

*Prince Edward Island*

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Volume 18, Issue 5

# POTATO NEWS

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- **Driving Sales**
- **Concentrated Flow Analysis**



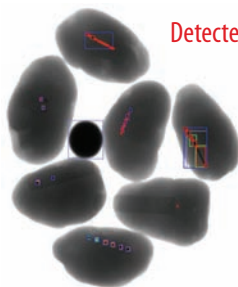
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# POTATO NEWS

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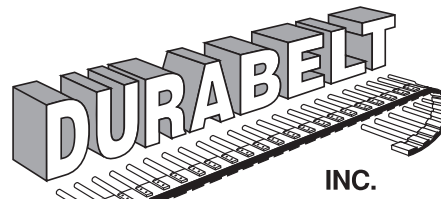
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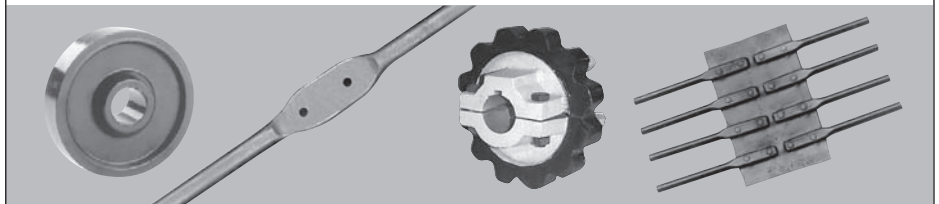
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Cover: Maps and GIS tools can be used to help identify field areas that may benefit from soil conservation tools such as a grassed waterway. Map provided by PEI Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Sustainable Agriculture Section.



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# Chairman's Comments

by Rodney Dingwell, PEI Potato Board Chairman



Our main harvest season is quickly approaching as I write this message. With a few days left in September, the rains we usually receive this month were much less than normal, and continued the trend of being extremely sporadic. The dry season has been challenging but we'll hope for the best at harvest. I wish you all a safe and good harvest.

Our industry was showcased in two recent events which took place on Island potato farms. On August 26th, Melis and John Visser hosted Outstanding in the Field (OITH) at Victoria Potato Farms. This was the first time the event has been held in Atlantic Canada, and chef Emily Wells created a beautiful meal featuring local ingredients, including lots of potatoes, which was served to the participants right in the field. Toe Taps and Taters, a Fall Flavours event, was hosted by Alex Docherty and Sherwood Produce at their potato storage in Canoe Cove on September 8th. It was also an amazing event, with people from across Canada and around the world in attendance. Both events took a lot of time and effort on the part of the Vissers and the Dochertys, and we commend them and everyone involved in organizing the two events that helped share the story and taste of potatoes with Islanders and visitors to our beautiful province.

The federal government has announced a number of transformative tax proposals that may have severe negative impacts for farmers, particularly for multi-generational farms. As the most significant tax changes in recent years, these complex proposals will spell uncertainty for all family farm corporations — the proposed changes require further study and technical analysis. The PEI Potato Board, United Potato Growers of Canada and the Canadian Potato Council will be sending letters before the October 2nd deadline for comments stating these corporate tax changes should be taken off the table and reconsidered until the government has undertaken the necessary consultation such changes require.

The PEI Potato Board has been working on other issues of importance to us all, including providing input on the work that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency is doing through its ongoing re-evaluations of many crop protectants. We've been told that input by farmers during these re-evaluations is very important, and we thank all those who took the time to respond to surveys circulated by the Board and who submitted comments directly to PMRA regarding issues. The comment period for Capture/bifenthrin closed on September 14th and the deadline for Matador (and other trade names)/lambda-cyhalothrin comments was September 21st. We did learn last week that the final decision on Lorox/linuron will not happen

until December, 2019, so that's welcome news. PMRA is now reviewing the input received on Capture and a final decision will happen in the next three months.

We continue our efforts to work with provincial agriculture and environment officials on environmental regulations. Changes were made to the pesticide transportation and storage regulations, and we have provided input on both pesticide records and buffer zones/headlands. We await a response from officials on both issues.

In recognition of the reduction in farm numbers over time, the Board is initiating a review of the governance structure of our industry. We have four districts, with three directors (one for seed, one for table and one for processing) elected to represent each district. We also have a Young Farmer representative sitting on the Board in an observer role to learn more about industry issues and governance. The Board also has a number of very active committees, with a great deal of grower engagement through that process as well. A review of our structure was conducted a few years ago, and no changes were adopted by the Board of Directors at that time. It's time to review it again, and we welcome your thoughts re how best to govern our industry going forward. Please contact your director and/or the Board office with any suggestions you have on this or any other issue.

Fresh markets have been good for the past few years, and the 2017/18 season is also off to a good start. Growers, dealers and exporters are encouraged to work together and with Board staff to obtain the best possible returns from the market again this year.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday, November 17th in Charlottetown. We're trying something new this year — the meeting itself will be held at Red Shores, and the reception and banquet that evening will be at the Delta Prince Edward. There's an interesting agenda for the day, and we invite all farmers, industry members and government officials and staff to join us for both events.

As a final note, I'd like to thank all those who contributed to the food aid donations for those who have been hurt so badly by the hurricanes this season. Your generosity is greatly appreciated for the support both here at home for our food banks, and in special circumstances like the Fort McMurray fire and the hurricane relief efforts.

# POTATO BOARD NEWS

## Potatoes From PEI Donated to Help Victims of Hurricanes in the Southern USA

The Government of Prince Edward Island and the P.E.I. Potato Board partnered with Island farmers to provide fresh produce to those affected by the devastating Hurricane Irma in Florida.

A tractor trailer with more than 40,000 pounds of fresh produce left Prince Edward Island September 20 for Georgia where it was distributed to victims of Hurricane Irma.

“All Islanders were moved by the images of devastation caused by Hurricane Irma,” said Premier Wade MacLauchlan. “Our province is well-known for its high-quality food and for its generosity. We are a small Island with a big heart, and this is a concrete way we can help those affected by doing on the things we know best – growing quality food and sharing it with those in need.”

“The PEI Potato farmers always rise to a need and this

is no exception, even during the busy harvest time,” said Rodney Dingwell, chairman of the PEI Potato Board. “We have a very generous industry and it gives me great pride that we are so quick to respond when someone is in need. Not only with our own communities, but as far away as the southern U.S.”

The trailer included 17 pallets of produce donations, from five-pound to 50-pound bags of potatoes from growers and packers throughout Prince Edward Island, to carrots and rutabagas from P.E.I. Vegetable Growers Co-Op. The trailer took approximately two-and-a-half days to arrive in Georgia at the hunger-relief organization Second Harvest of South Georgia. The second-largest food bank in the state, it accepts donations and redistributes them among areas of South Florida, and is also a FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) collection and redistribution site. The Government of Prince Edward Island covered the freight costs.



A truckload of potatoes left PEI on September 20 to help victims of Hurricane Irma in the southern USA. On hand to see the truck leave were (left to right) Greg Donald, GM of the PEI Potato Board, Don Read of PEI Vegetable Growers Co-operative, Phillip Visser of Sherwood Produce Inc., Phil Reid of Red Isle Produce Co. Ltd, Jamie Wood of Cavendish Produce, Ben Millar of Rollo Bay Holdings and Premier of PEI Wade MacLauchlan.

List of partners:

Government of Prince Edward Island  
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Vanco Farms  
Cavendish Produce  
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Sherwood Produce  
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crop protection products that are critical to horticulture. Through grower surveys, the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) has been verifying usage of these products so as to provide the PMRA with up-to-date use information on which to base their final decisions. For example, following our submission on the fungicide chlorothalonil (ex. Bravo), the PMRA revised its risk assessment and indicated it would amend its proposed decision to instead retain or increase the number of applications allowed on certain crops. We hope that future surveys and submissions will result in a continuation of favourable decisions like this one.

