short-term and long-term economic benefits for your operation.

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# Disposition and Holdings

## CANADIAN HOLDINGS as of March 1 ('000 cwt)

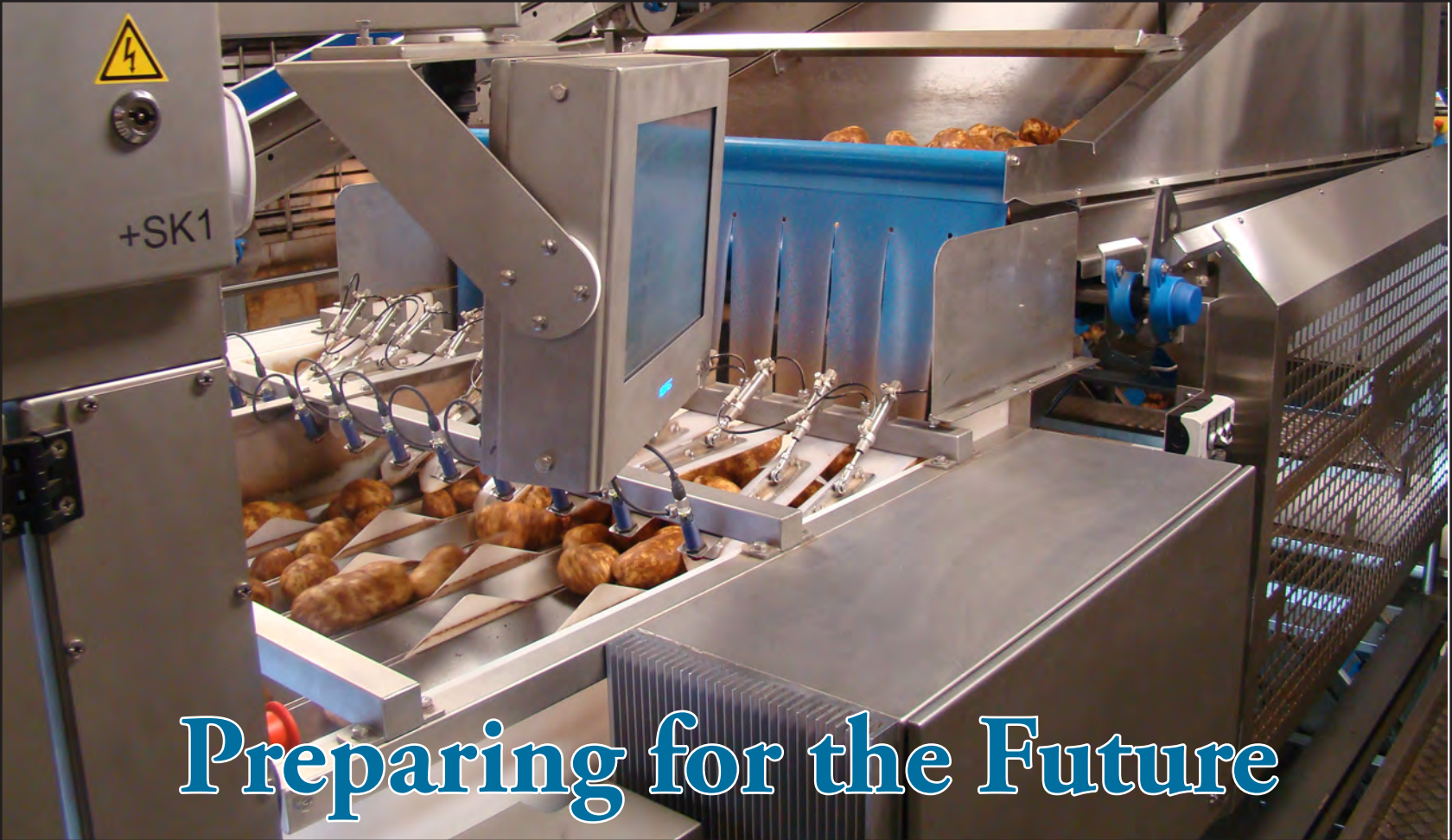
	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<b>17-18 vs. 16-17</b>
<b>PEI</b>	<b>14,048</b>	<b>14,324</b>	<b>14,507</b>	<b>13,262</b>	<b>-8.6%</b>
New Brunswick	7,426	8,525	6,685	9,580	43.3%
Nova Scotia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total Maritimes</b>	<b>21,474</b>	<b>22,849</b>	<b>21,192</b>	<b>22,842</b>	<b>7.8%</b>
Quebec	5,736	6,262	5,602	5,702	1.8%
Ontario	3,084	3,026	2,200	3,188	44.9%
<b>Total Eastern Canada (inc. Maritimes)</b>	<b>30,294</b>	<b>32,137</b>	<b>28,994</b>	<b>31,732</b>	<b>9.4%</b>
Manitoba	9,545	11,938	11,458	10,977	-4.2%
Saskatchewan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Alberta	10,414	11,287	10,434	12,300	17.9%
British Columbia	358	409	505	361	-28.5%
<b>Total Western Canada</b>	<b>20,317</b>	<b>23,634</b>	<b>22,397</b>	<b>23,638</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
<b>CANADA TOTAL</b>	<b>50,611</b>	<b>55,771</b>	<b>51,391</b>	<b>55,370</b>	<b>7.7%</b>

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND DISPOSITION as of February 28 (cwt)

	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<b>17-18 vs. 16-17</b>
Production	25,240,000	24,850,000	25,723,000	23,664,000	-8.0%
Canadian Shipments	1,231,770	1,162,444	1,368,475	1,325,007	-3.2%
U.S. Shipments	1,403,175	1,387,744	1,745,453	1,685,147	-3.5%
Export Shipments	618,712	688,229	561,238	410,333	-26.9%
<b>Total Fresh</b>	<b>3,253,657</b>	<b>3,238,417</b>	<b>3,675,166</b>	<b>3,420,487</b>	<b>-6.9%</b>
Processing / Local Use	6,682,573	6,066,296	6,267,913	5,886,966	-6.1%
Seed for Next Crop	0	0	0	0	
Cullage	1,255,825	1,221,768	1,273,267	1,094,873	-14.0%
<b>Total Disposition as of February 28</b>	<b>11,192,055</b>	<b>10,526,481</b>	<b>11,216,346</b>	<b>10,402,325</b>	<b>-7.3%</b>
<b>Holdings at March 1</b>	<b>14,047,945</b>	<b>14,323,519</b>	<b>14,506,654</b>	<b>13,261,675</b>	<b>-8.6%</b>

## Projected Utilization as of March 1 (cwt)

Fresh	3,570,785	3,577,700	3,424,332	2,609,160	-23.8%
Processing	8,550,168	8,760,497	9,056,983	8,843,261	-2.4%
Seed	1,926,992	1,985,321	2,025,339	1,809,255	-10.7%



# Preparing for the Future

## PEI Packing Sheds Updating to Meet Customer Needs

by Mary Kay Sonier

Just like everything else in our world these days, potatoes have gone high tech. It starts in the field with GPS autosteer on the tractor, variable rate fertilizer applications, yield monitors and load tracking at harvest and then moves to sophisticated climate controlled storages. This is followed by every increasing precision at packing.

Many PEI operations have been taking advantage of the positive prices the fresh market has returned in recent years, and repayable contributions available through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, to upgrade their facilities for the future.

