

Prince Edward Island

May/June 2019
Volume 20-Issue 3

POTATO NEWS



Publications Mail Agreement # 40011377

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- Potato Research Spotlight
- Growers' Corner



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Prince Edward Island POTATO NEWS

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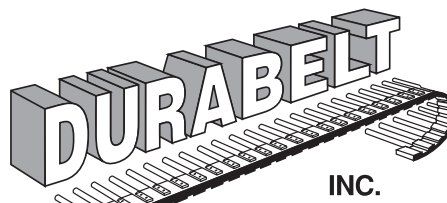
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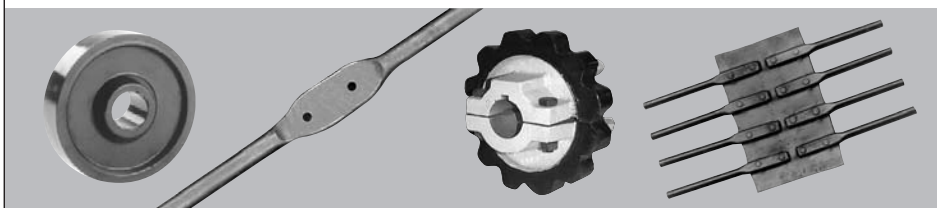
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Cover: Equipment at the end of the potato fields to keep the planters filled and going is a common sight across PEI from May to early June. Photo: M.K. Sonier.



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Chairman's Comments

by PEI Potato Board Chairman, Jason Hayden



It's good to be back on the land again, with the promise of a new crop ahead. The cool and wet conditions have slowed planting progress this spring, but it has also given time to start to address the things that could not get done last fall due to the heavy rains and early freeze up. A lot of Island fields suffered erosion damage this winter and spring, as cover crops either failed to establish after seeding, or fields simply could not be seeded due to the freeze up. We know cover crops are very important in terms of protecting soil, but we are also learning of other major benefits including increasing organic matter, decreasing leaching and increasing yields. We hope to see a major increase in cover crop use this fall. Please call the Board office if you have questions on this.

I'd like to extend congratulations to the newly elected government of Premier Dennis King. We look forward to working with Premier King, Agriculture & Land Minister Bloyce Thompson, and the other members of Cabinet and government. The Conservative election platform included some points that have been sought by farmers across the Island for several years, including an expansion of the marked diesel program. There was also a commitment to respecting and restoring the spirit and intent of the Lands Protection Act, which our Board has also sought. Other commitments related to our sector include working with the federal government to decrease the cost of bridge tolls and ferry service for Islanders. With respect to the bridge tolls, the direct cost to our industry is approximately \$2 million annually, so we fully support this. We look forward to learning more about all these new initiatives from the new government.

The Board continues to have discussions with federal officials regarding environmental issues, with the intent of finding ways to work together in a more collaborative and productive way. There has to be a better way to achieve

protection rather than spending years investigating a farmer after extremely intense rainfall events, laying charges, identifying and calling expert witnesses to testify, etc. It's certainly not a level playing field. When Alex Docherty and his son appear in court on June 11th to defend themselves against the federal charges laid in late 2018 after a 2016 fishkill, we've been told they will face as many as 10 expert witnesses that the federal prosecutor intends to call. It is disheartening to think of the cost of this, both in terms of dollars and stress, and it is virtually impossible for a farm to successfully defend itself from such a show of force. Despite this, Alex and his son plan to give it their best shot.

We encourage growers to watch for information on some upcoming sprayer calibration workshops that will be held across the province right after planting wraps up. Those tailgate sessions will provide a lot of valuable information, and in addition to the calibration work, there will be short but important presentations relating to due diligence. We've shared information directly with farmers over the past few months regarding due diligence and how it factors into potential charges, so we hope for a great turnout when those workshops are held.

Elections for the Board are also on the horizon. We encourage growers to review their production unit listings with the Board office before June 30th, and to consider running for the directors' positions on the Board. You may recall that we had support to change our governance model to move from four districts back to three, and to allow younger family members that are actively involved in the farm but who do not currently own 10% of the farm to vote and run for election. We submitted the request for those changes to the provincial government, and are awaiting an update on that. It will not be in place though before the deadline for 2019 nominations (July 31st). Our 2019 election will therefore be run using the existing rules rather than the proposed changes. As a final note, and it feels a bit odd to say it given the supply shortage we experienced for all segments of our industry in 2018, but we encourage growers to plant only for known market opportunities. Many areas of North America experienced poor harvest conditions that reduced the supply in 2018, and a return to normal conditions could easily turn the same planted acreage into an oversupply situation in 2019.

I wish you a safe planting season and a good crop ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, presumably of Jason Hayden, is located at the bottom right of the page.

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POTATO BOARD NEWS

Agri-Recovery Update

The Board continues to work with both levels of government regarding our request for disaster assistance last fall. Such funding is available under the Agri-Recovery Program if the federal government determines that the circumstances fit the program criteria. Discussions between Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and the Province had to cease once the provincial election was called, and were re-initiated as soon as the new government was formed. We are facing a tight timeframe – farmers are bearing the increased costs and reduced revenues from the 2018 crop, incurring more costs this spring as a result of work that could not be done last fall, plus remedial work on fields that suffered due to the lack of cover crop establishment, and a federal election is on the horizon. The Board hopes to hear good news on the negotiations between our federal and provincial officials in the near future.

New Provincial Government

The PEI election took place on April 23rd, and resulted in a minority Progressive Conservative government led by Premier Dennis King. The Official Opposition is the Green Party, and the Liberal Party now has third party status. The Board works across political parties to represent the interests of potato farmers and our industry, and will continue to do so.

The Hon. Bloyce Thompson is the new Minister of Agriculture and Land, and he is also the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, as well as Attorney General. Despite having many responsibilities, Minister Thompson has been hands-on in working on the time-sensitive Agri-Recovery file since his appointment on May 9th. We look forward to working with him on issues of importance to farmers, as well as finding ways to ensure our industry continues to be a leading contributor to the provincial economy.

Other newly appointment ministers in portfolios of importance to our sectors include the Hon. Darlene Compton, Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance, the Hon. Brad Trivers, Minister of Environment, Water and Climate Change, the Hon. Matthew MacKay, Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture, and the Hon. Stephen Myers, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy.

Several changes to senior management were announced on May 10th. Board staff have reached out to some of the new Deputy Ministers, who, like the Ministers they will work with, have been busy with briefings, meeting staff and other practical issues pertaining to realigned departments. We look forward to working with the new Deputies and the new departmental organizations. We encourage growers and other industry members to stay in touch with their MLAs throughout the year to ensure they are aware of issues of importance to you.

Dealer & Exporter License Renewal Deadline

2019/2020 PEI Potato Dealer &
Exporter License Applications and
Renewals are due on Wednesday,
July 31st, 2019.

For forms and other necessary information,
please contact the Board Office at
(902) 892-6551.

CULL DISPOSAL DEADLINE

All cull potatoes must be disposed of or
covered by June 15th, 2019.

For details on disposal guidelines and options
please contact:

PEI Department of Agriculture and Land
(902) 368-4880

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/agriculture-and-fisheries/guidelines-disposal-cull-potatoes>

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NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

Elections are being held under Section 11 of the Potato Marketing Plan Regulations to fill four vacancies on the PEI Potato Board created by the expiration of terms in office of Harris Callaghan, Tablestock Director for the West Prince District; David Francis, Seed Director for the Summerside District; Mark MacMillan, Processing Director for the Charlottetown District and Rodney Dingwell, Processing Director for the Montague-Souris District. Harris Callaghan and Mark MacMillan are eligible for re-election this year. However, having served two consecutive terms already, David Francis and Rodney Dingwell are not eligible to be elected this year.

To be eligible for election, a producer willing to serve on the Board must:

1. Be registered with the Potato Board on June 30, 2019;
2. Meet the classification requirements;
3. Be nominated by ten producers located in the district the person seeks to represent who are registered with the Board on June 30, 2019;
4. Have delivered to the Returning Officer, or have mailed and postmarked no later than the last day of July 2019, a properly completed nomination form; and
5. Indicate a willingness to serve by signing the Nomination Form.

Nomination forms are available from the Prince Edward Island Potato Board, 90 Hillstrom Ave., West Royalty Business Park, Charlottetown; Tel: 902-892-6551 or from the PEI Marketing Council Office: Suite 216 Farm Centre, 420 University Avenue, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7Z5; Tel: 902-569-7575.

Nomination forms containing original signatures must be delivered or postmarked no later than July 31, 2019 to:

Ian McIsaac, Returning Officer
Potato Board Elections
Suite 216 Farm Centre
420 University Avenue,
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7Z5

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Junior Agronomist Joins the AIM Project

We are pleased to announce that Morgan McNeil joined our team as Junior Agronomist starting on May 6th, 2019. Morgan is working with Ryan Barrett, Research Coordinator and Agronomy Lead, on projects related to the Agronomy Initiative for Marketable yield (AIM), a collaborative program funded by processing growers, Cavendish Farms, and the PEI Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Morgan recently completed her M.Sc. Agr. degree at the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture in Truro, NS with a specialization in soil science. She also completed a B.Sc. Agr. degree at Dal AC, majoring in Plant Science with a minor in Food Science and Technology. Her M.Sc. thesis focused on studying soil health in organic grain cropping systems as influenced by residual effect of green manures in rotation. She also has an educational background in vegetable production and experience as a research technician and teaching assistant.

Morgan hails from Hantsport, NS in the Annapolis Valley and is passionate about the agriculture industry. She is an Articling Agrologist with the Nova Scotia Institute of Agrologists and was previously Communications Officer with the Dalhousie Agricultural Association of Graduate Students. We are excited to add Morgan to our team as we prepare for a busy year of research and extension projects with PEI potato growers.