## **From the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC): New Crop Protection Manager Position Created**

As CHC members are well aware, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency has been actively reviewing many of the

However, staying up to date on all these re-evaluations, participating in conference calls, attending meetings, reviewing literature, analyzing risk assessments, and examining proposed re-evaluation decisions takes a lot of time. According to the PMRA's schedule for re-evaluations,

## **10th World Potato Congress - Cusco, Peru!**

**For the first time, the World Potato Congress (WPC) and the Latin American Potato Association (ALAP) will come together in the historic city of Cusco, Peru, from 27th to 31st of May 2018.**

**According to WPC President and CEO, David Thompson, the two organizations have agreed to stage a dual congress that will benefit the potato industry in South America and globally. The event will showcase and celebrate the Andean origins of the potato.**

**The WPC is held every three years and organized by the not-for-profit World Potato Congress Inc., dedicated to supporting the cultivation and development of potato around the world. This 10th WPC will mark the first time the event will be held in Latin America. Previous congresses were held in North America, Europe, South Africa, China, and New Zealand.**

**The 10th World Potato Congress (WPC) and the XXVIII Latin American Potato Association (ALAP) Congress is the industry's most important scientific and business event worldwide. It is an excellent showcase to promote the sustainable use of potato biodiversity (with a focus on native varieties), including how to differentiate it on the market and mine its gastronomic uses with varieties related to health and nutrition. It will serve as a food security platform and the development of business ventures.**

**Mr. Thompson notes more than 800 scientists and potato industry representatives are expected to attend the 10th WPC and share interests, innovations and useful information for the global development and growth of the potato. The congress is an opportunity to come into contact with the latest business and scientific advancements related to the potato.**

**The theme of the congress is: "A LOOK TO THE FUTURE OF THE POTATO" and will cover topics under the following sections: Biodiversity, Food Security and Business.**

**During the congress, delegates and guests will have an opportunity to participate in a number of different tours including a half day tour of city of Cusco and it's local ruins, a full day tour of the Sacred Valley and a full day tour of Machu Picchu, one of the Seven Wonders of the world.**

**"We want to encourage anyone involved in the industry to consider attending the 10th World Potato Congress," said Thompson. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn of new developments across the broad spectrum of the industry, to experience the uniqueness and flavours of Peru and to broaden one's understanding and appreciation of South America's diverse cultures.**

**To register visit: [www.worldpotatocongress2018-alap.org](http://www.worldpotatocongress2018-alap.org)**



based on its 15-year cycle, the burden will only get heavier in the next few years. Up until now, CHC has been able to address most of the PMRA's re-evaluations thanks in large part to the work of existing staff, who have taken on the work to the detriment of their other responsibilities. The CHC is thankful that the Canadian Potato Council has kindly "lent" David Jones to the CHC, with his extensive background and expertise, because his actual role is that of National Manager for the Potato Industry. Support in the analysis of the survey data has also been provided by CHC's administrative assistant, who has, at times, contributed over 50% of her time to these efforts.

An additional concern is that the people that CHC has been relying on to provide advice on these matters—Charles Stevens (CHC Crop Protection Chair) and Craig Hunter (Crop Protection Manager, OFVGA), in addition to CHC's David Jones—have inevitably begun, like many of our growers, to think of retirement and succession planning. We need someone who can replace them on these matters.

Because of these great concerns – the importance of crop protection, the amount of effort the file requires, and the eventual retirement of the experts we rely on - the CHC's Board of Directors has approved the creation of a permanent Crop Protection Manager position. Reporting to the CHC Executive Director, the Crop Protection Manager will assume responsibility of coordinating all crop protection activities for CHC, including the important role of responding to federal government consultations and advocating on behalf of fruit and vegetable. This will allow CHC staff to return to their own files, and will ensure that fruit and vegetable growers have a continued and effective voice in government decision-making with regards to pesticides and pest management. CHC has completed the staffing process and recently announced that Caleigh Irwin has joined them in the new position.

## **A Food Policy for Canada - Charlottetown Regional Session**

The first of several regional consultations on the development of a Food Policy for Canada was held in Charlottetown on Wednesday, August 9. The goal for a Food Policy for Canada is to set a long-term vision for the country's health, environmental, social, and economic goals related to food, while also identifying actions that can be taken in the short-term to improve Canada's food system.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lawrence MacAulay opened the first regional engagement session. The Minister was joined by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and MP for Charlottetown, Sean Casey, and one of Canada's best-known chefs and PEI food ambassador, Michael Smith.

The session, which included stakeholders, Indigenous representatives, experts, and key policy makers discussed key themes that were developed during a Food Policy Summit in June that brought together over 250 participants with diverse expertise and experience. The themes include:

- increasing access to affordable food;
- improving health and food safety;
- conserving our soil, water, and air; and
- growing more high-quality food.

It was noted that even during the Food Summit many participants objected to the use of the word "affordable". They felt that food in Canada is already affordable and the drive should not be to reduce the overall cost of food, but rather to improve the situation for those in economic situations which limit their access to food. Participants were asked to prioritize goals of a Food Strategy under each of these themes and then to discuss concrete action items that could be taken to achieve these goals in the short and long term.

This was the first in a series of regional consultations that will be held across the country over the next two months.

Public consultations on A Food Policy for Canada were launched on May 29, 2017, via an online survey. The comment period for the online survey ended on August 31, 2017.

## **Capture/Bifenthrin**

Many farmers, along with the PEI Potato Board, United Potato Growers of Canada, the Canadian Potato Council (CPC), the PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, and other individuals and organizations wrote to PMRA to oppose their proposed decision to eliminate the use of Capture by December 31, 2017. As well, representatives of the Canadian Potato Council, including Alvin Keenan in his role as Canadian Horticultural Council President and Brenda Simmons, met with senior PMRA staff on September 22nd to present rationale for designating Capture as a "critical need" for the industry.

The CPC representatives felt the meeting was productive and that rationale was presented to PMRA to meet the specific criteria of "critical use". Representatives of the registrant, FMC, also participated in the meeting. They advised that they are committed to conducting additional work in Canada to address the data concerns that led to PMRA's proposed removal of Capture from use in our industry. PMRA did not comment on the points put forward by the industry members, but indicated a final decision re the use of Capture in potatoes will be made prior to December 31, 2017.

# Agriculture Ministers Reach Five-year, \$3-billion Partnership

July 21, 2017 - St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador  
- The agriculture and agri-food sector is a key growth industry in Canada, contributing over \$100 billion annually to the economy and employing 2.3 million Canadians.

Ministers of Agriculture reached agreement on the key elements of a new federal, provincial, territorial (FPT) agricultural policy framework during the Annual Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Agriculture held in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, from July 19-21.

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year, \$3 billion investment, will come into effect on April 1, 2018. It will strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector, ensuring continued innovation, growth and prosperity. In addition, producers will continue to have access to a robust suite of Business Risk Management (BRM) programs.

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership will focus on six priority areas:

- Science, Research, and Innovation – Helping industry adopt practices to improve resiliency and productivity through research and innovation in key areas.
- Markets and Trade – Opening new markets and helping farmers and food processors improve their competitiveness through skills development, improved export capacity, underpinned by a strong and efficient regulatory system.
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change – Building sector capacity to mitigate agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment and adapt to climate change by enhancing sustainable growth, while increasing production.
- Value-added Agriculture and Agri-food Processing – Supporting the continued growth of the value-added agriculture and agri-food processing sector.
- Public Trust – Building a firm foundation for public trust in the sector through improved assurance systems in food safety and plant and animal health, stronger traceability and effective regulations.
- Risk Management – Enabling proactive and effective risk management, mitigation and adaptation to facilitate a resilient sector by working to ensure programs are comprehensive, responsive and accessible.

Under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, BRM programs will continue to help producers manage significant risks that threaten the viability of their farm

and are beyond their capacity to manage. Governments responded to industry concerns regarding eligible coverage under AgriStability, ensuring a more equitable level of support for all producers. Highlights of upcoming BRM changes are available at Canadian Agricultural Partnership - Business Risk Management Programs.