Greater flexibility and reduced waste are the hallmarks of the advancements. Customer choice is tremendous in the grocery store aisles these days - red, yellow, russet, white and purple potatoes, bakers, baby and creamer potatoes, ones for boiling, ones for baking, one pound, two pound, five pound and ten pound bags. To meet this demand packers have had to become very versatile and able to switch from one variety and pack to another quickly.

The versatility starts with the sorting line. Despite all the improvements in field production, potatoes are still a mixed bag when they are harvested with a wide range of size and quality parameters. "To meet the standard for today's retailers and consumers, consistency and continuity

of supply are essential," says Ray Keenan of Rollo Bay Holdings in eastern PEI. Rollo Bay grades potatoes into over twenty different sizes and packs. They are one of the Island operations which has invested in sophisticated sorting technology. He explains, "With the improved sensitivity of the latest cameras, the Newtec optical grader that we have installed can grade more effectively than the human eye." These optical graders singulate the potatoes, take photographs and use computer technology to determine the length, width and depth of the potatoes. This information is used to drop individual potatoes into lanes based on their size parameters. Potatoes from each lane go towards a different holding tank. Boyd Rose of East Point Potatoes comments that "In our recent upgrades, we have gone from seven holding tanks to 13 which allows us to quickly shift varieties and size grades depending on the orders we receive."

Improvements on the sorting end improve flexibility in packing which is critical in helping packers meet current customer demands. With the just-in-time delivery mindset, the turnaround time for orders has shortened considerably. Whereas packers previously may have had several days notice for an order, now they have to be ready for a call in the morning requesting a load to go out within 24 hours. To keep your customer base you have to be able to meet those demands.

Of course, a more efficient packing line also includes changes in packaging equipment. Stephen Visser of J. & S. Visser Produce in Orwell purchased an optical grader several years ago and recently added a 12 scale bagger and a poly 5 baler to their packing line. “We were upgrading equipment so we knew what we were looking for and worked with our past equipment supplier,” says Stephen. “These additions have allowed us to increase the volume we can pack in a shorter period of time and has increased our efficiency. This allows us to meet deadlines without putting extra time demands on our current staff and helps us to maintain a good stable working environment.” Much of the new technology helps to save labour, and it is not necessarily about replacing current employees, but making up for reliable labour that is hard to find and using the employees that packers do have efficiently and with reduced physical demands.

Besides a shorter turn around time for orders, many calls these days are also for mixed loads. Rather than a full load of russets, an order will commonly come in for a mix of russets, reds, and yellows, or just different pack sizes, to make up the full load. Changes to sorting and packing technology have helped packers to meet these demands. However, in some cases an advance in technology may not be required as much as a more organized storage area. In 2016, W.P. Griffin in western PEI increased their holding area for packaged product and the way it was organized. “This has really helped our efficiency,” says Garth Smallman, Director of Sales for W.P. Griffin Inc. “We are able to do larger runs and hold product for orders that may ship over several days. It also allows us to pack ahead for feature orders.”

Local packers have taken the opportunity of travelling to attend different trade shows to identify new technology that will fit our systems here at home. For the past two years, Trade Team PEI has sponsored a PEI mission to the Fruit Logistica trade show in Berlin. A group of representatives from the Potato Board and three Island companies attended in 2017 and a larger group of representatives from seven companies attended in 2018.

Mid Isle Farms, located in central PEI has made many improvements over the past decade, the most recent being installation of automatic baggers and a paper mastering machine. Rick Burt, CEO of Mid Isle was one of the group who travelled to Berlin to research equipment. “The industry is so competitive, we need to be efficient and consistent. We wanted to see what the world stage of produce has to offer and figure out what equipment or product opportunities can translate into our industry here at home,” comments Jennifer Harris, Marketing Director at Mid Isle. The 2018 trip included an optional pre-show tour of several large packing plants in Belgium and Germany. At

Fruit Logistica, in addition to innovations in fresh produce itself, there is a wide ranging display of the latest in grading and packaging technology. Smallman participated in the mission in 2017 and says “seeing the machinery in action helped us to identify improvements we could utilize in our own operation.” He continued, “We do a lot of specialty packs and it was very interesting to see what other people are doing and what machinery is available - it helps us to plan for future changes.”

Once new equipment is working in a local operation, others are able to see the advantages first hand and this spurs wider adoption. Jamie Thompson of Victoria first saw a new optical grader at the Potato Expo in Charlottetown and considered it for down the road. However, after talking to other industry members who were using them, he decided to move ahead earlier than originally planned. “The addition of the optical grader has provided greater efficiency and allows us to pack for higher value markets which require tighter size and grade specifications,” says Thompson. So far, he feels it has been a good investment.

ACOA has provided interest free repayable contributions for many PEI potato packing companies, under their Business Development Program, to help them expand and modernize their business. The goal of this support is to enable PEI businesses to focus on higher value product development to reach new markets, improve environmental standards and reduce waste and water and energy use. And the changes are having the desired effect. “These new sorters have really helped us to reduce waste and divert potatoes to profitable streams,” says Keenan.

Using technology advancements is one way of making potatoes easy for consumers to use, and to entice them to try new types of potatoes and new recipes in order to keep potatoes as a staple item in the grocery cart.



*New optical grading equipment (above and previous page) installed at Rollo Bay Holdings near Souris allows the user to program the exact parameters for the grading line.*



# Seed Promotion

by Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator

The Farm/Seed Committee of the PEI Potato Board works to improve conditions for the sale of PEI seed potatoes. This includes working through the Canadian Potato Council Seed Sub-Committee with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to keep seed certification regulations and export testing requirements reasonable for seed growers and dealers. It also includes regular promotion efforts to keep PEI seed potatoes top of mind with our customers. Efforts in 2017/18 have included:

- Print advertisements in a variety of US and Canadian potato trade newspapers and magazines.
- Publication of the Seed Directory and 'Seed Available for Sale' page on our website.
- Dickeya testing project for Island seedlots from the 2016 and 2017 crops. (To date, all Island seed lots tested have been negative for Dickeya.)
- Trade show booths and attendance at:
  - Ontario Potato Field Day, Alliston, ON. 2017
  - NPC Potato Expo, Orlando, Florida, USA. 2018.
  - Eastern Shore Ag Expo, Virginia, USA. 2018.

- International Potato Technology Expo, Charlottetown. 2018.
- Fruit Logistica, Berlin, Germany. 2018.
- Gulfood, Dubai, UAE. 2018. (A Potatoes Canada Initiative)
- Ontario Potato Day, Guelph, ON. 2018.
- Supporting efforts to gain access to international markets.

The PEI potato industry is also fortunate to have a complement of well experienced dealer and export companies who actively seek to expand markets and sales of PEI seed potatoes. Volume to both US and Canadian markets increased in 2017 over 2016 and volume looks positive for spring 2018 shipments.

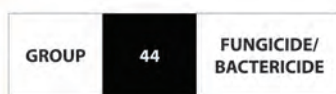
While the political issues in Venezuela have had a very negative effect on our seed market in that country, Canada recently regained access to Indonesia for seed potatoes from PEI and NB and initial shipments from PEI have occurred. PEI seed shipments have also gone to Portugal this year for the first time since the 2013/2014 shipping season.