Congratulations to Farmboys Inc. for Winning the 2019 Food & Farming Champion Award

The recipients of the 2019 Food & Farming Champion Award are Bryan and Kyle Maynard of Farmboys Inc. The "Food & Farming Champion" Award is presented to an individual, organization or business who has taken the initiative to engage with consumers in a conversation about food and farming in PEI. The Champion is someone who is passionate about food and agriculture and proud of our industry – they use their skills to share their stories and provide consumers with accurate information about agriculture and food production. Farmboys Inc. is making waves in the province's agricultural scene. Through interviews and videos, Bryan's BarnYard photography, Instagram photos and two websites, a Youtube video with North Capes Coastal Drive and more, they are capturing what it takes to grow potato, pulse and cereal crops and improve their environmental footprint. The Maynards are passionate about increasing awareness of the ups and downs of the farming lifestyle, by capturing what it's really like to be a farmer. They are trying to bridge the gap between farmers and non-farmers by showing their followers where their food comes from and how it's made. We all have a part to play in sharing the story of where our food comes from. Advocating takes a team and the Farmboys humbly shares

this honour with all Islanders who are activity engaging the public in honest and open conversations about how we produce the highest quality food in the world! Congratulations to Farmboys Inc!

Above Kyle Maynard accepts the Award from Santina Beaton, Farm & Food Care PEI Coordinator.

Summer Addition to the PEI Potato Marketing Team



Jacqui Scaman joined the Board in September 2018 as a part-time Market Information Officer. Starting this spring she has also taken on additional marketing duties to assist with activities that will be taking place on the Island this summer to promote PEI Potatoes to Island residents and tourists.

Jacqui graduated from the University of Guelph in 2016 with a Bachelor of Commerce degree, majoring in Economics and Finance. While studying she developed a specialization in food security and economic development, and completed an undergraduate research thesis on impact of sustainability standards on organizational performance. Jacqui grew up in Chatham, Ontario. She has close ties to the Island and moved to PEI permanently last year.

Summer promotional activities for 2019 will include attending sponsorship events, developing content for various media, creating new marketing materials, and preparing for the upcoming shipping season.

PEI Small Halls	June 8-23
Indian River Festival	
Catherine MacLellan	Aug 16
Island Summer Review	
Harmony House	July 4 - Aug 30

Local Radio Promotion	Summer Events
Toe Taps and Taters	September 6
PEI Shellfish Festival	September 19-22
Farm Day in the City	October 6





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2019 - A New Season

A Fresh Start

Greg Donald, General Manager, PEI Potato Board

Although off to a slow start, potato planting is now underway across the province. Most processing contracts in North America have included volume increases to meet increased demand for frozen potatoes. Early fresh growers are hoping to make a good start at filling the pipeline as soon as possible this season and many growers are making adjustments in varieties, fertility, rotation crops and other production practices to improve yield and quality in 2019.

One thing we know for certain is that every season is different. The following short items outline a few changes that growers can expect to encounter this season that have been put in place to assist with financial and production challenges this year:

Crop Insurance

Bev Francis, Insurance Manager, PEI Agriculture Insurance Corporation

AgrilInsurance sign up for 2019 Spring planted crops is underway at the Prince Edward Island Agricultural Insurance Corporation (AIC). The deadline for enrollment for Production Insurance, Unharvested Acreage Benefit Rider, Storage Insurance, Colour Rider, and Phytosanitary Disease Plan is Friday, May 31st, 2019.

The 2018 crop has resulted in an increase in premiums for the 2019 crop year. This is primarily due to the reduction in the fund balance. In recent history, the fund balance had resulted in discounts to the calculated premium rates. 2018 indemnities have seen the fund balance return to slightly below target reserve. Premium rates for the 2019 crop are slightly below the premium rates offered in 2014.

There are a few notable changes for the 2019 AgrilInsurance Program. For the 2019 potato crop, AIC is pleased to offer an increase to \$12 in the base unit price for potatoes. For the Colour Rider Program, weather stations will now be assigned on a field by field basis, rather than by farm. Weather stations will be assigned to fields by the AgrilInsurance Officers in June while completing Final Acreage Reports. A 90% coverage level has also been added for winter cereals planted in the Fall of 2019 (2020 crop).

Finally, due to AIC no longer being able to acquire grower information from CFIA, a deadline of July 31st has been added for producers to provide AIC with a copy of their CFIA Grower's Declaration, and November 15th to submit copies of their Growing Crop Certificate and Field

Inspection Reports for producers signed up in the Elite Seed Program. Any questions regarding this year's program, or to sign-up, please contact your AgrilInsurance officer or contact the office at (902)836-0439. AIC wishes everyone a safe planting season!

Changes to the Advance Payments Program

May 1, 2019 – Ottawa, Ontario – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Global Affairs Canada - Today, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau and Minister of International Trade Diversification Jim Carr announced actions to support Canadian farm families.

Minister Bibeau announced that the Government intends to amend the Agricultural Marketing Programs Regulations to temporarily increase loan limits under the Advance Payments Program (APP). These changes will help ease cash flow pressures that farmers are facing and help them manage the impacts of market disruptions in key export countries.

The regulatory amendment would change the loan limits for the APP for the 2019 year as follows:

Advances of up to \$1 million will be available on all commodities, more than double the previous limit of \$400,000.

The first \$100,000 will remain interest-free on all commodities, except canola. Canola advances will be eligible for up to \$500,000 (total) interest-free.

As part of the Government of Canada's trade diversification strategy, Minister Bibeau also announced that she will be heading to Japan in May to participate in the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. While in Japan, she will meet with Japanese industry leaders and officials from several countries to advance Canada's agricultural trade.

For more details please contact the PEI Federation of Agriculture at (902) 368-7289.

PEI ALUS Program

Shawn Hill, ALUS Coordinator &

Melanie Bos, Agri-Environmental Advisor, PEIDA&L

The Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Program was recently renewed for another five-year term under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP). The renewal required that new agreements be developed and signed with three-hundred and ninety (390) individual ALUS clients for projects covering in excess of four-thousand (4,000)

hectares. Completion of this agreement renewal process has recently wrapped up.

With the renewal of the ALUS program for another five-year term, a few minor changes were made. Two incentives related to tree planting within legislated 15-metre buffer zones have been removed with a new incentive for, “delayed hay cutting” being added for a three-year term with funding coming from ALUS Canada (a national charity). This incentive is aimed at conserving bobolink and other grassland birds by delaying the first hay-cut in long-term forage fields until July 16th, the date by which young birds have typically fledged from their nests. This incentive is being piloted over three years to determine the success of the practice and to better understand the life history and distribution of bobolinks and other grassland bird species across PEI.

For more information on the ALUS program, contact us at alus@gov.pe.ca.

New Format for PEI Variety Trial Field Day

Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator, PEIPotato Board

For the past couple of years, the variety field day for the AAFC variety plots and the PEI Potato Board variety trial at Harrington has been held in conjunction with a wider research plot tour. In 2019, we are going back to an afternoon session that will be focused only on viewing variety trial progress.

There have been several changes to the AAFC Breeding Program over the past year which have included staff changes, technical changes to methods used to collect information during the growing season, a reorganization of AAFC regional trials through the National Potato Research Cluster Project and an increased emphasis on gaining industry feedback. Characteristics of interest include disease and pest resistance, drought tolerance, and processing and fresh market quality. Growers and packers will be invited

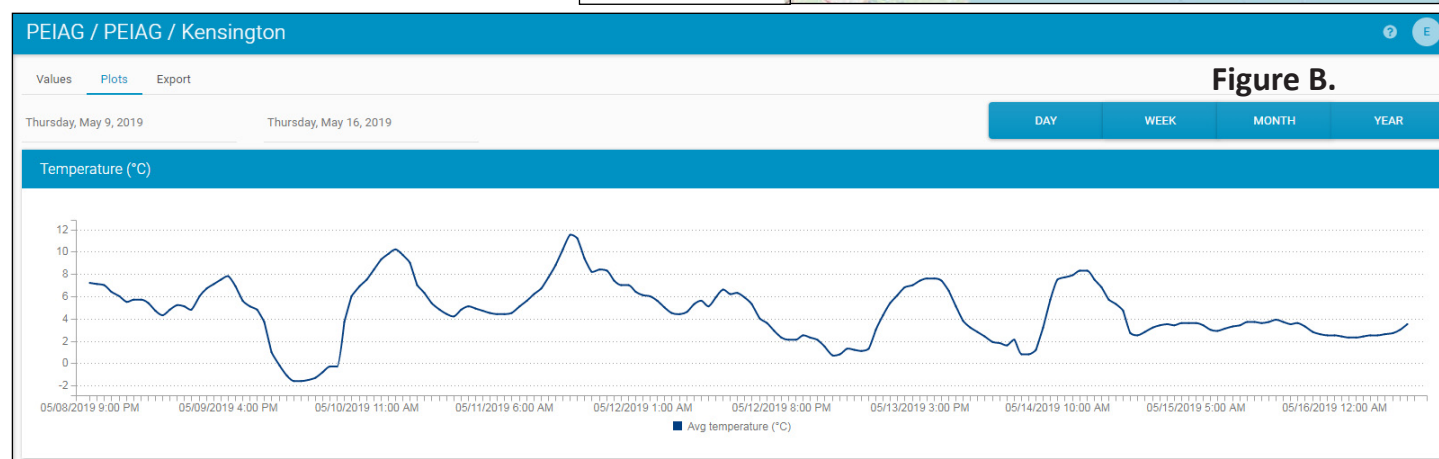
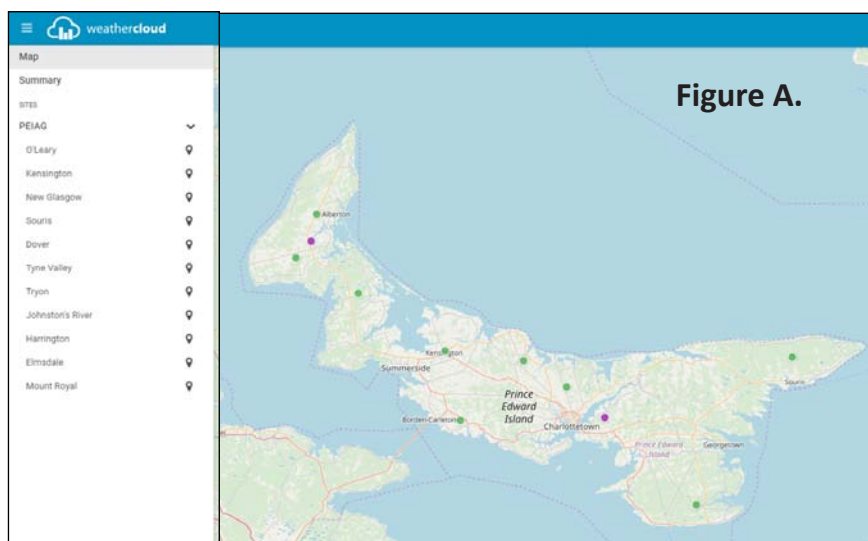
to meet with members of the AAFC potato breeding team and variety agents on August 29, 2019 to view the plants and early tubers, provide feedback on early AAFC lines and make suggestions on which lines should proceed to the next stage of development.