Governments further committed to engaging in a review that explores options to improve BRM programming. The review will recognize the important role played by all programs (AgriStability, AgriInvest, AgriInsurance) in the risk management plans of producers given the diversity of the sector. The review will also directly involve producers and have an early focus on market risk, including as it relates to AgriStability addressing concerns regarding timeliness, simplicity and predictability. Ministers will be presented with options in July 2018 for consideration based on early findings of the review.

The agreement reached by ministers today sets the stage for FPT governments to conclude bilateral agreements by April 1, 2018. It is a priority for ministers to implement a seamless transition from the current policy framework to the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. Extensive consultations with industry and Canadians informed the development of the new agreement, which builds on the success of previous FPT agricultural frameworks. Governments will continue to work closely with the sector as Canadian Agricultural Partnership programs are developed and implemented, to reflect the diverse needs across Canada, including the North.

This year's Annual Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Agriculture focused on important initiatives touching the agriculture and agri-food sector including the status of trade negotiations and market access initiatives in key export markets. To this effect, FPT Ministers reiterated their support for supply management. Ministers agreed to the approach for optimizing the Pan-Canadian Regulatory Framework and endorsed the Plant and Animal Health Strategy for Canada. Indigenous agriculture in Canada and the development of a Food Policy for Canada were also addressed. A summary of items discussed at the meeting is available at Summary of items from the 2017 Annual Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Agriculture. The next annual FPT Ministers' meeting will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, in July 2018.





# 2017 Field Day Reports

## AAFC Stakeholder Day

On Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, a good crowd of people working in the Island potato industry gathered for an Industry Stakeholder Day at the AAFC Harrington Research Farm just north of Charlottetown.

The morning started with time for a coffee and a chat with colleagues followed by a general tour of the farm property. Research scientists described the wide range of studies underway at the research facility on the tour.

After a lunch hosted by PEI 4H, comments were provided by Dr. Gilles Saindon, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister of Agriculture Science and Technology Branch of AAFC. Federal Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, MP Wayne Easter and provincial Minister of Agriculture Alan McIsaac were also on hand to visit and talk with participants and AAFC staff. Minister MacAulay announced a \$300,500 investment for the Prince Edward Island Federation of Agriculture (PEIFA) to undertake a risk assessment of agriculture on the island. The assessment will include three focus groups, from across PEI, to discuss and rank various risks associated with agricultural production

for a range of commodities.

Words from the elected officials were followed by a panel discussion with participants Steve Watts of agronomy consulting firm Genesis Crop Systems, Amy Sangster with Perennia, a not-for-profit corporation in NS that provides consulting services to farmers and food processors; Dan MacEachern, a new biologist with AAFC looking after variety evaluation of new cereal lines; and Aaron Mills an AAFC Research Scientist whose areas of study includes crop rotations. They tackled questions on what they saw as the best way to get AAFC research findings out to and utilized by the industry and the best way to improve communications.

Posters on research projects currently underway at AAFC were available for viewing and the afternoon concluded with more detailed field tours including one visiting several potato related research plots on variety evaluation, wireworm control methods, pathology trials and a soil health demonstration. Other tours visited organic and horticulture trials as well as cereal and oilseed trials.

## Ontario Potato Day

Ontario Potato Day is an event organized by Eugenia Banks (former OMAFRA Potato Specialist now working with the Ontario Potato Board) and hosted by HJV Equipment in Alliston, Ontario. It is a very casual, informal event for growers and industry people to come together to discuss current events in the industry and talk shop, look at new equipment, and view displays of new potato varieties and exhibits by input suppliers. A dinner was sponsored by Syngenta.



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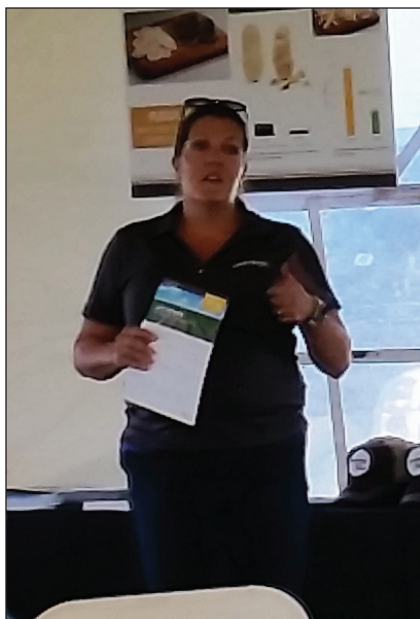
PEI Seed Potato Promotion booth at the Ontario Potato Day hosted by HJV Farm Equipment in Alliston, ON.

Several PEI dealers and growers attend the event each year to meet with seed buyers. Ontario is a key seed market for Prince Edward Island and we have long history of shipping seed potatoes to the industry here. This year, the PEI Potato Board took a small trade show booth to the event to increase the awareness of our quality seed and the wide range of varieties that we have available as well as to distribute information on accessing our seed book and dealer contact list.

The previous day the Variety Evaluation Demonstration Field Day was held at the University of Guelph Elora Research Station. New lines from AAFC and other breeding programs were on display.

## INNATE Field Day

Presentations and a tour of field plots were offered on Thursday, August 24, 2017 at the Atlantic Agritech research site in New Glasgow. Representatives from Simplot Plant Sciences were on hand to discuss the development of INNATE varieties. They currently have three lines approved in Canada - Cultivate (an improved Russet Burbank Line, Acclimate (an improved Ranger Russet line) and Hibernate (an improved Atlantic line). Generation 1 lines have reduced polyphenol oxidase (PPO), resulting in reduced blackspot and reduced darkening of raw potatoes, as well as reduced asparagine, resulting in less acrylamide in cooked potato products. Generation 2 lines have the above two character-



*Jolyn Rasmussen, Technical Services Manager of Simplot Plant Sciences speaks to growers at the INNATE Field Day held at Atlantic Agritech research facility in New Glasgow, PEI. (Photo: M.K. Sonier)*

istics with the added traits of late blight protection and reduced invertase resulting in the ability to store potatoes at cold temperatures while retaining suitable quality for processing.

The Simplot representatives discussed the development process, the agronomic characteristics of these new lines, their stewardship program for growers and their commercialization program. Their current focus is the fresh market and chip market in North America. They are working on

gaining international approvals and hope that as these approvals are granted, that in time the new varieties will be accepted by the frozen processing industry.

They currently have research trials in Canada in both PEI and Ontario.

## Soil Caravan

A sizeable crowd was on hand for the Quebec Ministry of



*Odette Ménard, an agronomist with the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, discusses the role of earthworms in a healthy soil at the Soil Caravan extension event.*

Agriculture Soil Caravan demonstration hosted by the AIM initiative at Oyster Cove Farms on Tuesday, August 29. It was a practical demonstration and discussion on how to build soil health and strategies for employing practices such as subsoiling to help improve water infiltration and drainage.

The speakers were Odette Ménard and Louis Robert who have spent their careers in extension, working with growers to improve soil

health and to help them condition their fields to realize the best yield potential.

Take home messages included:

- Keep a growing crop on your land as long as possible during your rotation through a combination of cover crops and grains underseeded to forage.
- Minimize tillage as much as possible.
- Do test digs in your field to assess the presence of a compaction layer and overall soil structure and other physical properties before undertaking activities such as subsoiling or drainage.

Videos from the event are available on YouTube and a booklet with details of topics discussed is available from the Board Office

## 4R Tailgate Sessions

A session was held at Rollo Bay Holdings in eastern PEI on August 30<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the Canadian Fertilizer Institute and partners to view and discuss results from 4R 2017 demonstration plots.

There were several officials on hand including federal Minister of Agriculture Lawrence MacAulay, Provincial

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Alan McIsaac, Provincial Minister of Communities, Land and Environment Robert Mitchell and several industry personnel who were in PEI to take part in the Atlantic Fertilizer Institute Annual Meeting being held in Brudenell on August 30 and 31<sup>st</sup>.

Agronomist Steve Watts of Genesis Crop Systems discussed the 4R trial taking place at Rollo Bay and test dig samples were on display. He emphasized that a 4R program was not necessarily about reducing fertilizer volume (although this was sometimes the case) but about using fertilizer more efficiently and improving returns for growers.