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# Soil Conservation Awards

## Recognize Little Pond And Lower Freetown Farmers

Pondsedge Farms Inc. (Kent, Michael, and Robbie MacDonald) is a dairy operation in Little Pond, Prince Edward Island. The brothers have been farmers for 38 years and in recent years have focused only on dairy. Milking 380 dairy cows certainly takes a lot of well managed forage and field crops to keep them all fed and happy. They manage 1,400 acres of barley grain, soybean, alfalfa, clover, grass, silage corn and grain corn. They maintain their land on a six year or longer crop rotation consisting of corn; soybean or barley; and 3 to 4 year alfalfa and grass mix, or, double cut red clover and grass mix.

Kent, Michael, and Robbie have considerable soil conservation enhancement measures and earthen structures in place to control water flow and reduce soil erosion on many of their farms. Pondsedge has Paradigm Precision provide soil and manure sampling and analysis services for their agronomy decisions. They calibrate their sprayer once a year and have On-Target Sprayer Services provide additional support.

“As a successful agri-business, Kent, Michael and Robbie MacDonald of Pondsedge Farms Inc incorporate a strong work ethic with a strategic vision to the promising future of agriculture on Prince Edward Island,” says John Hooper, President of PEISCI A.

Barnyard Organics of Lower Freetown, Prince Edward Island is a family farm operated by Mark and Sally Bernard, and their four children, Lucy, Wilson, Thayne and Solomon. Twelve years ago, Mark and Sally took over Mark’s dad’s conventional potato farm and have since converted the land to organic production.

Their farming operation consists of producing 300 acres of organic cereals, 100 acres of organic soybeans, and 100 acres of forages. They own most of the certified organic land they farm, renting only 7 acres. The Bernard’s crop rotation is five years: Clover; wheat; barley and field peas mix; soybeans; and oats under seeded to clover.

Sally and Mark also use winter cereals in their rotation to break weed cycles, provide green cover for the winter, and provide soil and organic building benefits. All of their land base has green cover going into winter, except for the soybean stubble - these fields are not fall tilled however to maintain the stubble residue.

Tillage passes are as minimum as possible. Moldboard plowing is generally only once in five years. They use a “false or stale” seed bed method where, after the secondary tillage, they leave the ground a number of days before



*John Hooper, President PEISCI A (left), Mr John Jamieson, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and Mr Mark Grimmet, AAFC Associate Director RDT (second from right and right respectively) present the Soil Award for Livestock Category to Michael MacDonald, and Kent MacDonald, Pondsedge Farms Inc. (top photo) and present the Soil Award for Cash Crop Category to Sally and Mark Bernard, Barnyard Organics (bottom photo).*

planting to flush out and then finger-weed-out that first growth of weeds. The finger-weeder is the Bernard’s main weed control method - they also have a specialized row cultivator for their 18-inch row soybeans.

The Bernards planted over 3,000 trees in hedgerows for wildlife corridors and wind control. In addition, they have worked with the Bedeque Bay Environmental Management Association, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada on providing habitat and protecting the barn yard swallow and bobolink bird species by leaving barn doors open, building nesting sites, and delaying mowing of pastures. Bat boxes have also been installed on the farm.

“As a very successful family farm, Barnyard Organics Inc is dedicated to growing economic opportunities in rural PEI, in a sustainable fashion,” says John Hooper, President of PEISCI A.

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# Potatoes Canada at Gulfood 2018

by Ellen Larsen-Kouwenberg

A Gardner Pinfold study carried out by the Canadian potato industry and implemented in 2012 identified the strengths and weaknesses of the industry as perceived by the international marketplace. One of the identified weaknesses of the Canadian Potato industry was its lack of consistent visibility in international markets as compared to its competitor countries. From the recommendations of this study, and direction provided by the Potatoes Canada Steering Committee and its commercial export representatives, efforts have continued in increasing the global visibility of the Canadian Potato Industry. These promotional efforts have included participation in various International Trade shows. Since its re-formation in 2012, Potatoes Canada has exhibited in various regions including Central and South America, North Africa, Europe and Asia.

Following meetings with the Consulate office of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2016 as to the opportunities and best approaches for promotional efforts in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)/Middle East region, Potatoes Canada explored the recommendation by the UAE Embassy to participate in Gulfood, Dubai, UAE in February, 2018. With a limited Canadian presence in this region, the Potatoes Canada Steering Committee approved efforts to research the market further.

The UAE is made up of 7 Emirates, the largest of these being Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The UAE enjoys economic and political stability. The estimated population in 2016 was 9.3 million with an expected growth of 2.9% by 2019. Approximately 80-85% of the population is young expats



with a median age of 30 years. In 2016 per capita income was \$44,600.

Being a desert climate, weather conditions and water costs hamper agricultural development efforts. The UAE imports \$15.6 billion of agri-food products annually, representing over 80% of the countries food needs. Thirty percent of these agri-food imports are re-exported within the Gulf and Middle East and North Africa regions.

The GCC is a political and economic alliance of six Middle Eastern countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman.

The estimated population of the GCC is 52.4 million, 48 % of which are non-nationals or expats. The total Canadian Agriculture, Agri-food and Seafood Exports to the GCC in 2016 was C\$900 million.

Gulfood is the world's largest annual food, beverage and hospitality exhibition which attracts food and beverage professionals from all over the world to Dubai – a hub for



*(Left) A representative of the Food Trade Control Section of the Dubai Municipality explains the UAE food importation system and associated regulations to Canadian business people attending the Business to Business session sponsored by the UAE Canadian Embassy. This was followed by one-on-one meetings between Canadian food exporters and importers and food procurement managers from the UAE area (right).*



*The Gulfood trade show floor had heavy traffic over the 5 days of exhibition time.*

international trade and commerce. The key to Gulfood is that it attracts buyers not only from the Gulf region but from all over the Middle East, India and North Africa region (MENA).

Since its launch in 1987, the exhibition has grown to promote food and beverage trade between more than 180 countries annually. In 2018 Gulfood set records with 97,000 visitors attending and over 5000 companies from over 185 different countries exhibiting their products.

Gulfood is one of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Flagship shows, whereby AAFC secures a square footage and recruits organizations and small and medium-sized enterprises to purchase booth space under their banner and provides in-show supports, stand builds etc. While the waiting list for standard exhibitors interested in exhibiting

in Gulfood exceeds 1,500 hopeful companies worldwide, Potatoes Canada benefited from square footage available within the larger AAFC/Canadian Pavilion in 2018. With booth space secured, Potatoes Canada approached the embassy to request additional contact information/meeting arrangements whereby in-country research could be completed on market access/trade barriers or limitations, buyers within the market, and the regulatory framework to which exporters would have to meet when exporting into this region. Coincidentally, the

Canadian Food Exporters Association was working with the UAE consulate to arrange a similar itinerary for its members. Potatoes Canada was successful in securing space within a pre-show Canada-Dubai trade mission and, in the following days, was invited to make a presentation to the various regional embassies.

What began as a promotional effort of gaining visibility for the industry via attending a trade show grew into an exceptional market research opportunity for Potatoes Canada to capitalize on.

Approximately 40% of the visitors to the Potatoes Canada booth were interested in purchasing fresh potatoes for chipping. Most of these companies have well established chip factories and well established brands within the region.

Inquiries were also received for fresh and fresh for processing into French fries. Starch and frozen product was also in great demand.