Weather Information and Weather Forecasting

Evan MacDonald, Soil and Water Conservation Specialist, PEIDA&L

The Department of Agriculture and Land has eleven weather stations across the province with sensors capturing information on temperature, rainfall, humidity, solar radiation, wind and more. They have contracted “Weathercloud” to host their weather data online for the 2019 season. Users can see hourly weather data and view graphs with customizable time lines, as well as download data in spreadsheet format. Figure A below shows the location of the current weather stations and Figure B shows one of the graphs of historical data that are available on the site. The Department would welcome feedback from users and they are welcome to suggest customization ideas to the developers. The site can be found at:

www.peiag.weathercloud.online



International Farm Workers

Most people never think about how food gets onto our tables, or the critical role played by the men and women who work in the fields and greenhouses. It is an enormously labour-intensive and complex process. Sadly, many Canadians are generally unwilling or unable to take on the rigours of farm labour, which is why many producers in this country rely on international farm workers to help plant and harvest their crops. The current labour shortage has reached epic proportions, with 114,000 vacancies predicted by 2025. It's only with the help of international farm workers that Canadian agriculture stands a chance.

Agricultural workers from abroad typically find work in Canada through both the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) and the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program - Agriculture Stream. Both workers and their families back in their home country benefit greatly from these contracts.

The Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program was introduced in 1966, with just Jamaica. It has since expanded to Mexico and numerous Caribbean countries. Employers can hire workers from participating countries for a maximum period of 8 months, between January 1 and December 15, provided they are able to offer the workers a minimum of 240 hours of work within a period of 6 weeks or less. To qualify for the SAWP, employers must meet 3 criteria:

- the TFWs hired must be citizens from Mexico or participating Caribbean countries
- production must be in specific commodity sectors
- the activity must be related to on farm primary agriculture

There are numerous regulations governing the program and covering areas such as transportation to and within Canada, housing, health and workplace safety, and worker contracts and wages. In order to access the program, it is required that employers first conduct recruitment efforts to hire Canadians and permanent residents, before offering a job to

Temporary Foreign Workers.

The Agriculture Stream of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program allows employers to hire workers for a maximum period of 24 months when Canadians and permanent residents are not available.

To qualify for this stream, employers must meet 2 criteria:

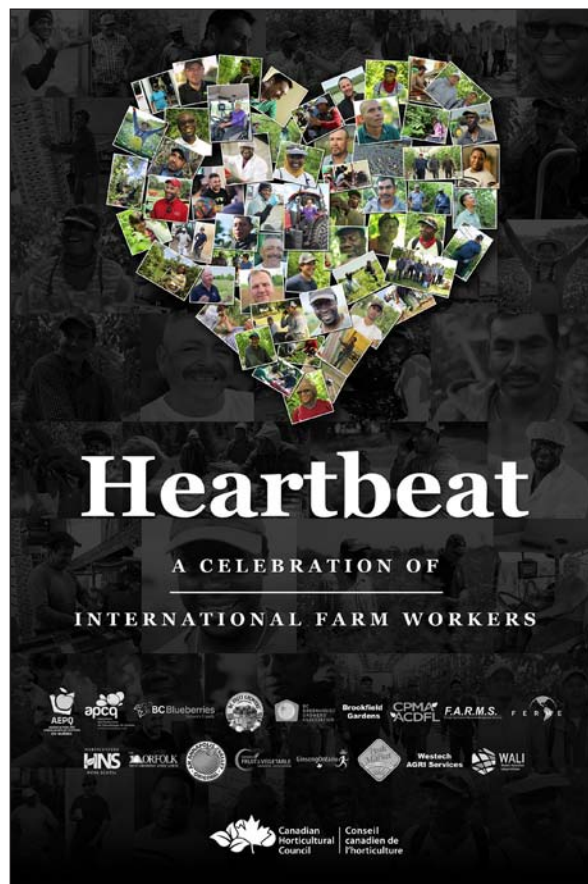
- production must be in specific commodity sectors;
- the activity must be related to on-farm primary agriculture

Other requirements are similar to those outlined for foreign workers under SAWP. Full details are available at www.canada.ca.

In 2018, the Canadian Horticultural Council initiated a special awareness campaign to inform Canadians about this important relationship between Canadian Farmers and foreign agricultural workers. A series of short videos and a documentary were created to use in advocacy work to promote benefits of international farm worker programs. The documentary is entitled Heartbeat and is available for viewing at www.hortcouncil.ca.

The documentary explores the operation of the program and shares individual stories of some of the workers - both those who are new to the program, including many women, and those who have taken part for many years. They explain how the program helps to increase their standard of living in their home country and allows them to achieve goals such as paying for education costs for their children, providing better quality housing and covering costs of special events for their family. Canadian farmers share how important these people are to their operation and the benefits of having good workers return year after year.

While the program has been used for many years on labour intensive fruit and vegetable farms in provinces such as Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec, its use is now spreading



to provinces like PEI. Ray Keenan of Rollo Bay Holdings, a potato growing and packing operation near Souris, is one of several Island farms who have hired workers through both SAWP and the TFW program. He comments, "We supplement our local work force with foreign workers to provide a full complement of staff in our farming and packing operation." He explains that it is a detailed process from the original application to arranging transportation and providing quality housing and training, but they are happy with the outcome. "We can honestly say that over the years we have not had a bad experience with our foreign workers from both Mexico and Guatemala. They not only have a good work ethic but they come to work with a smile and leave at the end of the day the same way," says Keenan. "They are here to provide for their families and they send the money they make each week back home. In a world that needs a better spirit, they clearly do teach us all something."



Aliseo Galicia Rosa has been coming to work at Rollo Bay since 2007.

Access to reliable seasonal workers through these programs helps Island farms to run smoothly and continue to contribute to the economy on PEI.

The PEI Federation of Agriculture offered a workshop in March 2019 on "Improving Strategic Skill Sets for Producers." One of the sessions was provided by the Canadian Agriculture and Human Resources Council (CAHRC) and covered how to manage employees in general and also walked attendees through the process of how to access and manage Temporary Foreign Workers. The session participants were very engaged and there was a lot of back and forth discussion during the question periods.

Potato farmers on PEI are finding many ways to balance their human resource needs through a variety of initiatives including automation, local recruitment and retention of employees and accessing Temporary Foreign Worker Programs. Like so many things in farming - there is no one approach that works all the time but using a variety helps lead to success.



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Adam Townshend

902-969-7325 easterncropsupplies@gmail.com



Potato Research Spotlight

History of Wireworm Research in PEI:

What we have learned so far

by Dr. Christine Noronha, Research Scientist, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Charlottetown and Dr. Suqui Liu, Research Scientist, PEI Department of Agriculture & Land

The total loss of a potato field in PEI because of wireworm damage in 2004 started the quest to increase our knowledge of wireworms and develop control practices. At that time, the species we were dealing with on the Island was unknown. After trapping and identifying adult beetles, we now know that the main species causing damage is *Agriotes sputator*, which is an invasive European species.

At that time, the lack of insecticides to control wireworms was a major impediment for the industry. Thimet, the only insecticide registered for wireworm control, was under re-evaluation by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and slated to be taken off the market. Research to test the efficacy of other insecticides was initiated in PEI and the data was provided to PMRA. The PEI Potato Board, the PEI Department of Agriculture (PEIDAF) and scientists at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) played an instrumental role in working with PMRA to obtain several extensions for the continued use of Thimet by the potato industry. Thimet is registered and available for use until 2022. A researcher at AAFC also tested other insecticides such as Titan which is now registered for use and trials with Capture showed efficacy in reducing damage from *A. sputator*. With the efforts of the PEI Potato Board, PEIDAF and local research data, Capture has received conditional registration until 2020. New experimental insecticides continue to be tested for wireworm control every year.

In 2007, Dr. Noronha, the AAFC scientist in Charlottetown, received funding from the Pest Management Centre to conduct a three year crop rotation study on three commercial farms in PEI. This trial showed that growing brown mustard and buckwheat as a rotational crop prior

to potatoes is effective in suppressing wireworm damage to potato tubers. This strategy has been adopted by the industry in PEI and research trials continue to discover ways to adjust the recommended procedure to obtain better economic returns for the farmers.