Dr. David Burton from the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture also spoke briefly about a project he is conducting in collaboration with Genesis Crop Systems, the PEI Department of Agriculture and Forestry and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on "4R Management to Increase Nitrogen Use Efficiency" and to also explore the question "Can 4R management reduce N<sub>2</sub>O emissions?"

## Cavendish Field Day

The Cavendish Farms/Cavendish Agri-Services field day was held on Tuesday, September 5 in New Annan. One of the first plots on the tour provided an opportunity to view new lines of Prospect and Riverdale Russet.

The new lines were the result of tissue culture plantlets of these varieties being exposed to somoclonal variation techniques in the lab to produce variations of the original variety in the hope that some would exhibit resistance to scab. Early results were promising with several lines showing less scab than the check plots. Further tests will need to be conducted over the next few years to identify lines that have retained similar agronomic and processing quality characteristics as the parent line while incorporating the scab resistance.

There were numerous samples from variety trials on display. Cavendish Farms looks at new lines from a wide variety of breeding programs to evaluate their performance under PEI environmental conditions. Plots ranged in size from small plot replicated trials to commercial scale blocks of some of the more promising varieties. Some of the variety trials were conducted to



Samples from check plots of the Prospect variety and lines altered using somoclonal variation techniques and selected for scab resistance were on display at the Cavendish Farms grower field day.

also evaluate various management practices for new lines - such as spacing, fertilizer rates and irrigation.

Other research areas covered during the tour included:

- Fertilizer Trials: Comparison of different N-sources and application practices, evaluation of different fertilizer programs.
- Crop Protection: control options for Rhizoctonia, Early Blight, Colorado Potato Beetle and Nematodes.
- Seed Quality and Seed Management: Seed treatments and other seed production practices and the Affects of Gibberellic Acid treatment.

Tours were led by Dr. Helga Miehle, P.Ag. the new Technical Services Manager at Cavendish Agri Services Ltd. and William Hardy, CCA, Potato Crop Technician with Cavendish Farms Research Division. Final trial results will be presented during winter research meetings.

## AAFC/PEI Potato Board Variety Evaluation and Crop Rotation Tour at AAFC Harrington Research Farm

Late summer provides a good opportunity for growers and industry members to gather and evaluate research projects as the crops are starting to mature. On September 6, 2017, visitors were welcomed to the Harrington Research Farm to view samples of experimental



New varieties were on display at the AAFC/PEI Potato Board variety evaluation tour in early September.

potato lines and new varieties that are in the early stages of commercialization. Biologist David Main of AAFC Charlottetown and Potato Breeder Dr. Benoit Bizimungu of AAFC Fredericton provided background on the AAFC lines that were on display. The lines were categorized by end use - fresh, chipstock or frozen french fry - and the same lines are being tested at a variety of sites across Canada to determine their adaptability of different environments.

Mary Kay Sonier of the PEI Potato Board provided background on the trial being conducted as part of the Canadian Potato Council/AAFC Potato Research Cluster. The varieties in this trial are in the early stages of commercialization. In most cases, if growers are interested in these varieties to try on their own farm a source of seed is available.

The tour finished off with a visit to a rotation trial being conducted by AAFC Research Scientist Judith Nyiraneza. A wide variety of rotation crops have been grown in 2017 such as sorghum sudan grass, brown mustard, grass and clover mixes, etc. Soil tests from these plots will be tested to determine levels of soil-borne pests and in 2018 the plots will be planted with potatoes. Evaluations of the potato crops will help to determine the effect of the preceding crop on potato yield and quality.

Potato growers collaborate with various partners including provincial and federal government to conduct research that will help to improve their competitiveness in the international marketplace by improving their environmental and economic sustainability.

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# Outstanding in the Field



Outstanding in the Field, an experience tourism company from California, had their first event in Atlantic Canada at Victoria Potato Farms on the south shore of Prince Edward Island. The company events attempt to re-connect their guests to the land, the food, the farmers who produce it and the chefs who cook it.

It was an overcast day, but the rain held off and the dinner was held in the middle of a field of brown mustard in full flower. As well as the mustard, the Visser family had planted many plots of a range of potato varieties and samples had been dug and laid out for the guests to view. These generated much discussion and enthusiasm. The menu featured many potato dishes as well as those made with locally produced chicken, seafood, meat and vegetables, fruit and wine. Guests included local people involved in the PEI food industry as well as visitors from several other provinces and states.

Clockwise from top - table laid ready for the guests, host farmer Melis Visser talks about the history and current operation of Victoria Potato Farms, the outdoor kitchen where Chef Emily Wells prepared the dinner, a drone's eye view of guests enjoying their meal out in the field and guests enjoy appetizers as they view the wide range of potato variety samples on display.



# Driving Sales

by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

Marketing and sales may be different activities, but one certainly complements the other. Our primary goal is to build a strong marketing program for PEI Potatoes. We do many different activities to market PEI Potatoes over the course of the year, but our approach remains the same – our activities must fit into one or more of the following objectives:

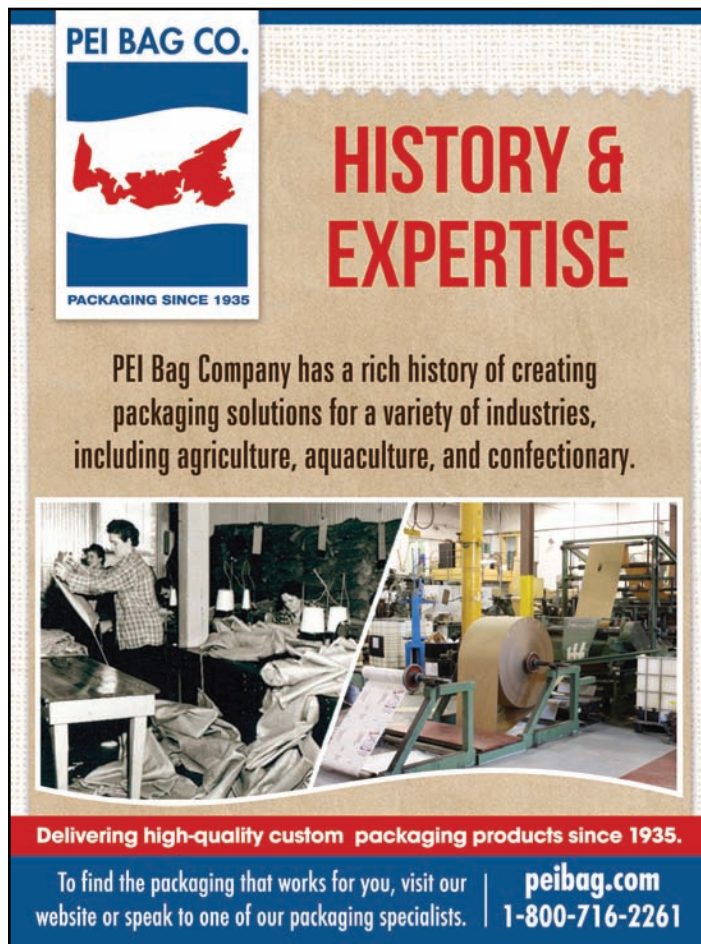
- **Create a Connection** – Reaching our consumers and end users of PEI Potatoes.
- **Create a Toolbox** – items that dealers and exporters can use in their own marketing efforts.
- **Create a Sale** – Closing the sales loop as best we can.

We know that we have high brand awareness for PEI Potatoes, but a lower instance of people choosing PEI Potatoes at retail. Our marketing challenge is closing this gap. As we approach the 2017/18 marketing year, this article will focus on the final point above, and what we do to help create a sale and close the sales loop for PEI Potatoes.