Seed inquiries were geared more to varieties for chipping or processing in warmer climates. For a variety to be grown commercially in most foreign markets, it must first be placed on an official variety registration list in that country. There is an official process to have a variety trialed, evaluated and approved and each country has its own unique system in place using either government or licensed importers and contractors to do this work. The process involved in locating these organizations, receiving verification from the appropriate government



*The Potatoes Canada booth was part of the Canadian Pavilion in the World Food Hall at Gulfood 2018.*

organizations and processing the applications and registration fees for these varieties is extensive. Shows like this help us make connections with embassy and commercial contacts who are familiar with the process and can guide us towards the proper regulatory parties.

Inquiries for product were received from over 20 countries with the largest percentage from India and the UAE. Other visitors to the booth looking for product came from Pakistan, Sri-Lanka, Iraq, Oman, Bangladesh, Singapore, Nigeria, Kuwait, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, USA, Brazil, Angola, Iran, Palestine, Georgia, and Jordan. While I have been fortunate to promote the potato industry at various trade shows over the past six years, Gulfood was by far the busiest show I have attended to date. It had the highest traffic volume and the highest caliber/quality contacts that visited the booth.

Potatoes Canada continues to actively work on behalf of the Alberta, PEI and New Brunswick potato industries to enhance marketplace presence in existing and target export markets. The objective of this effort is to increase market share in those countries or regions through utilization of a contribution agreement between Agriculture and Agri-Food

Canada's Agri-Marketing Program and the Canadian Potato Council (CPC) part of the Canadian Horticultural Council. Funding for this project has been covered under various agreements since 2010. The latest funding piece for the project covered April 2016 through to March 31, 2018 and is provided by Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the PEI Potato Board, Potatoes NB, Potato Growers of Alberta, and the PEI and New Brunswick Departments of Agriculture.

Potatoes Canada continues to work as a liaison between CFIA and the NB, PEI and Alberta exporters, bringing them together for meetings and updates on market access issues.



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# International PEI Potato Technology Expo

by Mary Kay Sonier

The 2018 edition of the International Potato Technology Expo welcomed professionals from across North America to the Eastlink Centre on Friday 23 - 24, 2018. The top industry event had an impressive display of equipment and products, alongside a sold-out educational conference.

Over 3,300 attendees walked the show floor to check out diverse exhibits from local, regional, national, and international companies. Potato growers, together with the leading manufacturers of equipment and product solutions from across the Maritimes and beyond were in attendance. Dozens of exhibitors at the show debuted cutting-edge and innovative products including new potato varieties, the latest models of equipment, innovative growing technology, and more.

Show Manager Mark Cusack was pleased to report the success of the event. "The crowd was very steady and exhibitors were happy with the turnout," he commented. "We saw professionals of all backgrounds come out to the event – from lifelong growers to children and families of the industry. Comments on the conference were very positive as well. Everything came together at the right time."

The full educational conference program saw huge success on both days of the show. During some sessions, listeners lined the room with seats completely filled to hear experts speak on informative, relevant topics. Thank you to seminar presenters John Walsh of McCain Foods; Drs. Suji

Liu with the PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries and Christine Noronha of Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada; Dr. Jiwan Palta of the University of Wisconsin; Ryan Barrett, of the PEI Potato Board with a panel of growers including Andrew Lawless and Nathan Ching; Bill Menkveld of Greentronics; and Drs. Andy Robinson and Andrew McKenzie-Gopsill of North Dakota State University and Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada. Four of the presenters were sponsored by the Agronomy Initiative for Marketable Yield (AIM) project.

Several topics provided timely information that growers can use when planning for the 2018 season.

John Walsh from McCain Foods addressed the issue of CIPC and the effect on seed potatoes stored or transported in facilities that have also handled product treated with CIPC. He began his presentation with a question he commonly receives from growers: "Is it okay to cut seed in a storage that has been treated with CIPC?" The original recommendation was to avoid bringing seed into a storage that had been treated with CIPC until four to six months have passed, the storage has been cleaned and disinfected and continuously aired for that period. After seeing continued emergence issues even after this procedure had been followed, Walsh did a study to look at the effect of exposure of seed potatoes to various levels of CIPC. After a three year trial they determined that concentrations of CIPC as low as 0.025 ppm or less could delay emergence and adversely affect yield. The take home recommendations for seed cutting locations based on results from the study

include the following:

1. Cut seed in a CIPC-free building if possible.
2. Select a storage for short term storage, do not treat with CIPC and steam clean every year.
3. Select a separately ventilated bin, keep it CIPC free and steam clean it every year. Make sure ventilation is off when gassing other bins.
4. Don't forget to steam clean trucks conveyors and bin pilers that will be handling seed after having handled CIPC treated product.

On Saturday morning a panel discussion was led by Ryan Barrett, Research and Agronomy Coordinator with the PEI Potato Board and featuring growers Nathan Ching from Black Pond Farms and Andrew Lawless of R&L Farms. Ryan started off by discussing the factors influencing specific gravity (SG) in PEI potato production and the difficulty many growers face in achieving both a high percentage of ten ounce and good specific gravity scores. Nathan felt that the major factor limiting gravity scores for his farm was not allowing the plants to mature and senesce as naturally as possible. To address this he:

- Limited top-killing to one spray only;
- Reduced the amount of banded Nitrogen; and
- Made a fall application of 50% of total K needs for coming year.

Since making these changes he has seen an increase in SG on his farm.

Andrew had focused mainly on changes to his fertility program. In 2017, they reduced K in the planter blend by 40 lbs/ac and replaced about half of MOP (KCl) with K-Mag. They also replaced AN primarily with Ammonium Sulfate. These changes resulted in a significant increase in SG across all varieties in 2017 compared to the previous two years.

Several of the topics covered in the education sessions at the 2018 Expo will be addressed in full articles in upcoming issues of PEI Potato News.

Friday evening, following the show, the PEI Department



Truck inserts being used in WD Potato trucks were on display (left) as were those manufactured by Gagnon Ornamental Works from New Brunswick.



There was good traffic by the PEI Potato Board booth during the show. Colleen Hogg of Klondike Farms was the winner of the potato picture in the draw for those who filled out the communications survey.

of Agriculture welcomed attendees to a casual session at the Pourhouse at the Old Triangle in Charlottetown. Here people could socialize with the presenters from the Expo in an informal setting and have one on one or small group discussions. The event was well attended and Potato Industry Coordinator Lorraine MacKinnon has received positive feedback that she will use in looking ahead to the next event in 2020.

Sponsors of the event included Prince Edward Island Agriculture and Fisheries, Sygenta, and Farm Credit Canada. The show is produced by Master Promotions Ltd., Canada's largest independent trade and consumer event management company. The International Potato Technology Expo takes place biennially in Charlottetown. The next edition will occur in 2020.





For his second event, Morgan chose to attend the Outstanding Young Farmers Meeting in Niagara Falls, ON in December 2017. He felt that this opportunity was outstanding in enabling him to make contacts with other young farmers his age who were progressive and trying new things. With this event, he found the focus was not as much on succession as on good financial planning for a successful farm operation.

Ashton was unable to complete the full program due to the arrival of a new baby! However Morgan and the Maynards continued on with the remaining travel opportunities.