Early in our investigation on wireworms, we noted that wireworm populations were high along the south east coast of the Island, however, increasing reports from other regions prompted the PEI Provincial Department of Agriculture and Dr. Noronha to conduct a survey to determine the spread of *Agriotes sputator* across PEI. These results showed that the beetles and damage, although more severe in the south east region, was starting to spread to other locations of the Island. At that time, a PEI wireworm research working group consisting of the PEI Department of Agriculture, PEI Potato Board, AAFC researchers, PEI Horticultural Association, Cavendish Farms, Genesis Agri-Services and farmers was formed. In 2011, the PEI Department of Agriculture, PEI Potato Board and Dr. Noronha (AAFC Charlottetown) took the lead to submit a three year research proposal for funding from the AAFC cluster initiative through the

Canadian Horticultural Council. The PEI Potato Board contributed funds which were matched by AAFC to conduct research in PEI. This was the first cluster project which was led by PEI, and included local wireworm researcher Dr. Christine Noronha (PEI) and researchers from British Columbia Dr. Bob Vernon (BC) and Todd Kabaluk (BC) who also worked on wireworms. With dedicated three year funding for a wireworm project, research to find wireworm control measures moved ahead. Based on the progress within the first three years, the PEI Potato Board contributed to two more 5 year cluster projects 2013-17 and 2018-23, and Cavendish Farms contributed to the current cluster project 2018-23.

Although work progressed on finding and developing wireworm control strategies, a big gap in our knowledge of the biology of *Agriotes sputator* remained. Understanding the biology of a pest insect is very important to develop control measures. However,



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one major drawback was finding enough female beetles to study the biology of this species. With the invention of the Noronha Elaterid Light Trap (NELT) in 2015, which traps both female and male beetles, research on the biology started. In 2016, the PEI Department of Agriculture hired an entomologist (Dr. Suqi Liu) to work exclusively on studying wireworms and their biology in collaboration with Dr. Noronha. Significant progress was made in understanding the biology of this species which has helped to assess new tools for wireworm control.

The PEI wireworm research group meets regularly to discuss research ideas and helps to keep industry needs and priorities at the forefront especially when developing research proposals. The first wireworm information session was held in 2006. Since 2009, a wireworm information seminar has been held every year to update the industry on research finding and new wireworm control strategies.

What we have learned about wireworms in PEI since 2004 includes the following:

1. *Agriotes sputator* is the main species attacking our crops with another species *Hypnoidus abbreviates* being abundant in some locations.
2. Three surveys conducted in 2009, 2012 and 2016 showed a spread and increase in populations across the Island. The next survey is scheduled for 2019.
3. Adults emerge in early to mid May depending on the temperature and peak in early June.
4. Females mate several times and a single female is able to produce up to 114 eggs after its first mating.
5. More than 95% of the eggs are deposited in the upper

two cm of soil before the beginning of July and over 90% of the eggs hatch.

6. Newly hatched larvae can grow an average of 8.4 mm in one year at room temperature.
7. Neonate (newly hatched) larvae are capable of moving 30 cm or 12 inches within 24 hours in search of a food source, demonstrating their ability to move away from adverse conditions.
8. Certain potato varieties are more susceptible than others. Our trial with 21 different varieties found Red Norland to be highly susceptible with some of the chipping varieties showing the lowest susceptibility, Russet Burbank was near the centre with Atlantic and GoldRush being at the lower end of the damage scale. (Figure 1).
9. Data from trials conducted on insecticide efficacy was used by PMRA to give conditional registration for Capture to be used by the industry. Presently there are three insecticides registered: Thimet, Titan and Capture. Capture has conditional registration until 2020.
10. We found in laboratory studies that both Titan and Capture paralyse wireworms when they come in contact with it. Thimet kills wireworms.
11. Presence of wireworms in a field can be assessed by using carrot or wheat baits. A step by step protocol for using baits was developed.
12. Research on baiting found that the best time to bait was from mid-September to mid-October and in the spring from the mid-May to the end of June.

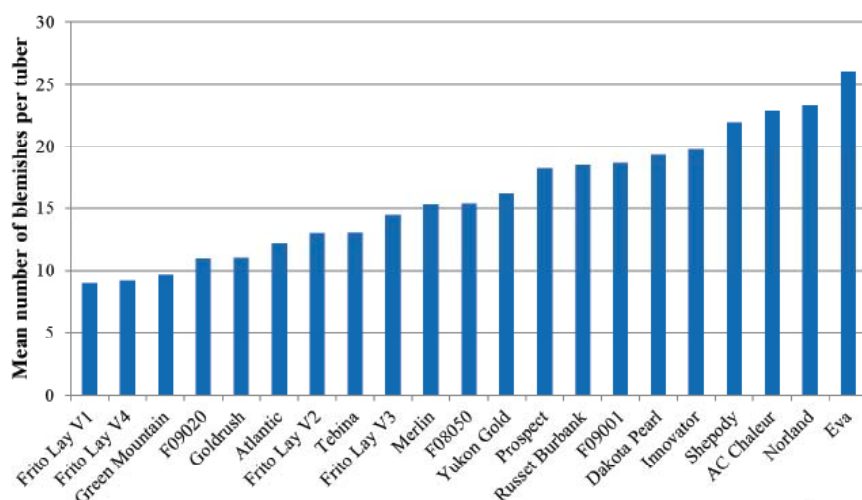
13. Growing brown mustard and buckwheat as a rotation crop in the years preceding potato was found to be effective in reducing wireworm damage. See Figure 2. A protocol was established and is available on the PEI Potato Board website.

14. Further research found that growing these rotation crops for one year or two years can reduce wireworm damage, two years being better than one.

15. Incorporating mustard can provide soil bio-fumigation but mowing the mustard or buckwheat was found to also be effective in suppressing wireworm damage, eliminating the cost of a second crop.

16. We found that it is

Figure 1. Mean number of blemishes (holes+scars) in different potato varieties grown without an insecticide application to protect against wireworm damage



important to have one of the wireworm suppressive rotation crops growing in mid-September when the wireworms are at the surface feeding voraciously before moving down the soil column to overwinter.

17. A Trap (NELT™) using light to attract beetle was developed which attracts both male and female beetles. It can be used both as a monitoring tool to determine populations in a field as well as a control tool by removing egg laying females from the population.
18. Studies on the horizontal movement of wireworms showed that medium and large size wireworms can move a distance of 3.6 m in 24 hours to find a food source. This information is critical when determining baiting procedures.
19. Studies on the vertical movement showed wireworms can move down to a depth of 80-90 cm. The majority of wireworms spend the winter months at a depth just below the frost line but can survive if trapped in frozen soil.
20. Studies have shown that the biological fungus *Metarhizium anisopliae* is effective in killing *A. sputator* larvae and adults. Work is underway to register this product for use on commercial fields.
21. Studies using *Metarhizium anisopliae* 52 to control click

Figure 2.

Damage to tubers following a two year crop rotation with Brown Mustard, Buckwheat or Barley

Crop	Percent Marketable tubers	Percent tubers not damaged	Percent tubers lost
Brown Mustard	98%	34%	2%
Buckwheat	93%	30%	7%
Barley	64%	6%	36%

beetles showed 50% of the population sprayed died within 21 days after treatment.

22. A new and improved pheromone trap, the Vernon beetle trap, was developed. It is much easier to install and collect and monitor male beetle populations in the field.
23. A large study conducted in PEI revealed the distribution of click beetles in a commercial field. Population numbers varied with higher numbers found along the edge of the field.
24. A risk assessment factsheet was developed using click beetle monitoring data.
25. Planting treated wheat seeds showed it to be an effective method to control wireworm in a field.
26. A new wireworm population monitoring technique was developed which requires a strip in the field to be kept fallow during the summer and wireworms sampled using potatoes as a bait trap in the fall.
27. Trials were conducted in the field in PEI to determine the effectiveness of insecticides to control click beetles.

Factsheets and information for all the above studies can be found on the PEI Potato Agronomy site at:

www.peipotatoagronomy.com

Research requires time and careful planning and needs to be repeated a few times to confidently show both the problems and benefits of specific control options so that growers are able to make an informed decision related to the situation on their farm. Dedicated long term funding for research has aided in moving research ahead at a faster pace. We have come a long way since 2004. Not only has our knowledge of wireworms increased but we now have strategies such as rotation crops, additional insecticides to mitigate damage, better methods for risk assessment and monitoring. However, we continue to conduct research to fine tune these strategies and discover new tools to control wireworms in crop fields.

Stay tuned for information on future research plans.



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Results of the 2018/2019 Marketing Campaign

by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

This past fall and winter, PEI Potatoes finished our second multi-media campaign, that included TV, online and an additional public relations element. Similar to last year's campaign, we ran TV and online locally in PEI and the online and PR campaign in Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

This year's plan also included some learnings from last year. For instance, we split up the campaign to better coincide with what's happening in the market. We also re-cut the spot to add a fresh take and included new elements into the online portion. Overall, we are very pleased with the results once again and have included some highlights below:

- We achieved 15.7 million impressions overall! That breaks down to 15.1 million online and 560,000 TV impressions.
- We had a million Youtube views of our commercial (which is almost 4x last year's views!)
- We had almost 1,000 new additions to our email database.
- We had almost 6,000 new visitors to our website looking for more information.
- Our video completion rate online (the amount of people who watched the full ad) is 38%, which is excellent. The industry average is 15-25% depending on the industry.

We know that the video content is compelling. Similar to last year, we had excellent feedback. We also know that people are interested in where their food comes from and want to know more and we see that loud and clear from our results.

Overall, the goals are two-fold:

- 1) to have a positive impact in public perception of potato farming locally on PEI; and
- 2) to create awareness of PEI

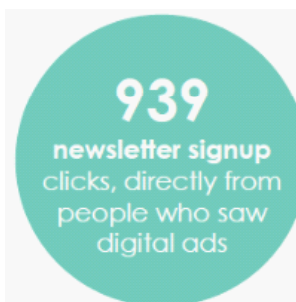


Potatoes and thus increase sales in our other large markets.

These are two very different goals, however, we have found the right message and outlet to be able to achieve both. PEI in particular demonstrated strong engagement with the message and the website. An increase in

budget towards PEI resulted in 1.8 million impressions in our province alone. We are very pleased with this successful campaign!