The tablestock committee looks at many different options to

find ways of closing the sales loop – some more successful than others and what we learn helps to direct our future marketing initiatives. One of the more successful programs that we have been implementing is the “Where to Buy” Facebook posts. During the main shipping season, we choose an ad on PEI potatoes that is happening around the country and we post it under “Where to Buy” and some of the details about the ad. We spend a little money boosting the post in that region, so that not only our Facebook followers, but also other consumers will see the ad and will be encouraged to purchase PEI Potatoes. We try to ensure all regions, pack sizes, and packers are covered off during the season. We have received specific feedback from retailers on their support of this program. I try to ensure to periodically send the results of a successful post to the retail buyers, as well. Last year, we did 20 posts to garner 182,000 impressions. An average post will receive 201 likes, 30 shares and 15 comments. This is one of the benefits of seeing the social media growth that we have experienced – they become our own promotional channels now.

Another tactic that was tried recently was the Air Miles Program at Sobey’s. The last few years we have done a



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promotion in February for Potato Lover’s Month. This year, we wanted to try to add a retail element to it. While it was great to try new things, the results didn’t reach our expectations. The year prior, we did a regional sampling program at Sobey’s, which did seem to have a positive impact in sales and saw a 3x increase in sales from the week prior. However, there were added elements that would have helped, including a weekly ad and price decrease from \$4.99 to \$3.99. While it did have a positive impact, sampling is also a very expensive activity and so we always evaluate its cost effectiveness when considering sampling programs.

Several other activities we do to encourage sales of PEI Potatoes include regular contact and visits with retailers. That is where we present our co-op advertising incentive program. This is widely used by most major retailers in Canada as well as our customers in the Northeast US. The co-op program is still a significant part of our trade budget, and having this contact keeps PEI Potatoes top of mind, and provides value when buyers are choosing promotional support for flyer ads. Another large part of our trade budget is shows. While we have decreased the number of shows we attend, we try to ensure we are present at the major ones to reach the maximum number of retail, foodservice and export buyers.

Of course, evaluating sales is never cut and dry. There are so many different economic elements that impact sales, such as price, supply and competition, which are things that sometimes are out of our control. However, we are always looking to find new ways of supporting our dealers and exporters to positively impact sales of PEI Potatoes – whether it is trying an online coupon (Checkout 51), large scale contests (Pack Your Appetite), co-promotions (Dairy Farmers of Canada) or the tried and true flyer ads, trying new things and finding what works is always part of our goal!

# BAD SKIN?



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# Recommended Practices for the Construction of Irrigation Ponds



Prince Edward Island's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Department of Communities, Land and Environment have worked together to develop the guidelines below around the planning and building of an agricultural irrigation pond. These recommended practices are designed to ensure the installation of an irrigation pond is a success. The document outlines suggestions around location, structure and design, among other things to keep in mind when creating an irrigation pond. We hope this will serve as a useful tool for all farmers considering this method of irrigation.

## **Recommended Management Practices for Agricultural Irrigation Ponds May 2017**

Agriculture is the largest contributor of any resource sector to the economy of Prince Edward Island. Rainfall patterns have changed in recent years and in some cases, some farmers are interested in irrigating crops to ensure yield and quality.

One potential method for obtaining water for irrigation is the use of dug ponds which collect rainfall, surface water, and snowmelt. These water levels are usually maintained throughout the growing season with the use of a well.

The practices listed below have been developed by staff of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

and the Department of Communities, Land and Environment to provide a practical guide for irrigation pond construction. These practices serve to help the agricultural community continue to be environmentally and socially responsible and gain maximum return from their investment.

### **Planning**

- The construction plans, including Provincial Identification Number (PID#), for all new ponds should be discussed and examined by a Soil and Water Engineer with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.
- The Soil and Water Conservation Engineer should meet with the proponent on the property where the pond is to be constructed to examine the topography and natural features of the site.
- Ponds should be sited away from watercourses and wetlands, using existing mapping resources.
- If the existence or exact location on the property of watercourses or wetlands is unclear, then the Department of Communities, Land and Environment should be contacted to delineate the sensitive environmental feature.
- Ponds should be sited away from existing residential properties.



- If a well is used to fill or maintain a pond, then the well location must be identified to the Soil and Water Engineer.

### Construction

- Ponds must be built outside of the 15 m buffer zone of any existing watercourse or wetland (legal requirement).
- Any spoils from the pond excavation must also be kept out of the 15 m buffer zone.
- Ponds should be constructed with a properly sized overflow (assistance from Soil and Water Engineer) to prevent against possible overtopping and total structural failure of the pond.
- Ponds should be constructed with some type of fence or physical barrier, and/or signage around the perimeter of the pond, to decrease the possibility of accidental injury of people, livestock, or wildlife. Proponents and landowners should consult their insurance companies to ensure all liability issues are addressed.
- Ponds can be constructed to allow surface run off water to enter the pond, but the inlet must be constructed to prevent scouring (erosion of the disturbed soil).
- If berm height exceeds 10 ft. from the original grade, a geo-technical expert (assistance from Soil and Water Engineer/Structural Engineer) should be consulted to ensure the integrity of the pond walls.
- The pond design must not divert additional water onto adjacent properties.
- Care must be taken during any dewatering of ponds under construction, so that existing watercourses or wetlands are not impacted by silt laden water.
- Noise issues can be a concern if a pond is constructed in close proximity to existing residents. Every effort should be made to substitute electric pumps for diesel /PTO driven generators.
- All barren soil should be seeded and mulched as soon as possible to reduce erosion.

### Wells

- Existing wells already used for irrigation may be used to fill irrigation ponds.
- A new low capacity wells may be drilled and used to fill an irrigation pond.

- Producers may only use one well per property to fill an irrigation pond.
- Properties may not be subdivided to enable the use of more wells to fill an irrigation pond.
- Any well construction must be carried out by a licensed well drilling company.

### Communication

If it is necessary to construct an irrigation pond within 300 meters of existing residences, the proponent should make every effort to inform the residents of the work that is to be carried out. This communication should be carried out well in advance of construction. Communication may consist of a phone call, letter or personal conversation.

If you have any questions, please contact Greg Wilson, Manager, Environmental Land Management, PEI Department of Communities, Land and Environment at 902-368-5274 or [gbwilson@gov.pe.ca](mailto:gbwilson@gov.pe.ca).





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# Staffing Changes in Sustainable Agriculture Section Lead to New Program Activities

**Barry Thompson, Manager - Sustainable Agriculture  
PEI Department of Agriculture and Fisheries**

The focus of the Sustainable Agriculture Section, related to the potato industry, has always been and will continue to be to encourage producers to voluntarily implement beneficial management practices (BMPs) and on-farm assurance systems through delivery of the Agriculture Stewardship and Assurance Systems programs.

Over the last number of months the Sustainable Agriculture Section has had a couple of retirements which, as with any organization, created a loss of considerable corporate knowledge. However, it also allowed the opportunity for the addition of new staff and role changes within the section.

Evan MacDonald, previously the section's Agri-Environmental Systems Officer hired in September 2016, has taken on the role of Soil Conservation Specialist (formerly Gwen Vessey's position) and Will Ramsay has been hired in Evan's former position. Along with "learning the ropes" of the Soil Conservation position, Evan will continue to work

with and develop the use of drone technologies for not only our soil conservation activities but for nutrient management and integrated pest management programming within the section. Will's role with the section involves surveying and layout of project design for any of our soil conservation activities. In addition, Will is also in the process of becoming certified and getting "up to speed" in the use of drones for section programming.

Use of drone technology has significantly improved the efficiency of the section's soil conservation activities. As a result, within the next few months, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, through the Sustainable Agriculture Section, will be offering a "concentrated flow" analysis of agriculture fields to those producers wanting to identify potential areas of erosion for which soil conservation plans could be developed. One of the easiest and arguably most effective soil conservation features to implement is a grass waterway. They are designed to move surface water across agriculture land without causing soil erosion. The vegetative cover in the waterway slows the water flow

and protects the channel surface from the eroding forces of runoff water. Overall the grass waterway has the beneficial effect of trapping soil suspended in the runoff water and reducing the impact of soil erosion on streams and water courses.

Although in its development phase, the Department's intent is to have producers submit properties for a "concentrated flow" analysis after which the producer will receive a map identifying potential areas of erosion concern and be visited by an Agrologist to discuss soil conservation options. Construction of these soil conservation options will be eligible for funding assistance under the Canada Agriculture Partnership (CAP) agreement.