The final event which was mandatory for all participants in the FMC Transition Program to attend was the International Farm Management Association Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in July 2017. Both Morgan and Bryan attended this session. The Canadian group attended meetings and sessions, and as well took part in two days of field trips. They had an opportunity to see how some farmers in the UK are diversifying their operations and making crop and facility changes to adapt to new market demands. The interaction with international attendees also provided insight into the role of government in setting land management regulations and financial support in other regions of the world.

Succession was a topic of discussion at all the meetings and participants can continue the discussion through ongoing workshops and events sponsored by Farm Management Canada ([www.fmc-gac.com](http://www.fmc-gac.com)) at locations across Canada.



Morgan checks out some potatoes in Scotland. Photo courtesy FMC.

All the Island participants found value in participating in the program. They have a Facebook group and still maintain contact with the other young farmers they met. "The networking opportunities were the biggest benefit," say Bryan and Kyle. "We have contacts for life that are the same age as us but in different situations, that we can talk to and share ideas. We never would have made these contacts without this program." Morgan agrees, "I continue to talk with folks I met from other areas of the country and while we are involved in different crops, our financial and succession plan situations have definite similarities."

For information on the Transition Program go to: <https://fmc-gac.com/programs-services/btg/>.

## Have You Heard from Your Advisor Lately?

When the markets turn volatile as they have, even the most patient investors may come to question the wisdom of their investment plan. We would be pleased to put our years of experience and knowledge to work for you.



Earl Pickard, CIM  
Investment Advisor



Dale Turner  
Associate Investment Advisor



Deneen Ferguson  
Client Associate




Karen Pickard  
Administrative Assistant



**Pickard Financial Management Group**  
119 Kent Street, Suite 400, Charlottetown, PE C1A 1N3  
902 892-4231 • 1 800 207-0231


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# HISTORY & EXPERTISE

PEI Bag Company has a rich history of creating packaging solutions for a variety of industries, including agriculture, aquaculture, and confectionery.



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**1-800-716-2261**

# Marketing Notes

## Results of the TV and Social Media Campaign Featuring the “How do you grow a quality potato” Video Spot

by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

This fall, PEI Potatoes experienced our first multi-media campaign to include broadcast. As you know, we produced a thirty second spot to promote the PEI Potato industry, which ran on TV locally, and had an online campaign in Ontario and Atlantic provinces:

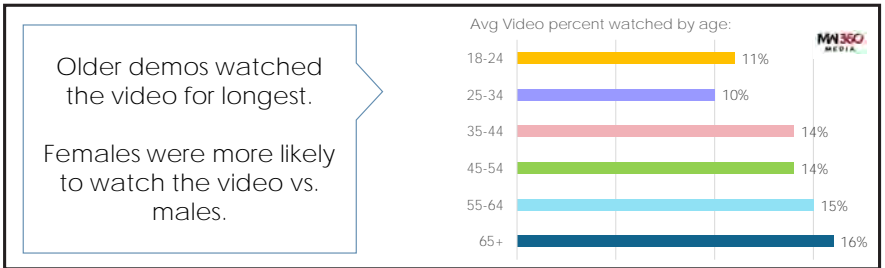
- Dates: Oct 30 – Dec 11, 2017
- TV PEI only: CBC, Rogers HNIC and Gusto TV. Programming highlights include: Hockey Night in Canada, Compass, Rick Mercer, 22 Minutes.
- Online: CBC.ca statics online ads, CBC pre-roll, YouTube pre-roll, and a Facebook ad campaign

We were very pleased with the results. In total, we achieved 5.2 million impressions, meaning 5.2 million viewers had the opportunity to see our spot. We had 4.35 million impressions online and 915,000 impressions on TV. It also helped to boost our other networks. We added 1,400 Facebook followers, and 3,400 new people to our database.

We also outperformed the industry standard for video completions on YouTube. Depending on the category, between 15-25% of users finish watching the videos, without clicking through them. We achieved a 31% video completion rate. We attribute that to two things:

1. The video was a good length at 30 seconds. Of course, the longer the video, the lower your completion percentage
2. The video content was compelling. We had excellent feedback from the video and know that people really liked it and wanted to watch it. Our story impacted our consumers!

## Facebook Video



Older demos watched the video for longest.  
Females were more likely to watch the video vs. males.

We also did well with bonus air-time, particularly on TV. The agency we worked with was able to negotiate getting our ad included in any unsold or “no charge” spots on TV and the stations would air our spot, which helps our campaign to over achieve. We actually booked the equivalent of 700,000 impressions and we received 915,000 impressions for a 131% achievement, which is excellent value.

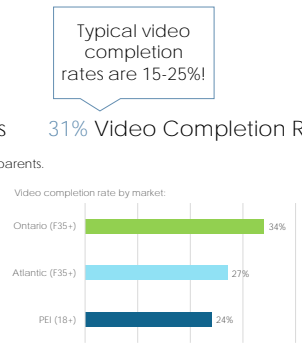
Overall, the campaign went very well, it created lots of awareness and promotion both on TV and online for PEI Potatoes for our positive message and received lots of great feedback. We are very pleased with this successful campaign!

Once again, the tablestock committee thanks Innovation PEI and the PEI Dept of Agriculture and Fisheries for their support, and to MW360, Fresh Media and Furrow Creative for their expertise in helping us tell our story and bring it to market!

## YouTube.

695,427 Impressions 449 Clicks  
213,242 Completed Video Views 31% Video Completion Rate

- Parents had a higher video completion rate vs. non-parents.



Media	Details	Markets	Impressions
<b>Television :30 seconds</b>	Est 670 GRPs		915,000
PEI National	CBC & Rogers Hockey Night in Canada Gusto Specialty Channel	PEI Canada	
<b>Online</b>			
CBC	:30 Pre-roll, Big Box, Leaderboard, Double big box, Mobile, Billboard ad	PEI/NS/NL/NB	539,471
Youtube	:30 Pre-roll	PEI/NS/NL/NB/ONT	695,427
Facebook	Newsfeed video, lead generation ads	PEI/NS/NL/NB/ONT	3,121,467
<b>Total</b>			<b>5,271,365</b>



Food Safety for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

## The Basics of CanadaGAP Audits

The companies that provide CanadaGAP audits are called Certification Bodies. Certification bodies operate independently of CanadaGAP. They offer CanadaGAP audits under license, and are overseen by CanadaGAP management to ensure they deliver the service according to program rules. They are also overseen by their Accreditation Body to ensure they operate according to international standards for certification bodies. These include standards governing complaints, impartiality, appeals, and other matters related to certification.

The certification body's role is to:

- Perform audits, using staff or contract auditors
- Recruit, train and supervise auditors
- Schedule audits and assign auditors
- Review audit reports before issuing reports to the client
- Review self-assessments and corrective actions
- Issue reports and certificates
- Make all certification decisions including extensions, suspensions, withdrawals
- Handle billing for audits
- Maintain and publish registries of certified companies
- Respond to appeals and complaints regarding the audit

Enrolling for CanadaGAP certification includes choosing which certification body that you want to perform your audit. CanadaGAP currently has three certification bodies to choose from:

**BNQ**



**NSF Canada Ag**



**SGS Canada**



### Which Certification Body should I choose?

While all certification bodies must meet the same basic requirements to offer CanadaGAP audits and certification, these companies are private and compete with each other on price and services. It is worth contacting the various certification bodies to find out how well they can meet your needs for an audit, including:

- How many auditors do they have?
- Which regions or provinces do they operate in?
- Do they have auditors in your area?
  - If the auditor will have to travel, where is the auditor coming from? How much does the certification body charge for the auditor's travel time and expenses?
  - Will an audit be scheduled to occur in conjunction with others nearby, so that auditor travel costs can be shared?
- How much does the certification body charge for the audit? Is it an hourly rate, a half or full day rate?
- Do they charge an administrative fee to issue the certificate?
- What other fees do they charge – for example, if the audit takes longer than planned, or if corrective action requests are issued and have to be verified?
- How will communication occur? Will the audit plan arrive by email? Will the audit report and certificate be mailed or emailed? Make clear your preferences.
- Are there features of the certification body's service that distinguish it from their competitors? Do they offer discounts? Do they offer additional services?