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



Market/Channel	Details	Weight Levels
Prince Edward Island		
Television	CBCT & Rogers HNIC	600 total GRPS
Online - PEI	CBC Pre-Roll, Standard Display Ads	1.8 million impressions
	Pinterest - Sponsored Pins	
	YouTube PreRoll	
	Facebook & Instagram - Video, Lead Generation	
NB, NL, NS, ON		
Online - NB/NL/NS	CBC Pre-Roll, Standard Display Ads	4.6 million impressions
	Programmatic - PreRoll, Standard Display Ads	
	Pinterest - Sponsored Pins	
	Native Content	
	YouTube PreRoll	
	Facebook & Instagram - Video, Lead Generation	
Online - ON	Programmatic - PreRoll, Standard Display Ads	9.3 million impressions
	YouTube PreRoll	
	Facebook & Instagram - Video, Lead Generation	

Processing Contract Settlements in North America

by Scott Howatt, Processing Coordinator

The contract settlements of 2019 provide a unique situation where most growing areas of North America (but not all) held multi-year contracts with their French fry processors from previous years. In this article, I will re-report the multi-year deals as they pertain to the coming crop and provide the settlements for 2019 from the areas that have finished negotiations for this season. These settlements and values are what the member grower organizations report to the Potato Marketing Association of North America; please note the settlements in the States are valued in USD, while settlements in Canada are valued in CDN currency.

Beginning in the Pacific Northwest (PNW), the Potato Growers of Washington (PGW) hold two-year agreements with their fry processors. Following a 5.1% increase in 2018, their increase for 2019 is valued as a 4.0% increase onto their 2017 contracts' field run return to the grower. The growers of Malheur County, Oregon will see a 3.25% increase to their base prices with J.R. Simplot in 2019, which is a repeat of their 2018 contract increase from a two-year deal, settled last winter. Meanwhile the Potato Growers of Alberta (PGA) in 2019 are entering the last year of multi-year deals that have their Lamb Weston and McCain contracts increasing by 1.0% to align their contracts' over-all values with the final year of a three-year deal struck between Cavendish Farms and the PGA in 2017.

For processing growers in Idaho, the 2019 contract agreements are one-year settlements since the processors and growers in Idaho settled one-year deals in 2018. The reported increase in value for both Lamb Weston and J.R. Simplot (JRS) growers in Idaho is 3% in 2019, following 2% increases in the 2018 crop. The growers who supply the

McCain plant in Burley, Idaho have seen a change to a multi-year agreement with McCain Foods in that the company is adding a \$0.35/ hundredweight (cwt) increase in value to growers' "first Net" delivered potatoes based on growers' 2018 contracted value. This change comes because of actions this winter by Southern Idaho Potato Growers Cooperative (SIPCO) to enact State legislation that would have required processors to negotiate contracts on a collective bargaining basis as opposed to talking with individual growers, one-on-one. With this change to the 2018 agreement, the proposed legislation is on-hold for the time being.

In North Dakota and Manitoba, processors and growers need to come to agreement for 2019 as each area have one-year deals from 2018. At time of print, we understand the growers who supply JRS in North Dakota agreed to a two-year deal for 2019 and 2020 reported as a \$0.50 per cwt increase on field run for 2019 and a \$0.37 per cwt increase for 2020. Meanwhile in Manitoba, last month Keystone growers accepted a favoured nation offer from McCain Foods with a reported value of \$0.66 per cwt over-the-whole-pile for a one-year agreement for 2019. Keystone growers and JRS are still in contract talks as they work on the details of matching the favoured nations offer from McCain Foods.

In Wisconsin, there was a relatively unprecedented move by McCain Foods in February when they announced an Addendum to the 2019 growers' contract. The announcement spoke to the extraordinary weather events during the 2018 growing season (that hurt growers' yields, crop quality and storability) and stated the company would be making a one-time payment to growers of \$0.35 per Payable cwt on their 2019 contract deliveries. This one-time payment comes in addition to the 2% increase to base prices, which is already in place for 2019.

As we move to the Atlantic Northeast (ANE), each of the four areas who supply French fry processors hold two-year agreements. Growers in Quebec will see a \$0.35 per Payable cwt increase in 2019 following a \$0.40 increase in 2018. Growers in Maine will see the extension of their 2018 contract into 2019 due to last year's agreement between ABC growers and McCain Foods for a two-year deal with a 6.0% increase to base prices for 2018 combined with a contract rollover into 2019.

In New Brunswick, McCain Foods growers are seeing a \$0.31 per Payable cwt increase to their 2019 contracts' base prices. This follows



their 2018 contract improvement valued at \$0.485 Payable reported as an approximate 5% increase. On PEI, Cavendish Farms contracts will increase by \$0.364 weighted across the whole pile, which is a 4.0% increase from the 2017 Base prices. In the first year of PEI's two-year agreement with Cavendish the base prices increased by 5% and there was additional improvement on the Prospect contracts. In April, Cavendish Farms announced a contract addendum for 2019 of a one-time payment of \$0.22 per Payable cwt to all their growers to assist with the escalating costs of crop inputs following the very challenging 2018-crop year.

In my ten years plus of watching and participating in processing contract talks, never before have the rules of Supply and Demand been so squarely in the growers' favour. World wide and North American demand for finished frozen potato products continues to grow at a steady pace. All four of the major fry processors have announced plant expansions in the PNW and Manitoba, investing hundreds of millions into innovation and increased production. Meanwhile every French fry plant in North America has seen significant re-investment and re-tooling over the past four years to increase productivity and efficiency.

Unfortunately, the current tight supply of processing-quality potatoes in most of North America comes as a direct result of Mother Nature robbing growers in the ANE (in

particular PEI growers), in Manitoba and in Wisconsin of both yield and quality. Had these areas had a "normal" or average crop, we actually could be reporting on a relatively soft demand for processing-quality potatoes due to an over-supply of potatoes. That is how tenuous the balance of potato supply is in North America, a 10 to 15% drop (depending on whom you speak with) from budgeted yields in only a few areas can create a major increase in demand. But wait, we all need to take care and realize that this a pendulum, a greater than 5% increase in production in one area while everyone else meets his or her budgeted yield targets will create an over supply of potatoes and put the price increases needed for growers' financial sustainability critically at risk.

It was only two years ago in 2017 when all processing grower organizations experienced downward pressure on prices due to an increasing number of farms offering to grow more potatoes under the protection of pre-season contracts... two years ago. Let us do more than just hope that we do not return to those days. Every grower who wants to be sustainable in his or her own right needs to NOT plant open acres, and we need to keep communicating to all growers on the need and benefits of matching supply with demand and maintaining a balanced pipeline of quality processing potatoes.

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Science Based Professionals Supporting the Agriculture Industry on PEI by Gwen Vessey, P.Ag.

If you are involved with any aspect of agriculture here on PEI, you've probably noticed the designation P.Ag. or PPA behind the name of an ag professional you have dealt with. The letters stand for Professional Agrologist (P.Ag.) or Permit to Practice Agrology (PPA) and signifies that the person is licensed to practice agrology in Prince Edward Island under the provisions of the Agrologist Act. This Act regulates the profession, ensuring that the public interest is protected and served in matters related to the practice of Agrology. The Agrologists Act is similar to legislation that regulates other professions, such as the Engineering Profession Act or the Dental Profession Act.

Being a professional agrologist on PEI carries with it the commitment to on-going learning and practising within professional and ethical standards. Across Canada, the P.Ag. designation is the national standard for excellence in the

Agrology profession.

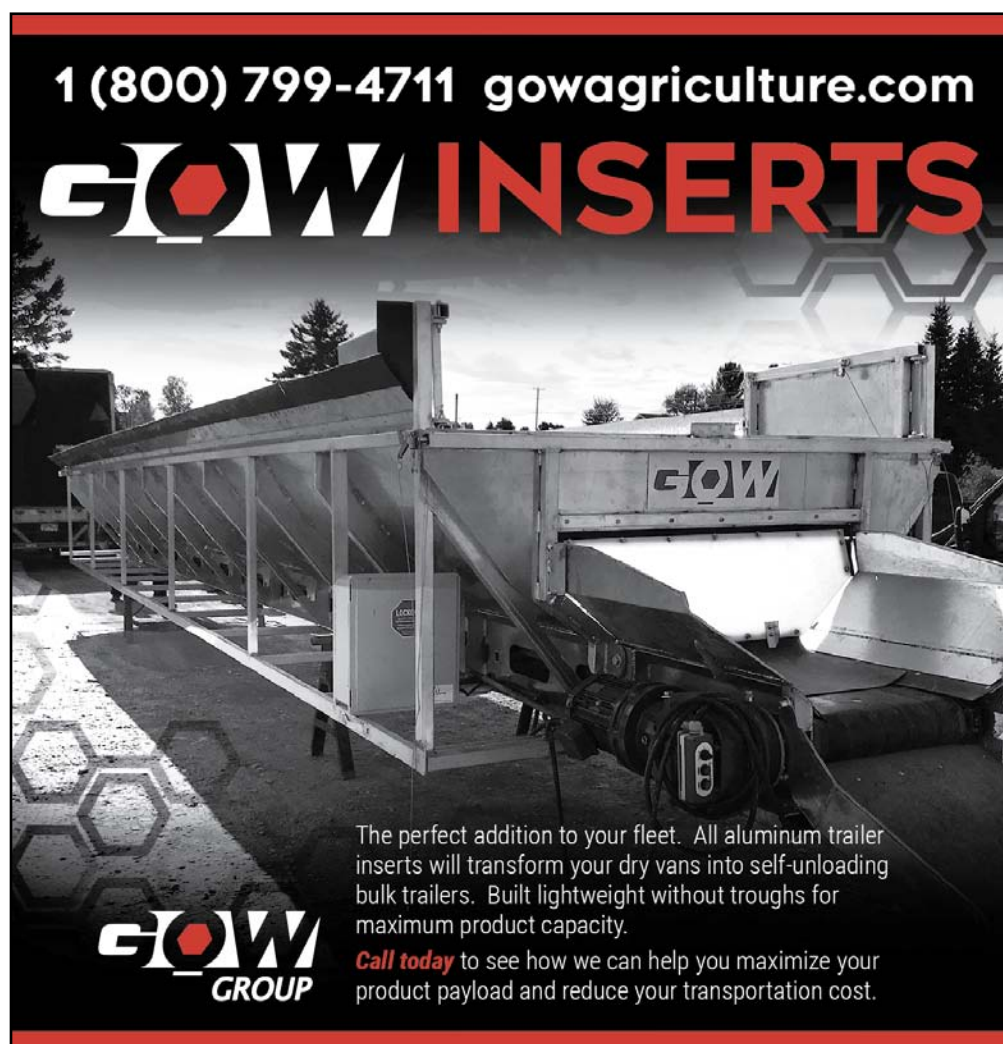
The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists (PEIIA) is the regulating body for the practice of Agrology in the Province. The Institute is responsible for licensing applicants according to the admission standards outlined in the Act. Licenses are renewed on a yearly basis and members are required to attain a minimum number of continuing education credits to maintain their certification. To that end, the PEIIA delivers a number of professional development and learning opportunities throughout the year. These seminars provide members with Continuing Education Units (CEU's) that can also be used with other certification programs, such as the Certified Crop Advisor.