Look for further details from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on the Concentrated Flow Analysis Program in the coming months.

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## Toe Taps and Taters Fall Flavour Event

Tate the Great PEI Potato welcomed guests to the Toe Taps and Taters Fall Flavours event hosted at the Skyview Farms/Sherwood Produce warehouse in Canoe Cove, PEI. Toe Taps and Taters had relocated from its previous venue, the Potato Museum in O’Leary, and over 200 guests made their way to the south shore for this signature event. Guests had a wagon ride to the field where they were invited to hand dig their own five pound bag of potatoes. Host farmer Alex Docherty was along for the ride to explain the potato growing process. Local chef Jeff McCourt of Glasgow Glen Farm was on-site with a smoker making racelette appetizers featuring his spectacular gouda cheese. The Celebrity Chef for the event was Chuck Hughes from Montreal and star of “Chuck’s Day Off” on the Food Network. Among the potato dishes served to start were potato risotto, potato and leek handpies made by Papa Joe’s Restaurant, samples of the many impressive delicacies created by PEI Charcuterie, and last but not least, moules frites. The main sit down meal included salmon haddock potato cakes, roasted garlic-horseradish whipped PEI potatoes and Island blueberry cobbler with a russet potato crumble and lemon cream.

Toe Taps and Taters marked the debut of Fall Halls, a new partnership with the Small Halls Festival to provide entertainment at several signature events, and award-winning PEI country singer Trinity Bradshaw took to the stage to entertain.

All in all a successful event, with the greatest off-Island attendance of any Fall Flavours event to date and a great promotion for the Island potato industry.





# **2017 PEI Potato Board AGM**

**Friday, November 17, 2017**

**Red Shores, Charlottetown, PEI**

**Registration**

**9:30 AM**

**Business Meeting, Trade Show and Guest Speakers**

**10 AM**

**Guest Speakers include:**

**Ryan Smolkin, Founder and CEO of Smoke's Poutinerie**

**Kevin MacIsaac, General Manager, United Potato Growers of Canada**

**Romain Cools, Secretary General, Belgapom**

**Nora Olsen, Professor, University of Idaho**

**Ghislain Pelletier, International Agrologist**

**Annual Awards Banquet at the Delta Prince Edward  
Reception: 6 PM Banquet: 7 PM**

**To register for the daytime session or for evening tickets  
please contact Karen at (902) 892-6551 or [karen@peipotato.org](mailto:karen@peipotato.org)**

# Nutrition Research News from the Alliance for Potato Research & Education

We hope you've been enjoying the summer season! Following is a brief overview of some of the latest nutrition research news about potatoes. If you would like to learn more about the Alliance for Potato Research & Education's (APRE) research program, or if you have ideas for future science needs on the role of potatoes in healthful lifestyles, please email us at [research@apre.org](mailto:research@apre.org).

## Assessing Epidemiological Research: Evaluating Results and Reading Beyond the Title

A study was published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition titled, "Fried potato consumption is associated with elevated mortality: an 8-y longitudinal cohort study." (Veronese, N et al. Fried Potato Consumption is Associated with Elevated Mortality. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2017 June;105(6). The attention-grabbing title of this study generated widespread media coverage, including stories that didn't accurately reflect the study's conclusions and limitations. Like all epidemiologic research, this study cannot demonstrate cause-and-effect, and associations identified by any epidemiological work must be carefully examined in the context of the study methodology and relative risk results. It is important to note that longitudinal studies like this are designed to identify relationships, or to generate hypotheses for future, more well-controlled research, making any generalizations about epidemiologic results challenging and often inaccurate. It's well-established in the scientific community that long-term, randomized controlled studies (RCTs) provide the strongest evidence for establishing cause-and-effect relationships between diet and health outcomes. APRE is committed to supporting clinical research such as RCTs, as well as epidemiological studies, to better understand the role of potatoes in healthful lifestyles. You can read our analysis of this study on the APRE website.

## Effects of Potatoes and Other Carbohydrates Consumed at Breakfast on Cognition, Glycemia and Satiety in Children and Adolescents

Researchers at Ryerson University in Toronto recently investigated how 50 grams of carbohydrates from white potatoes and other sources impact cognitive performance, glycemia, and subjective appetite in 9- to 14-year-old normal weight children. Presented in April at the annual American Society for Nutrition Experimental Biology conference,

the results illustrate that children who consumed potatoes, particularly as French fries, had improved word-list recall (short-term declarative memory), and that children were more alert and pleasant (based on the experiment's scoring methods) after eating potatoes, especially in the form of French fries and hash browns. Additionally, potatoes in mashed form were found to not only suppress appetite more than the other foods, but also maintain appetite suppression for at least three hours. These results help confirm that potatoes exhibit unique properties for mitigating glycemic response. The outcomes also support the blood glucose enhancement effect, which states that moderate increases in blood glucose allow for greater passage of glucose to the brain. (A link to the full manuscript will be included in an upcoming newsletter, once it is published.)

## Fatty Acids and Bioactive Lipids of Potato Cultivars: An Overview

As the third most widely consumed plant product, a potato is much more than meets the eye. In addition to the starch that many people associate with potatoes, this vegetable also contains important vitamins and minerals such as vitamin C, vitamin B6, potassium, phosphorus, and calcium, as well as various antioxidant compounds such as phenolic acids and flavonoids, which further contribute to their nutritional benefits. In addition, according to research published in the Journal of Oleo Science, potato tuber lipids contain high levels of bioactive constituents including fatty acids, phytosterols, tocopherols, and carotenoids. These bioactive lipid compounds are desirable because of their health-promoting effects, which range from helping to play a key role in the body's defense systems to contributing to a decreased risk of many degenerative diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and cancer (due to high levels of vitamin E in the form of alpha tocopherol). Given the popularity of potatoes worldwide, the study researchers concluded that consumption may also help increase intake of essential polyunsaturated fatty acids – linoleic and linolenic acids – found in potatoes.

Ramadan, et al. Fatty Acids and Bioactive Lipids of Potato Cultivars: An Overview. Journal of Oleo Science, 2016;65(6):459-470.

For more nutrition information about the role of potatoes in healthful lifestyles, please visit [www.APRE.org](http://www.APRE.org)





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**Farmers: safely dispose of your unwanted agricultural pesticides and livestock medications from **November 6–17, 2017**, at one of the following locations, for no charge:**

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**CHARLOTTETOWN**

Cavendish Agri Services  
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*An Update From the:*

## PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries



I'm Lorraine MacKinnon and I'm happy to say I've been appointed as the Potato Industry Coordinator for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and began my duties on September 25<sup>th</sup>. I'm thrilled to continue my vocation to support the Island's #1 industry.

Allow me to introduce (or re-introduce) myself. I grew up on a family potato farm in West Cape, attended NSAC and the University of Guelph, and in my past roles I have worked in private industry as well as government. Throughout my career, I've been fortunate to have met and worked with many of you. I look forward to serving the needs of PEI's potato farmers and continue to support a profitable, sustainable and rewarding potato industry on PEI.

In the coming months, I plan to get out on the road and get reacquainted with growers and industry stakeholders.

In the immediate future, I wish all potato farmers a safe and bountiful harvest. Please don't hesitate to call or text me at 902-314-1607; or email [lormackinnon@gov.pe.ca](mailto:lormackinnon@gov.pe.ca).

## Mid Isle Farms Celebrates 35th Anniversary

Mid Isle Farms in Albany celebrated their 35th anniversary in August. In the late 1970's a group of ambitious potato farmers, better known as friends, identified a need for washed potatoes in the marketplace. The original 7 - all farm families, unanimously agreed to work together and bring Mid Isle Farms to life. The founding members of Mid-Isle Farms included Bertie Webster, George Webster, Elmer MacDonald, Earle MacDonald, Walter Wood, Morley Wood, John Robinson, Alan Robinson, John MacKay, Harleigh MacKay, Reggie Mulligan, Robert Mulligan, Ernest Mulligan, Clifford Dawson and Brian Dawson. Over 35 years later, Mid Isle Farms is now one of Prince Edward Island's largest fresh packing facilities and takes pride in providing nutritious potatoes to the homes and restaurants of millions of Canadians and Americans under the FoodTrust brand.