## What are the next steps?

- Your selected certification body will contact you once they have received a copy of your enrolment form from CanadaGAP.
- Your certification body will want to collect additional information about your operation to help them scope your audit properly. They may ask for information about:
  - the number of acres
  - the location of your production
  - the number of employees you have
  - other crops/livestock on your operation
  - the specific products and activities that the audit will cover
  - whether you agree to them sharing your audit results with your buyers
- You will receive a contract or service proposal from the certification body. Read it carefully to ensure you understand all terms and conditions, services, and fees before you sign it. You must send a signed copy to your certification body before a certificate can be issued, assuming you subsequently pass the audit.
- The certification body, or the auditor assigned to do your audit, will send an audit plan. Make sure to review and verify the plan before you accept it. The plan will indicate the auditor, timing, and scope of your audit and certificate.
- After the audit, your certification body will issue your audit report within 30 business days. If you passed the audit, you will usually receive your certificate at the same time. If you failed the audit, you have 60 days to correct the problem(s) and obtain certification.

If you have any problems with your audit, your auditor or your certification body, you have the right to file an appeal or complaint with the certification body, or directly with CanadaGAP.

- The instructions for appealing your audit findings or filing a complaint are provided by your certification body. Consult your contract or contact their office for information.
- Complaints can be filed with CanadaGAP in writing at [info@canadagap.ca](mailto:info@canadagap.ca) or by regular mail at the address below.

## What is the benefit of an audit?

The audit:

- Is an opportunity to identify potential problems
- Offers a continuous process for improvement
- Helps you meet your customer requirements and comply with contract obligations
- Helps you comply with legal and regulatory requirements related to food safety
- Provides an effective method for involving and motivating staff at all levels.

Read the CanadaGAP brochure “What to Expect From Your Audit” for more information about preparing for your audit.

## Contact Us

CanadaGAP Program • 245 Menten Place, Suite 312 • Ottawa, ON K2H 9E8 • Tel: 613-829-4711 •  
Fax: 613-829-9379 • [info@canadagap.ca](mailto:info@canadagap.ca) • [www.canadagap.ca](http://www.canadagap.ca)

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*CanadaGAP® is a program developed in Canada to promote Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for fruit and vegetable suppliers.*

*An Update From the:*

# PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries

by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator

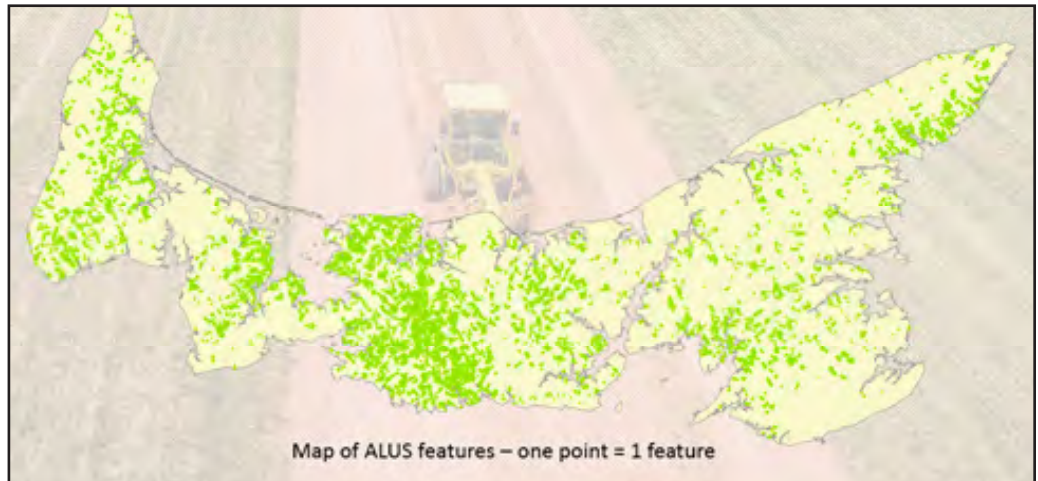


This year's International Potato Technology Expo held February 23-24 in Charlottetown, was host to over 3,300 attendees. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants in the tradeshow and conference. We also added a Friday evening social event, which was well attended and provided growers a meet-and-greet with our conference speakers. If you have any feedback regarding the event to help make the 2020 Expo even better, please let me know.

Last week I travelled to Ottawa to attend the 96th annual meeting of the Canadian Horticultural Council. This was a new experience for me and I was quite impressed with the professional advocacy efforts this organization provides on behalf of all Canadian fruit and vegetable growers - from crop protection issues to trade policy to research projects and more. The AGM was chaired by our very own Alvin Keenan, outgoing President of the Canadian Horticultural Council. The council was presented with several resolutions to guide their activities and direction in 2018, with the ultimate goal of strengthening the fruit and vegetable sector. The PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries is a member of the CHC, and as such, I was sent as a voting delegate. The PEI Potato Board also sent voting delegates. For more information on resolutions, committees, or the annual report contact the Potato Board office or myself (902-314-1607).

This week my colleague Sebastian Ibarra is in Ottawa attending the Pesticide Minor Use meetings. He joins his counterparts from across the country to lay out areas of priority for specific crops and crop pests. Before he left, we discussed the key priority areas for Prince Edward Island potato producers. It should come as no surprise that we identified wireworms, early dying and Colorado Potato Beetles among these priorities; given the current status of pesticide re-evaluations.

Lawrence MacAulay, Federal Minister of Agriculture & Agri-food Canada, announced the launch of the federally-delivered Canadian Agricultural Partnership in February.



The federal programs are now open, and soon the PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries will release the detail of the next five-year suite of agricultural programs. Stay tuned for more details in upcoming issues of the PEI Potato News, and watch our website for program details and application forms [www.princeedwardisland.ca](http://www.princeedwardisland.ca).

*Thank you to Evan MacDonald, PEIDAF for providing the image and statistics on ALUS soil conservation structures in PEI.*

## DID YOU KNOW:

**The Alternative Land Use Services Program (ALUS) has provided support to growers to build:**

- **332,000 ft of farmable berms; or the distance from PEI to Moncton**
- **1,300,000 ft of terraces; or the distance from PEI to Houlton, Maine**
- **2,400,000 ft of grassed headlands; or the distance from PEI to Montreal!**

# UNITED

POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA  
LES PRODUCTEURS UNIS DE POMMES DE TERRE DU CANADA

## The Road to Profitability

by Kevin MacIsaac, Executive Director, UPGC

The United Potato Partner Seminar held earlier this winter in Charlottetown presented an excellent line up of speakers to provide information for decision making for the 2017 potato crop and the upcoming one in 2018.