This summer, the PEI Institute of Agrologists will be hosting a major two-day conference starting on August 18th, 2019. The theme of the conference will be Climate Change: Buffering & Building Resiliency. The Stanley Bridge Resort will be the venue where international, regional and local experts on soil health, rotational crops for building

organic matter, crop opportunities and challenges with climate change, and new technologies for use in resource management, are just a few of the many topics to be discussed. This event will be of interest to both agrologists and the broader agriculture community. Please check the PEI Institute of Agrologists' website at www.peiia.ca for more details.

Modern Agriculture is a steady flow of new products, crops, technologies and challenges. For those involved in advisory roles, staying ahead of the knowledge curve requires a commitment to constant upgrading and engagement with other specialists. Professional Agrologists are uniquely positioned to offer clients the best in guidance and advice.

If you are entering the agrology profession in PEI or would just like more information on the PEIIA, please visit our website; www.peiia.ca or email us at info@peiia.ca.



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Certified Crop Advisors

by Carolyn Wood, Ag Information Officer, PEIDA&L

The Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Program is part of the American Society of Agronomy and has been available in Atlantic Canada since 1999. We currently have 52 CCA's in this region, of which 22 are certified on Prince Edward Island. To become a CCA, agriculture professionals must have a combination of agriculture experience and educational background. They must pass two rigorous exams which focus on four competency areas:



- 1.) Nutrient Management
- 2.) Soil and Water
- 3.) Integrated Pest Management
- 4.) Crop Management.

The International exam tests their knowledge of agronomic practices and principles while the Atlantic Board exam tests regional knowledge of agronomic practices and crops grown in the Atlantic Provinces. These exams are offered each year on the first Friday in February.

Once Certified, CCA's must obtain 40 hours of continuing education credits in the above competency areas every two years in order to keep their CCA designation. Hours can be

obtained by attending conferences and meetings that are evaluated for points by the local Atlantic CCA Board.

Being certified adds credibility and shows that you are serious about what you do. When you become certified, you join more than 13,000 of your peers in the largest, most recognized agriculturally oriented certification program in North America. This program's professional standards are widely respected by industry, academia, and government and are referenced in statutes.


The Certified Crop Advisor Program along with the Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists complement each other with the ultimate goal of providing our Island producers sound agronomy advice. The PEI Department of Agriculture as well as many local farm supply businesses have front line employees with designations from one or both organizations.

Protect your business with a certified professional -- one of the most powerful risk management tools available. Whether you are hiring a CCA to provide advice or as an employee, you can rest assured that CCAs have met the professional standards set by the American Society of Agronomy. Equally as important, CCAs have the passion and commitment you deserve.

1. Increase profits
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 - Focus on profitability vs. "cheap" inputs
2. Manage your risks
 - Reduce mistakes/costs
 - Professional performance benchmarks are established and proven
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4. Gain Access to current, technical knowledge "on-demand"
 - Partner with an experienced agronomy professional
 - Become aware of practices that may improve your yields and bottom-line
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To find out more information about becoming a CCA – please consult the website at:

www.certifiedcropadviser.org/become-certified




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Growers' Corner

This is the PEI Potato Growers' magazine and we welcome contributions from all those who work in the industry - from grower profiles to bits of history you may find in your attic or have come across while researching your family roots; from art in the form of drawings, photographs or poetry to memories of years past and how the industry has changed or tales of how the potato industry has impacted your life. This first item in our Growers' Corner is a story from John Phillips of Westcountry Farms in Arlington. You may have already seen it in local general farm publications, but we wanted to be sure to include it in Prince Edward Island Potato News and thank John for writing and sharing it with us.

The Big Field

**The Story of a Prince Edward Island Potato Field
by John Phillips**

I don't know exactly when the Big Field became a big field, but it has been called that since my earliest recollection. The neighbouring farm had a half dozen fields in the same amount of area, but the Big Field had all of its fence lines removed to make one long slender field. I remember standing in the yard of the one room school house, which was directly across from the Big Field, watching a large tractor pulling a five sod mouldboard plow. This was quite a marvel for a farm boy whose dad's equipment was tiny in comparison. I was young, but I knew that the operator was preparing the field for the next year's potato crop. Because of the high cost to produce each acre, only the best quality land was used to grow potatoes.

When I was in my early teens, my older brother worked for the potato farmer who owned the Big Field. Some workers went AWOL when they got paid at the week's end, and that gave me an opportunity to join the work force. The farmer's name was Bud. Since Stompin' Tom's song had become popular around this point in time, we liked to imagine that it was written about our Bud. Bud, however, rarely drove a truck and hardly ever ventured off PEI. Potato farmers were well respected and were considered an integral part of the Island way of life. Farmers created employment and generated cash flow in the stagnate PEI economy.

My job was picking the rocks and potato vines off the mechanical harvester. The opportunity to work on a sunny Saturday was a great way to earn some cash, however, as



Potato farmer John Phillips with his grandson Jasper.

darkness drew near, the cold became almost unbearable. At about 8:00 pm, Bud stopped the harvester and took us all to his house for some warmth and the best tasting turkey sandwich I had ever eaten. When the break was over, we were back out in the cold, and was it ever cold! Shortly afterwards, it started to freeze and, lumps of frozen soil began coming over the harvester, so it was time to quit. I slept great that night!

The next morning, I managed to convince my mother to let me skip church to dig potatoes, a very tall task. It was around noon when the ground thawed enough to continue the harvest. We worked until approximately 7:00 pm, when a breakdown forced us to halt. Since it was Sunday night, we were quite confident we were done for the day. Surprisingly when we got back to the warehouse, Bud insisted that we return with the repair parts and continue digging spuds. Shortly after the repair was completed, the ground started to freeze and that was the end of my working weekend.

Several years later, I told my brother of my memories of that year. He told me the reason that Bud had been insistent on our return to the field that Sunday night was the impending weather forecast. He said the ground had frozen solid that night, and was covered in snow by morning. It was only mid-October, but in the weeks that followed the ground only managed to thaw enough to dig a small portion of the remaining crop, and all the rest froze in the ground.

The heartbreak of that year, followed by a few years of

poor prices, discouraged Bud to the extent that he offered to sell the potato farm to my brother. Another older brother, who had left his teaching position to start a dairy operation on my Dad's farm, became his partner in this new adventure. By this time, I was in high school and able to operate most of the equipment on the farm. I had always aspired to be a teacher or an agricultural extension worker, but tilling the soil and watching a crop grow to harvest turned out to be kind of addictive. I began to consider a farming career at this point. I can still remember guiding a big old tractor down the Big Field, working up the ground that first spring. The equipment was large compared to what I was accustomed to, but the most memorable part was the view. From the crest of the hill in the Big Field was a wonderful view of Malpeque Bay. On a sunny day with white caps on the waves, it was a beautiful sight to behold.

The years flew by, and soon I was graduating from high school. Most of my friends had opted for trades rather than post-secondary education, and I was left with a difficult decision: should I further my education or farm? The next year, I attended UPEI, but weekends, holidays, and Christmas break were spent home working on the farm. Through my studies, I met another agricultural enthusiast in my biology lab who persuaded me to apply to an agricultural university in Montreal. The following fall, my classmate and I were on a plane headed west. This move was a big step for someone who rarely left PEI and had never spent more than two weeks away from the farm.

After working the next summer on the farm, I was prepared to go back to Montreal, but my future wife,

farming, friends and family were big draws for staying home on PEI. When a job as a farm manager for a large grower/exporter was listed in a local newspaper, I applied and got the job. This new job was interesting, challenging, and informative, but I soon realized this was not what I wanted to be doing with my life; I wanted to be back on the farm. When my brothers offered to let me become a partner in the business, I officially became a farmer. Those first years farming were challenging: rocketing interest rates and some hard lessons made for tough going in the beginning. Fortunately, the dairy income cushioned the low returns from the potato operation. Over time our outlook improved. One of the biggest factors in our improving fortunes was our willingness to try new methods to better the farm. My oldest brother had proven this practice in the dairy portion of the farm by continually trying new ways to not only boost production, but to also improve animal health and increase profits. Prime examples of this practice include maximizing winter bonus milk sales and low turnover of cattle.

Having jumped into the potato industry with limited experience, we had a large learning curve to navigate. The Big Field was the main land base for the potato operation and it had been farmed relatively hard, which was common practice at that time. Many back-to-back crops of potatoes left the Big Field lacking fiber and very susceptible to erosion. One year, I remember trying to level the field by crisscrossing the ruts and trenches that remained after the spring run-off. The first step to stopping this discouraging sight was to implement a minimum three-year rotation with only one year in three having a potato crop. This new

rotation plan also provided food and bedding for our dairy herd in non-potato years by planting barley and hay. The new rotation resulted in a significant increase in our land expenses, because we required more land to produce the same amount of potatoes. The extra expense was worth it, because the rotation proved to be beneficial to lower soil erosion and obtain better soil health.