The old fashioned picnic to celebrate their anniversary consisted of games, food and a whole lot of fun! It allowed the founding families, staff, growers and associates to reminisce and celebrate 35 years of memories.

Pictured are a few members of Mid Isle's founding families:

Harleigh Mackay, Donald Mulligan, Bertie Webster, Mary Robinson, Andrew (& Everleigh) MacKay, Elmer MacDonald, Ernie Mulligan & John Robinson.





# 2017 Entered Seed Acreage

Prince Edward Island					
Variety	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 <sup>^</sup>
Russet Burbank	3,525	2,225	2,034	2,232	2,270
Eva	850	1,198	1,302	1,449	1,462
Goldrush	2,223	1,470	1,644	1,369	1,455
Shepody	798	793	944	706	909
Ranger Russet	306	403	536	624	716
Superior	998	780	647	412	575
Kennebec	818	504	912	592	521
Dakota Russet	na	na	na	na	496
Atlantic	855	709	624	487	454
Norland	380	494	382	356	452
Innovator	331	267	283	404	392
Chieftain	222	121	263	290	392
Highland Russet*	na	na	na	na	284
Clearwater Russet	na	na	na	na	158
Dakota Pearl	245	170	222	186	150
Other varieties	5,914	8,807	6,836	6,874	5,999
<b>TOTAL ALL VARIETIES</b>	<b>17,465</b>	<b>17,941</b>	<b>16,629</b>	<b>15,981</b>	<b>16,685</b>

<sup>^</sup> Information received from CFIA as of September 6, 2017.

\* Non-registered variety under the Seeds Act that can only be multiplied further for experimental, variety registration or export purposes. In addition, it can only be moved as certified seed potatoes between farm units in Canada if accompanied by a Certificate of Authorization.

Seed acreage in PEI rebounded slightly in 2017, likely due to the positive post harvest test results on the 2016 seed crop, the shortage of clean seed of some varieties for 2017 planting, and improved seed movement to off Island markets.

The top five acreage varieties remained the same but there were some shifts in other varieties with some of the new russets increasing in popularity.

The table above includes information for public varieties and private varieties that has been approved for public release.



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## POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA

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#### **Proposed Small Business Tax Changes will Negatively Affect Potato Farmers**

In July, the Department of Finance Canada released a discussion paper titled “Tax Planning Using Private Corporations”. Since the proposed tax changes could have major ramifications for small businesses in Canada, and particularly potato farmers, our organization submitted the following response to Finance Minister Bill Morneau.

Dear Minister Morneau:

Our organization represents potato farmers across the country, from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island. With over 1,300 producers in the county growing 345,000 acres of potatoes, the proposed Corporate Tax Changes will put a large number of these small businesses at risk.

It is important for your government to understand that farms are family run businesses in the heart of small Canadian communities and not offshore tax havens for the wealthy.

One of the significant challenges to our profession has been the succession of ownership to younger family members. As a result, the average age of a farm operator in Canada at 57 years is much higher than non-agriculture related businesses. Ultimately land and other assets will need to be transferred to younger generations to maintain a healthy, viable industry producing food in Canada. Your proposed changes will make it much more difficult for family farms to transfer assets to their children. The majority of successful family farms today have had to utilize the labour input of children and spouses in order to make below average salaries meet the domestic needs of their households. Many successful entrepreneurs in our industry began their careers cutting seed, picking stones off the harvester, and shoveling dirt in the potato warehouses. Children on dairy farms fed calves, did chores, and milked cows seven days a week and on statutory holidays that other businesses would have had off. Women often paid the bills, did accounting and banking requirements, all while raising families, and frequently working off the farm at another full time job. Do any of the foregoing sound like participants in a tax shelter? Are they even eligible to be called “middle class” by the Prime Minister of our country? On the contrary, women and children are being disproportionately affected and certainly

are far above the “reasonability test” in your proposal to address income splitting (TOSI – Tax On Split Income).

The potato industry in Canada is very capital intensive. Canada’s cheap food policy has meant that growers often receive the same price (and sometimes less) for produce that was the standard of a generation ago. The industry requires larger equipment to utilize economies of scale in order to meet the “grow more for less” philosophy that large multi-national food companies seem to be demanding. Land costs are accentuated by the crop rotations we follow for crop and soil health reasons. A farmer producing 650 acres of potatoes, often utilizing a minimum three-year rotation, will require 2,000 acres of land. The take home message is that it is very difficult to just start farming without some generosity from your family or friends. As a result, many farmers, on the advice of accountants, created limited corporations where they could roll over assets into the company and allow transfer of shares to new entrants – a very honest, sound, ethical, and compassionate way of passing the torch of ownership. Similarly, the corporate structure allows farmers to accumulate capital for retirement using the lifetime capital gains exemption (LCGE). The government has proposed to restrict this tool with few good alternatives.

Potato farming, like other facets of agriculture, is a high-risk business, dependent on weather, commodity pricing, and world events. It is an economic generator, and a large employer, needing tax planning tools. It is definitely not solely in place to take advantage of perceived “loopholes” in the system. The Department of Finance Discussion Paper makes many comparisons between Small Businesses and Employees and how they are treated under the existing legislation. It is compelling to point out some extreme differences between the two scenarios: Pensions – small business owners are responsible for their own retirement plans. Vacation and Sick Leave – Very little time off and no pay earned on sick leave. Parental Leave – non-existent on the paternal side and less secure on the maternal side. Overtime – In addition to working much longer hours, most farms do not include overtime bonuses. Business Failure – No benefits available such as Severance and Employment Insurance. The proposed changes in your discussion paper will stifle risk takers by providing a disincentive to those pursuing their dreams of entering and owning a small

business enterprise such as a farm.

The 75-day consultation period ending on October 2 2017 falls within our grower members' busiest time of the year. With all farmers harvesting their crops and their source of income for the next year, it has been challenging for producers to get out and have their voices heard.

Please extend the consultation time in order to allow for more thorough analysis and revision of your proposal to avoid very negative unintended consequences, and to allow our members to provide meaningful feedback.

Agriculture was identified as a Key Growth Sector in the Federal 2017 Budget. However the proposed tax changes

are significant and far-reaching for small businesses and for farmers in our country. Given those changes it will be difficult to meet those ambitious targets outlined in the budget.

We would encourage you to consider our concerns, and instead look at other ways to modernize the tax system on behalf of all Canadians.

Sincerely,

Ray Keenan

Chairman, United Potato Growers of Canada

Kevin MacIsaac

General Manager, United Potato Growers of Canada

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# INDUSTRY UPDATES

## **Innate® Second Generation Potato Receives Canadian Government Clearance**

Boise, ID, August 3, 2017 – Health Canada and Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) have completed the food, feed, and environmental safety assessments of the J.R. Simplot Company's second generation of Innate® potatoes. The authorizations enable the potatoes to be imported, planted, and sold in Canada, complementing the three varieties of Innate® first generation potatoes that received regulatory approval last year.

Health Canada conducted a comprehensive safety assessment and approved the use of Innate® second generation potatoes for food. In addition, CFIA determined that these potatoes are "as safe and nutritious as traditional potatoes" for use as livestock feed, and that the potatoes do not present increased risk to the environment when compared to currently cultivated potato varieties in Canada.

The second generation of Innate® potatoes contains four beneficial traits of relevance to potato growers, processors and consumers:

- Protection against the late blight pathogen
- Reduced bruising and black spot
- Reduced asparagine, which contributes to reduced acrylamide in cooked potatoes
- Lower reducing sugars, which further contributes to reduced acrylamide while enhancing cold storage capability

These traits were achieved using genes from wild and cultivated potatoes to adapt the standard Russet Burbank, Ranger Russet, and Atlantic potato varieties.