One of the highlights of the day was a presentation by Mark Klompfen, CEO of the United Potato Growers of America. This year has seen a dramatic increase in the price of potatoes in the U.S., particularly Idaho, compared to the last five. Mark focused on some of the reasons:

When United of America was formed – there was very little practical data. Growers did not know how much they grew collectively, nor what was available to the market at any given point in the year. Thirteen years later they have developed a very real time picture of the industry. Looking at models and trendlines last spring they were able to predict that the US potato industry was headed on a downhill trajectory if Idaho planted the acreage they were expected to in 2017. UPGA was able to get that information out to the growers before they made their decisions and the outcome was dramatic. Idaho growers reduced their acreage by 15,000 acres. The growing season was a challenging one, bringing in yields below their trend line of 425cwt./acre. The results were dramatic. Production in Idaho was down 8 million hundredweight from the 2016 crop (6%) with 5 million hundredweight of that reduction coming out of the fresh market supply (13%). Idaho's GRI last year was \$4.66/

cwt. This year it is currently at \$8.76/cwt.

Other areas of the U.S. have higher GRI's to date: Wisconsin \$10.28, Colorado \$10.37, and Columbia Basin \$8.76.

The overall US Russet Supply over the past 5 years has been 73,910,000 cwt./year. The overall US Russet Supply for the 2017-18 fresh market is estimated to be 68,615,000 cwt. Similarly in GRI coordinates, the overall weighted GRI for the last five years across all regions was \$6.44/cwt. The 2017-18 weighted GRI to date across all regions is \$8.93/cwt.

So what is the Russet potato supply/ price correlation? Proven data shows that A 7% Reduction In Supply Provides A 39% Greater Return. In other words a 100-acre grower would need only to produce 93 acres for the same return.

Red potato supply in comparison to russets, has shown 10 years of annual growth of 1.5%/year. Unlike russets, the red price is more stable and less affected by supply shifts than ever before. What is the reason? Good communication at the United Potato Growers Crop Transition Conference in Minneapolis (will be held this year on June 20, 2018) has helped Central Minnesota to clean up their crop and therefore pass a higher price baton to the next scheduled shipping regions of the Red River Valley and Wisconsin.

Yellow potato supply in the last 10 years has shown growth of 10.5%/year. Pricing has declined slightly, but still returns profitable levels. How does this defy odds? It seems that no single region dominates the yellow market, which is unlike the red and russet market. The unknown factor is how many yellow potatoes the market will accept while still giving positive returns.

What does the future hold for the upcoming 2018 crop in the United States? Acreage will need to increase this year to meet processing expansion as new French fry plants are being built to feed the demand for frozen markets. For those in the fresh market the low prices of alternate crops will be a factor. A comparison of the price changes between the 2016 and 2017 crops produced in Idaho shows potatoes to be the most profitable, followed by alfalfa and wheat. Malt barley, and corn are showing negative margins. This will no doubt have an effect on planting intentions.

Looking for small scale potato equipment for fresh potato production in Goose Bay, Labrador

**Primary interest - 2 row planter and harvester in good working condition.**

**Also bagging and handling equipment.**

**Please contact Tom Angiers:  
1-709-897-5398 calit@nf.sympatico.ca**

# INDUSTRY UPDATES

## **International Food Processor Announces Major Expansion Of Manitoba Operations**

*February 14, 2018 - Portage La Prairie* — The Manitoba government and J.R. Simplot Company (Simplot) announced a major investment and expansion in the company's Manitoba-based operations near Portage la Prairie today. Premier Brian Pallister and Agriculture Minister Ralph Eichler were joined by Mark McKellar from Simplot to make the announcement.

"Our government is excited to join Simplot today to announce a historic investment and expansion of their Manitoba operations," said Pallister. "Simplot has already established itself as a member of the community of Portage la Prairie and now they are doubling their operations and investing in the future of Manitoba. Simplot, like others before them, has taken notice of a renewed focus on improving the business climate and our efforts to create opportunities for growth and investment."

"Manitoba delivers in so many ways that will help make this project a success," said Mark McKellar, food group president, Simplot. "It has access to quality potatoes, a strong grower community, availability of highly skilled employees and distribution routes that continue to expand our footprint. We are convinced Manitoba's business-friendly environment made this the right decision for the J.R. Simplot Company."

Simplot confirmed the \$460 million construction project is expected to begin this spring and will increase the size of the facility from 180,000 to 460,000 square feet. The expansion will more than double the plant's need for potatoes from regional growers, while increasing its employment by 87 expected new full-time positions. Current operations are expected to continue during construction, with expanded processing capacity expected in fall 2019.

"Simplot has been an outstanding corporate and community partner since establishing its operations in Manitoba," said Eichler. "This investment further cements their reputation as a pillar in Manitoba's agriculture and food processing sector. The plant's increase in capacity also presents a tremendous opportunity for Manitoba farmers to strengthen their partnership with a reliable local processor and increase potato production in Manitoba."

The investment package provided by the Manitoba government includes tax increment financing up to \$6.31 million to assist with anticipated capital investments and road improvements. Manitoba will also provide up to \$522,000 in employee training contributions, based on the number of new positions.

Manitoba Hydro will provide \$1 million in PowerSmart program funding for electrical and natural gas efficiency projects, based on the plant meeting program guidelines.

"Simplot has long been an outstanding partner and contributor to the community of Portage la Prairie and the surrounding area," said Kam Blight, reeve for the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie. "We are beyond excited for them to grow their operations here and create even more economic opportunities for the region. In addition to the recent announcement of Roquette, business truly is booming for Portage la Prairie."

"This is a great day for the Portage region," said Irvine Ferris, mayor, City of Portage la Prairie. "Simplot has been a strong corporate citizen in our community since 2003. We welcome today's announcement, that Simplot will double production in Portage. This significant investment will create more jobs, business opportunities and prosperity for the entire region."

As part of the expansion, Simplot will incorporate similar industry-leading energy and water efficiency processes which were first established at the company's plant in Caldwell, Idaho. It was recently awarded Food Processing Green Plant of the Year in 2017 by a leading industry publication.

Founded in 1929, J.R. Simplot Company is headquartered in Boise, Idaho and has operations in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and China, marketing products to more than 40 countries worldwide.

Manitoba growers annually harvest over 65,000 acres of potatoes, representing one-fifth of the Canada's total potato crop and making Manitoba the second-largest producer in the country.

## **Canadian Agricultural Partnership: Building a Strong Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector**

*February 13, 2018 - Ottawa, Canada* – Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector is a key driver of economic growth, innovation and trade. Economic indicators show a strong and dynamic Canadian agricultural sector, with a growing global middle class looking for our world-class products.

Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister, Lawrence MacAulay, celebrated Canada's Agriculture Day alongside farmers, ranchers, food processors, industry leaders and youth today in Ottawa, where he officially launched the six federal programs under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

The Partnership is a progressive \$3-billion, federal-provincial-territorial agreement that will help chart the



course for government investments in the sector over the next five years.

Developed with input from provincial and territorial partners, as well as industry, federal programs and activities under the Partnership will focus on three key areas:

- Growing trade and expanding markets (\$297 million) - Providing core industry services, such as timely market information and sector expertise to help improve the sector's competitiveness, growth and adaptability. Advancing and defending international trade interests, as well as improving market development and market access activities to address emerging needs of the sector, and of small and medium enterprises (SME). This will help expand markets and trading opportunities for the sector.