The Big Field had a long low slope at both ends, but the farthest end also had a depression in the middle. The long rows of potatoes, over a mile long, directed the flow of water from heavy rains right to



The Big Field spring 2019.

this lowest point in the field. Despite our efforts, some years still resulted in heavy erosion. The solution might have seemed unlikely, but we removed a fence line to our neighbouring field. This allowed us to plant potatoes sideways from the original direction of the rows, leaving the hollow in permanent grass. This change allowed water run off without taking soil with it, and eliminated much of the erosion problem. While scouting the crop one evening, I saw evidence of the benefit from this change in our farming practice. I was at the far end of the Big Field and decided to walk down through the bushes to the brook below. While down by the brook, I noticed a large trail of dirt that had deposited from a neighbour's field on the other side of the stream. This field had potato rows planted down the slope and also planted across the bottom, so it directed all the run-off water from the field to one corner and then into the brook. Many years later, legislation was put in place to make it mandatory to leave the lower end of a field in grass or forage if the potato rows were running down the slope. This method slows down the water flow coming out of each individual row and stops torrents of water from transporting valuable soil off the field, which can cause damage to the stream. Several years later, I returned to the same location to find the vegetation had healed the mistakes of the past. When I walked into that neighbour's field, the buffer zone regulations had been followed and the water was staying in the field and not transporting the soil into the brook. In hindsight, I wish I would have taken before and after pictures of how effective buffer zones were, as it was a lasting impression on the benefits of buffer zones.

At some point early in my farming career, my brother persuaded me to operate the farm sprayer. It was more appealing than packing square bales of hay in the loft on a hot summer day, but being inside the tractor cab with the windows closed and no air-conditioning wasn't a great spot either. The solution was to spray early in the morning and later in the evening... which unfortunately left me available to help with the hay as well. My brother gave me my first unofficial pesticide safety course. He explained how to manually fold the booms of the sprayer, set the speed and pressure to operate it at, and showed me the safety aspects. For safety, he warned me to always wear rubber gloves when mixing the chemicals, to be careful when rinsing the empty containers with the large water fill hose, and explained that sometimes the chemical could splash back on your arms and face. He told me that if you got splashed, wash it off immediately. I am sure I washed it off quite a bit at the start, but I soon knew the tricks to rinsing a

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jug or a bag without coming into contact with the contents. The next lesson he gave me, I will never forget. The Big Field fittingly had a big water spring at one end. This was ideal, because you didn't have to travel far to fill the sprayer tank, as it was common practice in those days to fill directly from a stream. We stationed a gasoline powered pump at the water's edge to pump water into the sprayer. My brother warned me to watch closely when the tank was almost full and to hold the hose up, out of the chemical mixture in the tank. When the tank was full, but not overflowing, he said to throw the hose on the ground and then shut the pump off. If I were to shut the pump off when the hose was in the mixture, the pump would syphon the chemical back into the stream, and possibly harm our neighbour's cattle that drank from that stream!

A lot of the activities that I listed above would result in some dire consequences now. That is why we have mandatory pesticide application courses that have to be continually renewed, and many regulations concerning safely handling agricultural protectants. Water fill stations, secure pesticide storages, containment areas on water transport trucks and many other safety measures have now become the norm.

It was during these early years of farming that I learned some important lessons about the value of spraying crop protectants. One summer, I was spraying herbicide on the Big Field while really doubting that I should be wasting the time and expense as the field looked quite clean with only some very small weeds. The type of herbicide I had been using had to be applied just before the potatoes emerged, with the purpose of killing off any competition for the potato crop. I had almost finished the portion of the field that was at the proper growth stage when the sprayer booms started to lose pressure and I realized that I had run out of solution. Knowing that the potato crop would be mechanically tilled to build the hill of soil on the potato rows, I opted to leave the unsprayed section to see if that herbicide was actually needed. By summer's end, the section that had not been treated with herbicide was covered in weeds over 3 feet tall. Further though, the real lesson became apparent when we harvested and had a very light yield of very small potatoes in the untreated section.

There have been a lot of changes in potato production since I first helped plant potatoes in the Big Field over 40 years ago. When we plant next spring, the planter will be triple the size of our first model, and both the planter and tractor will be steered by GPS to form perfectly spaced

rows. The seed pieces will be cut to optimum size using the latest technology, and the fertilizer will be metered on, aided by scales attached to the holding tanks. The crop will be sprayed during the summer using variable rate technology that changes the amount of chemical applied as the machine slows or increases ground speed. Automatic height control will keep the sprayer booms hovering at the proper distance above the potato plants. At harvest time, one pass of the harvester will pick up six times the amount of rows at a time than we did 40 years ago. When the crop goes into climate controlled storage, it can be monitored and adjusted from anywhere in the world (provided that it has an internet connection). With this type of storage, we have the ability to store potatoes until the next year's crop is ready to be harvested. Change is inevitable, and there will be much more still in the coming years. Challenges of new pests and diseases, climate change, and meeting consumer expectations are a few of the obstacles to be cleared.

I am grateful for the lessons it has taught me. I hope the next custodians will appreciate the bounty and the beauty the Big Field has to offer.

The Big Field reminds me of the phrase, "no matter how big you are, there will always be someone bigger". Our farm has grown over the years and we now have several fields as big or bigger than the Big Field. It has however, been an integral part of my life and the lessons learned and the experiences gained will always be with me. I try to protect the Big Field, as we do with all our fields, but there is something extra special with this one. This year, the portion of the field that grew potatoes was planted with an earlier variety so we could establish a cover crop to help protect its soil from the harsh winter winds, while the other portion was a resting year of forage. Because we had the farm's manure supply allocated to other fields, we opted to mulch the crop during the summer. This will help build the soil structure and assist in maintaining the nutrient levels in the soil.

Time marches on, and my brothers and I steadily trek to a time when we will no longer farm the Big Field, but I am grateful for the lessons it has taught me. I hope the next custodians will appreciate the bounty and the beauty the Big Field has to offer.

An Update From the:

PEI Department of Agriculture & Land

by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator



Summer is quickly approaching, and I'd like to provide an overview of the department's services and workshops available to growers in season.


- The 2019 Click Beetle Survey is well underway – thank you to the participating producers. Results will be shared in the winter of 2020.
- Aphid Alert will begin at the end of June. If you're interested in monitoring aphid species and populations throughout the summer, please don't hesitate to call me at 902-314-1607.
- Plant Diagnostic Services are now open for the season. Please feel free to submit seed and plant samples for disease diagnosis. Drop-off locations include Access PEI offices and the PEI Analytical Lab in Charlottetown.
- Potato Scouting Workshop will be held on July 2nd at the Emerald Rec Centre. The workshop will

provide potato scouts and other agronomists with training on identifying pest and nutrient problems, as well as safety precautions and common scouting procedures.

- Potato Fieldworker Meetings will be held bi-weekly, alternating between Kensington and Charlottetown. The first fieldworker meeting of the season will immediately follow the Potato Scouting Workshop on July 2nd at 3pm at the Emerald Rec Centre. From then on, the locations will shift between Charlottetown and Kensington every second Tuesday, and we are moving all the fieldworker meetings to 3pm (as opposed to 7:30am in previous years).


Health Canada Pesticide Compliance Audits on Potato Farms

Health Canada regularly carries out visits on farms to monitor compliance with federal legislation (Pest Control



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Products Act) and regulations. On a cyclical basis, each commodity sector gets selected, and this year it is the potato industry's turn. This isn't a new thing; I recall them carrying out these audits on blueberry farms a few years back. Many of you would know our local Compliance Officer, Delly Keen. Delly's objective is to be helpful to producers, and to avoid causing producers undue disruption on their farms. As long as you're abiding by the legislation and regulations, you needn't worry about the compliance visit causing much distress. If you have any questions, Delly can be reached at 902-370-4515.

This would be a good time to also remind growers that products like plant growth regulators and biopesticides (whether they are for conventional OR organic use) require a pesticide label if their purpose is to control a pest. If you can't find a label in the PMRA database you should think twice about using the product. Applying an unregistered product is a violation of the Pest Control Products Act.

Finding Pesticide Labels Quickly

I'd like to share some tools that growers have access to that can aid in finding information from a pesticide label, whether it's a wind speed requirement, aquatic toxicity, specific buffer zones for a product, re-entry intervals (REI's) pre-harvest intervals and so on.

1) PMRA Smartphone App

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has a free app available in the App Store on your Smartphone. It contains labels of pesticides registered in Canada and is the most current information.

Once you've downloaded the PMRA app, you can search for any pesticide label, open it, and search for key words within the document. Applicators are required to read the pesticide labels in full – I cannot stress this point enough – however, if you've already done so and are wishing to double check, say, the buffer zone requirement, you can simply type "buffer zone" in the search field, and you'll immediately be shown the information on that label that relates to buffer zones.

2) PEI Potato Crop Pest Control Guide

The Potato Crop Guide contains some of the information you need (REIs, buffer zones, hazard ratings, etc), although it's not meant to be exhaustive. I'm going to repeat myself and once again state the importance of reading the full product label. While efforts are made to keep the information up to date in the Pest Control Guide and available on the PEI Department of Agriculture & Land website, manufacturers are free to make label changes at any point. Again, the PMRA app or website has the most up to date pesticide labels.



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3) Acute Toxicity Tables

My colleague Sebastian Ibarra has created a table of commonly used pesticides with their associated hazard ratings for fish, birds, and bees (this was recently sent out by the Potato Board to all potato growers as an attachment to an email). All pesticides listed in the table are registered and growers can legally apply them. The table simply provides a relative ranking of toxicity to specific organisms. It is important to note that the ratings do not take into account several important factors, such as application rate, environmental conditions, or probability of exposure.

4) Agricultural Retailers & Manufacturer Representatives

If you are not able to find the information you are looking for, you can call your sales person, retailer or manufacturer

and they should be able to help you.