Innate® late blight protection trait can convey up to a 50 percent reduction in annual fungicide applications typically used to control late blight disease. This disease was a contributing cause of the Irish Potato Famine in the mid-19th century and remains a major constraint for production and storage. Further, research shows that Innate® second generation potatoes help reduce waste associated with bruise, blight, and storage losses by reducing waste at multiple stages of the value chain, including in-field, during storage and processing, and in food service. That research suggests that these traits will translate to less land, water, and pesticide applications to produce these potatoes.

Lower asparagine and reducing sugars mean that accumulation levels of acrylamide can be reduced by up to 90 percent more when these potatoes are cooked at high temperatures. In addition, lower reducing sugars enable cold storage at 3.3° Celsius for more than six months without significant degradation in quality.

According to academic estimates, if all fresh potatoes in Canada had Innate® Generation 2 traits, potato waste (in-field, during storage, packing, retail and foodservice for fresh potatoes) could be reduced by 93 million kilograms. In addition, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions could be reduced by 14 million kilograms, water usage reduced by 13 billion liters, and a total of 154,000 fewer pesticide hectare-applications would be needed.

"This is a big technology advancement for the Canadian potato industry," said Kevin MacIsaac, General Manager of the United Potato Growers of Canada. "As long as proper stewardship guidelines are followed, Innate® biotechnology provides growers a promising option to significantly reduce waste, chemicals, and pesticides."

"We're excited to offer the latest generation of Innate®



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potatoes to the Canadian marketplace,” said Susan Collinge, Ph.D., Vice President of Simplot Plant Sciences, a division of the J.R. Simplot Company. “Innate second generation potatoes offer important benefits while staying within the potato genome to create a quality crop.”

*About Simplot: The J.R. Simplot Company, a privately held agribusiness firm headquartered in Boise, Idaho, has an integrated portfolio that includes phosphate mining, fertilizer manufacturing, farming, ranching and cattle production, food processing, food brands, and other enterprises related to agriculture. Simplot's major operations are located in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Australia, and China, with products marketed in more than 40 countries worldwide. The company's mission statement is Bringing Earth's Resources to Life.*

### **Ag Canada Eyes Bioherbicide Use in Crops**

*FCC Express, Richard Kamchen, August 4, 2017: A bioherbicide that's expected to appeal to organic and conventional producers facing tough-to-kill, resistant weeds could soon be available.*

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada isolated and purified the indigenous fungus *Phoma macrostoma* that naturally infects dandelions, Canada thistle, clover and other broadleaf weeds without harming grasses and certain crops.

#### **Agricultural applications**

It's currently only registered for controlling weeds in non-edible plants like turf grass, but the government department is eyeing expanding Phoma's application to include edible crops like wheat, barley and corn.

“I think we're looking at three to five years,” says AAFC microbiologist Russell Hynes.

Canola and legumes are sensitive to Phoma, so the edible crops currently targeted are cereals and corn, he says. Additional research on its effects on soybeans still needs to be done.

AAFC also discovered there are no residue effects from Phoma's application, meaning farmers could continue their traditional rotations, like following wheat with canola.

#### **How it works**

Phoma is absorbed into weed roots, causing the weeds to lose their ability to feed themselves, AAFC explains in its latest newsletter. The targeted plants turn white from lack of chlorophyll and then die.

If the fungus is applied prior to weeds appearing, they'll emerge white and die before becoming established, AAFC says.

#### **Benefits over traditional controls**

Hynes says Phoma offers benefits over traditional, synthetic products when it comes to weed resistance.

Weeds won't adapt as quickly as they would to synthetic

controls as Phoma attacks weeds in several different ways, making it tougher for weeds to adjust.

“It could take a very, very long time; decades or even longer. It may not happen,” Hynes says.

### Commercialization

Pest control product maker Premier Tech has teamed up with AAFC to commercialize Phoma, and Hynes indicates the firm can assist in meeting future regulatory steps. Phoma should be available for the latter by next year, he says.

### Bottom line

Phoma could help conventional farmers tackle problem weed patches.

Being more environmentally friendly has also attracted organic grower interest, adds Hynes. It’s all biodegradable, and basically blends back into the background microbial population that was always in the soil, he says.

### Wisconsin Measures Aim to Prevent Crop Disease

*Wisconsin Public Radio, August 5, 2017:* Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker signed two new measures involving the potato industry last Wednesday. One law requires potato growers to use certified seed potatoes if planting 5 or more acres. The other measure shortens the response time allowed when farmers are notified of the presence of late blight in their crop from the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Both laws are widely seen as beneficial to the Wisconsin Potato Industry.

### Mandatory use of Certified Seed Potatoes

For farmers planting 5 or more acres of potatoes, the use certified seed potatoes is mandatory.

Alex Crockford, director of the Wisconsin Seed Certification Program through the University of Wisconsin-Madison says, “Certified seed goes through a various amount of lab testing too before it can be replanted, so the commercial grower that’s buying the seed knows that it’s virtually free of any disease that may cause yield or harvest or storage limitations.”

Certified seed potatoes do cost more. But Crockford said most commercial growers already use certified seed

because many potato processors require it.

Tamas Houlihan, executive director of the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association, said getting the roughly 2 percent of growers who don’t use certified seed potatoes to start will be good for everyone in the industry.

### Responding Faster to Late Blight

Governor Walker also signed a law that shortens the amount of time growers have to respond to late blight of potatoes, the disease that caused the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s.

Growers now have 24 hours to treat plants with late blight or 72 hours to destroy them after receiving notice from the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Previously, DATCP gave farmers 10 days to address the issue, a time frame that Houlihan said was too long, “By the time the abatement was ordered, (late blight) might have already been in the field for a week or 10 days. If you also give the person 10 days to treat, we’re

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looking at three weeks and by that time the disease can spread.”

Houlihan said more potato growers are proactive about preventing and responding to late blight.

### Graduate Student Positions in Potato Science

Graduate student positions (M.Sc. & Ph.D.) are available in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. The positions will focus on fundamental studies of potato biology that present practical interest to the potato industry, using modern methods of plant molecular biology, physiology, biochemistry and plant tissue culture. Research projects include but are not limited to:

1. Physiological age of the seed potato, with emphasis on factors controlling tuber dormancy and sprout growth, and development of molecular markers - indicators of physiological age;
2. Postharvest storage and physiology;
3. Production of seed potato minitubers in vitro using temporary immersion bioreactors;
4. Plant pathology, with focus on population biology and control strategies for Verticillium wilt, Fusarium dry rot and Phytophthora late blight disease development in potato.

We are looking for highly motivated students interested in potato biology, with excellent academic standing and knowledge of plant science and/or plant pathology. Previous research experience in relevant fields would be beneficial. International applicants must provide acceptable evidence of English Language Proficiency (ELP) for graduate students.

The positions are fully funded for a period of two years for an MSc. program and four years for a Ph.D. Full details on the application procedure, funding and scholarship information are available from:

Dr. Dmytro Yevtushenko  
Research Chair in Potato Sciences  
Department of Biological Sciences  
University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.  
dmytro.yevtushenko@uleth.ca



## Upcoming Events

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

### October 2017

Oct 19-21 **Potato Marketing Association Fresh Summit**  
Ernest N. Morial Convention Centre  
New Orleans, LA

### November 2017

Nov 3-12 **Royal Agricultural Winter Fair**  
Toronto, ON

Nov 8 **Potato Marketing Association of North America (PMANA) Fall Meeting.** Las Vegas, NV.

Nov 17 **PEI Potato Board AGM**  
Charlottetown, PEI

Nov 18-20 **World Potato Congress Board of Directors' Meeting**  
Charlottetown, PEI

Nov 21-23 **Agricultural Excellence Conference.** Farm Management Canada. Ottawa, ON

Nov 27-28 **Canada-USA Potato Meeting.**  
Toronto, ON.

Nov 29 **Potato Association of America Certification Section Meeting.**  
Toronto, ON

### December 2017

Dec 11-14 **New York Produce Show**  
Jacob K. Javits Convention Centre,  
New York City.

### January 2018

Jan 10 **UPGA/UPGC Potato Business Summit,** Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. Orlando, FL, USA

Jan 10-12 **National Potato Council Potato Expo,** Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. Orlando, FL, USA

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