- Innovative and sustainable growth of the sector (\$690 million) - Enhancing the competitiveness of the sector through research, science and innovation, and adoption of innovative products and practices, with an emphasis on the environment and clean growth. The Government will help support the resiliency and sustainability of the sector, helping farmers adapt to climate change, conserve water and soil resources, and grow their businesses sustainably to meet increasing global food demand.

- Supporting diversity and a dynamic, evolving sector (\$166.5 million) - Strengthening the sector by better reflecting the diversity of Canadian communities, enhancing collaboration across different jurisdictions through a new Regional Collaborative Partnerships Program, securing and supporting public trust in the sector, and improving client services.

These three key areas include \$686.5 million over five years in federal programs, and \$467 million of federally funded activities that benefit producers and processors and address priorities identified by the agricultural sector during consultations in the development of the framework. These investments will support trade policy and market access, trade commissioners, market development, market information, value chain roundtables, foundational science led by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and support for regulatory systems and regional collaboration.

Budget 2017 clearly outlines a strong commitment to the agriculture and agri-food sector and its importance to the Canadian economy. It outlines investments inside and outside the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to help the agriculture and food sector reach new heights. Specifically, Budget 2017 includes a strengthened focus on trade, along with investments in the areas of innovation through the \$950 million, five-year, Innovation Superclusters Initiative, infrastructure, and value-added industries through the \$1.2 billion Strategic Innovation Fund, which will all help Canada unleash the sector's growth potential.

## Ireland selected to host World Potato Congress in 2021

March 22, 2018 - The Irish Potato Federation – with the support of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Bord Bia, Failte Ireland and Teagasc – has won its bid to host the World Potato Congress (WPC) in 2021 in



**Potato Warehouse Competition**

This competition is open to all Potato Warehouses located in Rural PEI (excluding Charlottetown & Summerside).  
Judges will evaluate the overall appearance of the property, including the criteria noted below.

Judging will commence after September 01, 2018.

Criteria for judging based on the following:

- General appearance of storage facilities, sheds, cleanliness of area Surrounding the building(s) including any cull/soil piles, farm machinery and other equipment places in an orderly fashion, used/soiled bags, rocks, soil, oil, farm machinery and machinery placed in orderly fashion - 300 points
- Exterior appearance of building, exterior painting, exterior finish - 200 pts
- Window glass, doors, roof, provision of storage for waste material - 50 pts
- Condition and appearance of warehouse identification - 150 points
- Landscaping; lawn areas, planting and care of trees, shrubs - 150 points
- Condition of approach to the warehouse from the highway - 150 points
- Lighting or illumination of the entire area - 100 points
- Flag flying - 75 points

Total Possible Points - 1175

Contact:  
Ph: (902) 569-3701  
Email: peirbs@gmail.com

**Entry deadline:  
June 15, 2018**

Prizes on a Provincial basis are as follows:  
First prize - \$400.00  
Second prize - \$200.00

**Sponsored by the PEI Potato Board**

**RURAL BEAUTIFICATION SOCIETY**

Dublin.

It is envisaged that 1,000 delegates from developing and developed countries across the globe – including: growers; researchers; producers; traders; processors; and manufacturers – will attend the congress.

The Irish Potato Federation has also secured the simultaneous hosting of the Europatat Congress – the annual congress of the European association of the potato trade.

Both events will become a week-long focus on the potato, the third most important food crop in terms of global consumption.

Andrew Doyle, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture of Ireland comments: “I am delighted to be able to announce this good news for Ireland in the RDS, which will be the congress venue for the 2021 World Potato Congress. “I want my department and Bord Bia to continue to work with the Irish Potato Federation to make this event a great success for the Irish food industry.”

Michael Hoey, president of the Irish Potato Federation states, “Winning the World Potato Congress for Ireland is the culmination of a lot of hard and creative work by a very dedicated committee and I know that the 2021 congress will shine a spotlight on the importance of the potato in Ireland, and across the globe, and become a centrepiece of world-class marketing excellence.”

Romain Cools, president and CEO of World Potato Congress Inc is enthusiastic about this announcement. “Ireland has a very important historical and cultural connection with the potato going back hundreds of years. I see the 2021 congress looking at the important role the potato will play in the future as a sustainable source for food security across the world. The World Potato Congress in Dublin will be the perfect follow-up to this year’s congress, which will be held in May 2018 in Cuzco, Peru, under the title: ‘Biodiversity, food security and business’.”

He concludes, “I will be working closely with the Irish Potato Federation over the coming years and really look forward to visiting Dublin in 2021 for the Congress.”

## Upcoming Events

Please call the Board at (902) 892-6551 for further information on any of these events.

### April 2018

- Apr 17 **PEI Potato Board Meeting.**
- Apr 24-26 **Canadian Produce Marketing Association Convention.** Vancouver, B.C.

### May 2018

- May 27-31 **World Potato Congress.** Cusco, Peru.
- May 31 **PEI Potato Crop Insurance Deadline.**

### June 2018

- June TBD **CFIA Seed Potato Inspection field course,** Ridgetown, ON.
- June 30 **Application Deadline for CFIA Seed Potato Inspection.**

### July 2018

- July 17 **Canadian Potato Council Summer Meeting,** Edmonton, AB.
- July 22-26 **Potato Association of America Annual Meeting.** Boise, ID.
- July 31 **Deadline for Applications for PEI Dealer and Export Licenses for the 2018/2019 season.**

**For Up-to Date Agronomy Information and dates for Potato Extension Events taking place on PEI, visit the new PEI Potato Agronomy Website at**

**<http://peipotatoagronomy.com>**



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PRIME

Velum<sup>®</sup> Prime nematicide is making big news. No wonder. Now you can make yield-robbing nematodes a thing of the past, and expect more out of your crop. It even offers early blight protection. To integrate it into your potato protection program, apply it in-furrow at planting. And give your potato yield a chance at being out of this world.

**Get the yield-enhancing details at  
[cropsience.bayer.ca/VelumPrime](https://cropsience.bayer.ca/VelumPrime)**



[cropsience.bayer.ca](https://cropsience.bayer.ca) or 1 888-283-6847 or contact your Bayer representative. [@Bayer4CropsCA](https://twitter.com/Bayer4CropsCA)

Always read and follow label directions. Velum<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of the Bayer Group. Bayer CropScience Inc. is a member of CropLife Canada.



## Coragen<sup>®</sup> Insecticide

### Make time for what really matters. Coragen<sup>®</sup> can help.

You're proud of your potato crop. Let's face it. No one ever looks back and wishes they'd spent more time controlling crop damaging, yield robbing insects. We get that. Coragen<sup>®</sup> insecticide delivers extended residual control of European corn borer, decreasing the number of applications needed in a season. And, if your Colorado potato beetle seed treatment control breaks late in the season, Coragen<sup>®</sup> insecticide can provide the added control you need, so you have time for more important things. Did we mention it's also easy on bees,\* beneficials\* and the environment?

Visit [FMCcrop.ca](http://FMCcrop.ca) or call 1-833-362-7722 to learn more.

\*When applied at label rates. In line with Integrated Pest Management and Good Agricultural Practices, insecticide applications should be made when pollinators are not foraging to avoid unnecessary exposure.

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**FMC**