I hope this helps you as producers and pesticide applicators to quickly find the information you need.

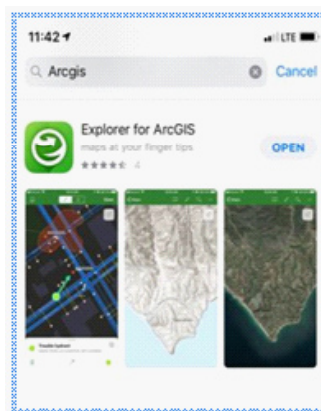
WeatherCloud now Online!

Are you looking for up to the minute local weather reports, including rainfall accumulation, temperature and wind speed? Evan MacDonald at the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land has collaborated with a company called WeatherCloud to have the weather data from 11 PEI weather stations uploaded to their site. Go to <https://peiag.weathercloud.online> and bookmark the site, or add it to the home screen of your smartphone. Check back often – the site is customizable and new features will be added in the future.

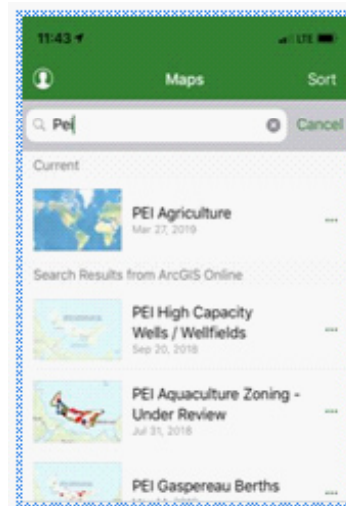
ArcGIS App for PEI Agriculture

As introduced in the last issue of PEI Potato News, there is new app for smartphones that will allow you to view satellite imagery of fields, complete with layers that indicate the location of watercourses, areas with high slope, 200m buffer requiring 10m grassed headland, etc. Just go to the app store on your phone and search “ArcGIS” for the free download:

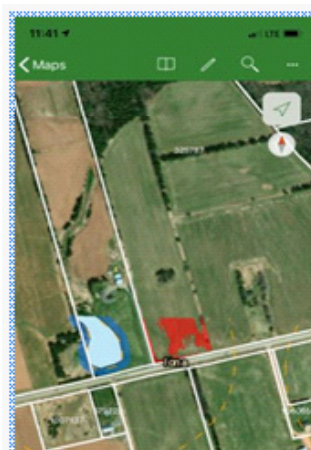
1. Search for ArcGIS download and open app.



2. Type in “PEI” and click on PEI Agriculture.



3. View GIS maps where highly sloped land, watercourses and buffer zones are identified.



Upcoming Events

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

June 2019

- June 19 **United Potato Growers Transition Conference**, Minneapolis, MN.
- June 20 **Monthly Potato Board Meeting.**
- June 30 **CFIA Seed Potato Crop Inspection Application Deadline.**
- June 30 **Potato Acreage Registration Deadline.**

July 2019

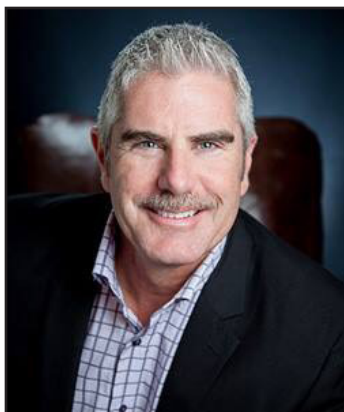
- July 15-16 **PMANA Meeting.** Quebec City.
- July 17 **Canadian Potato Council Summer Meeting**, Quebec, QC
- July 23 **Monthly Potato Board Meeting.**
- July 28 - Aug 1 **Potato Association of America Annual Meeting**, Winnipeg, MB.

August 2019

- Aug 14-15 **AgriExpo**, E. & P. Sénéchal Center, Grand Falls, New Brunswick.
- Aug 22 **Monthly Potato Board Meeting.**
- Aug 29 **PEI Variety Field Day**, AAFC Harrington Research Station.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity Announces New President & CEO



GUELPH—May 13, 2019—The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity's Board of Directors is pleased to announce the hiring of John Jamieson as its new President & CEO. With more than 25 years of senior leadership within Canada's agri-food sector, John is well suited to lead CCFI as a well-respected leader with a passion for advancing public trust. Jamieson

succeeds outgoing President Crystal Mackay, who provided valuable leadership as the inaugural President.

"We are delighted to have a respected leader like John join the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI) as our President & CEO to further advance our mandate as we strive to build public trust within Canada's food system," says Kim McConnell, Chair of the CCFI Board of Directors. "We are confident in John's ability to guide CCFI with his esteemed experience, his many contacts in the food, agriculture and aquaculture industries, and his personal passion to advance public trust."

Jamieson comes to CCFI after serving as the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development in Prince Edward Island. He previously served as the Executive Director of the Prince Edward Island Federation of Agriculture and has a wealth of knowledge working with various commodity organizations. Jamieson is also a Professional Agrologist and Certified Nutrient Management Planner and sits on both the Farm and Food Care Foundation Board of Directors and the Dalhousie University's Faculty of Agriculture Advisory Committee.

"I am thoroughly excited to take on this new role and to work with the CCFI Board of Directors and industry members to advance trust in Canada's top-quality food system," says Jamieson.

Jamieson's senior management experience, strengths in working within government and his

thorough understanding of Canada's agri-food sector will be leveraged to continue to build CCFI as the recognized leader in public trust in Canada's food system. John will be starting with CCFI and reporting to the Guelph office on June 17th.

The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity is a non-profit organization that helps Canada's food system earn trust by coordinating research, resources, dialogue and training. Our members, donors and project partners, who represent the diversity of the food system, are committed to providing accurate information and working together to address important issues in food and agriculture. The CCFI does not lobby or advocate for individual companies or brands.



The Atlantic Grocery Foundation Gala

was held in Halifax on Saturday, May 11, 2019. During the event a presentation was made by Sobeys and W.P. Griffin of money raised during the "Dig In Do Good" campaign in Atlantic Canada which ran in February and March 2019. Sixty thousand dollars was donated to support the IWK Health Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia; the CHU Dumont Foundation at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre in Moncton, New Brunswick; and the Janeway Children's Hospital Foundation in Newfoundland and Labrador. "Dig In Do Good" supporters also include the PEI Bag Co. Ltd. and Fresh Media. Pictured above during the presentation are L to R - Pam MacMillan, Atlantic Grocery Foundation (AGF); Albert Clements, Sobeys; Kevin Connors, AGF; Dave Sobey, AGF; John Griffin, W.P. Griffin; Steve Chiasson, AGF; and Tom Margeson, AGF.



Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau toured the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Fredericton research centre on April 23 to learn about the department's research into all things potatoes.

The visit included a stop at the centre's Potato Gene Repository with Fredericton scientist Benoit Bizimungu. The repository contains Canadian and international potato germplasm. Potato research is the Centre's main focus with an emphasis on potato agroecosystem bioecology, Potato germplasm enhancement and enhancing the environmental performance of potato production systems.

PEI Rural Beautification Society Competition Applications Due June 15

After WW II, a small volunteer organization started by Lt.-Col. E.W. Johnstone worked to encourage Islanders to paint, repair and plant to improve their homes, farms and properties. The PEI Rural Beautification Society through its Annual Awards competition has been a leader in enhancing the rural landscape of our beloved province. Property owners should be proud of their work that allows residents and tourists alike to enjoy the beauty of Prince Edward Island and that demonstrates Islanders pride in place.

The PEI Potato Board is proud to sponsor the Potato Warehouse Competition which evaluates the overall appearance of the property including such specific criteria as provision of storage for waste material, condition and appearance of warehouse identification, condition of approach from the highway, landscaping, and flag flying.

There are many other community and individual categories in which residents can compete such as Commercial Property Flower Garden, Mailbox/Home Identification, Community Flower Garden, and Farm Home Improvement competitions to mention a few. Entry dates

and full details can be found at www.peirbs.ca.

New Partnership Brings Major Agricultural Trade Show to Grand Falls, NB

April 1, 2019 - GRAND FALLS (New Brunswick) – A New Brunswick-grown industry partnership will see Grand Falls host an all-new edition of major farming trade show AgriExpo this summer. Valley Chamber of Commerce, alongside Master Promotions Ltd., Canada's largest independent trade and consumer event company, are planning this large-scale exposition to showcase new trends, technology and equipment for farming sectors throughout the region.

Taking place Wednesday, August 14th and Thursday, August 15th, AgriExpo 2019 will attract thousands of attendees from New Brunswick, Quebec, Maine, and beyond, generating significant economic and industry impacts for Grand Falls and surrounding communities. This year's edition is expected to be bigger and better than ever before, with indoor and outdoor exhibits covering over 100,000 square feet of space at the E. & P. S  n  chal Center.

A major voice for the farming community in New Brunswick, Potatoes NB is thrilled to be on board as a supporting partner of the event. "Potatoes New Brunswick is proud to be a sponsoring partner for the biennial AgriExpo held in Grand Falls! We welcome all farmers far and wide to attend this one-of-a-kind, fantastic show. New Brunswick potato producers take professional and personal pride in the quality of their products. Over the years, dedicated growers, professional marketers and a well-organized industry association have built the New Brunswick potato industry into a worldwide success," says Matt Hemphill, Executive Director, Potatoes New Brunswick.

AgriExpo 2019 visitors will be able to meet with local, national and international farming equipment suppliers and service providers. New for 2019, a variety of educational seminars will be presented, along with a networking social event on the first evening of the show. Local farmers are embracing the return of an updated version of this event.

More details of the show will be announced as they become available. Stay tuned to www.AgriExpo.ca to stay up-to-date.

For media inquiries or to book your space today, please contact: Shawn Murphy, Show Manager, Master Promotions Ltd., smurphy@mpltd.ca, 1-888-454-7469, 506-658-0018





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