

Prince Edward Island

September/October 2019

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POTATO NEWS



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POTATO NEWS

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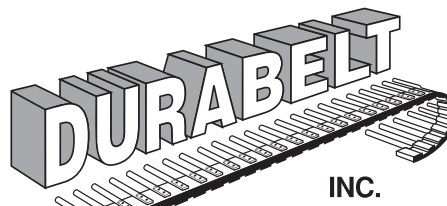
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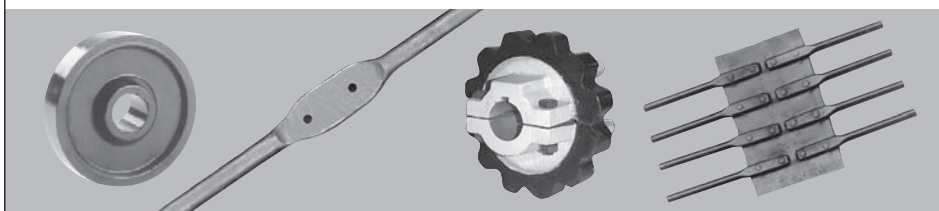
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Cover: *The Maynard children of FarmBoys Inc. (left to right) Kent, Kate (Kyle and Krista Maynard) and Brynley (Bryan Maynard and Ashley Dawson) were kept busy during Open Farm Day helping visitors to dig potatoes. (Photos: Bryan Maynard).*



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Chairman's Comments

by Jason Hayden, PEI Potato Board Chairman



A cool, late spring, below average rainfall in July and August, a wet September and a patchy frost on September 19 have meant another year of weather extremes for PEI farmers. The crop is not out of the ground yet and we are hopeful for a better harvest season than 2018 provided. We would like to thank the provincial and federal governments for their support of our application for disaster relief funding for 2018. The assistance will help with the extra expenses we all faced last year. Thank you as well to the staff who have been working hard on processing the claims. We understand funds are currently being disbursed to potato and vegetable growers on the Island.

Several field days have been held recently to provide an opportunity for growers to have a look at various trial work going on in the potato industry across the province. Results of this work will be presented at meetings over the winter months but it is nice to get an initial look in the field.

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency has been doing inspections at potato farms across the country this season. They concentrate on a different crop each year and the purpose of the inspections is to ensure that farmers are in compliance with the Pesticide Control Act regulations and identify areas in which improvements and increased communication are required. Twenty-four farms in PEI were included this year. In general this is intended as a

helpful exercise working toward improved understanding and adherence to the regulations.

On another government regulation front, the Board continues in its efforts to change the consequences of extreme rainfall events both in the areas of reducing environmental damage and changing enforcement actions implemented by Environment and Climate Change Canada from a heavy handed court-based approach to one of working with industry cooperatively for positive change. As the federal election approaches we encourage you to speak to your elected representatives both federally and provincially to let them know this is a priority and to share your concerns about other issues impacting farmers and to seek their support.

The Board will also continue to encourage the provincial government to implement its election promise to allow the use of marked fuel in farm trucks. It only makes sense that farm products moving from field to field or field to warehouse in trucks should be exempt as they are when moved with farm tractors. Also, the burden of two separate diesel fuels systems on each farm adds needless expense and takes away from farmers' bottom line.

We are also facing new regulations to accompany the recently passed PEI Water Act. There will be public consultations this fall. The Board will be preparing a submission and encourages all growers to take part as individuals.

The summer promotion season is winding up. It has been a busy tourism season on PEI and we have used the increased summer population to get our message out to both local residents and visitors to the Island through sponsorship and attendance at events such as Breakfast on the Farm, Fall Flavours events, the International Shellfish Festival and participating in the MLA Farm Tour. Many thanks as well to the young growers who told their story as part of the Board's radio campaign this summer and fall. All these promotions help replace misinformation with facts and positive information about our industry and the contribution we make to the Island environment and economy.

Have a safe harvest season.

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



The Award for the Seafood Chowder competition at the 2019 International Shellfish Festival was awarded by Jason Hayden (right), Chair of the sponsor PEI Potato Board, to winner (third from left) Chef Erin Henry shown here with her team from Culinary Boot Camps - Holland College. Photo: Fall Flavours.

POTATO BOARD NEWS

2019/20 Board of Directors Confirmed

New Directors for the PEI Potato Board have been announced with a transition to take place after the Board's Annual Meeting in November 2019.

Becky Townshend of Townshend Potato Farm will be replacing Rodney Dingwell as the Processing representative for the Montague- Souris District. Becky farms with her father Peter in Rollo Bay.

Mark MacMillan of Pownal is the Processing representative for the Charlottetown District. Mark re-offered for this position and will be serving a second three year term. Mark farms with his father Wilfred and brother Aaron.

Donald Stavert of Freetown will be replacing David Francis as the Seed representative for the Summerside District. Donald grows seed potatoes for local and export markets. He farms in Freetown with his brother Peter, son Greg and nephew Isaac. Donald has been the Board's representative to the Canadian Horticultural Council for the past year.

John Griffin of W.P Griffin in Elmsdale will be replacing Harris Callaghan as the Tablestock representative for the West Prince District. John is a Director of the World Potato Congress. W.P. Griffin operates a large growing and packing operation shipping to retail markets in Canada and the United States.

Meeting with Federal Minister of International Trade Diversification

On August 13, Board General Manager Greg Donald and Seed Coordinator Mary Kay Sonier along with Island exporters Rod MacNeill of West Isle Enterprises, Terry and Derrick Curley of Monaghan Farms and Ryan McKenna of McKenna Brothers met with the Honourable Jim Carr, federal Minister of International Trade Diversification, and Wayne Easter, MP for Malpeque and Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance.

Some of the information provided to the Minister included:

- Total PEI agri-food exports have increased by \$90 million or 23% in the past three years.
- Fresh and processed potato products

increased by \$81 million or 24% over those three years.

- In 2018, we shipped:
 - seed potatoes to seven countries
 - fresh potatoes (tablestock and for processing) to 16 (not including seed) countries
 - Processed potatoes to 40 countries

Discussions also stressed impediments to market access faced by Island potato exporters and suggestions for help the Canadian government could provide by ensuring that potatoes are included in free trade agreements and bilateral trade negotiations including negotiations on phytosanitary requirements and to reduce tariff levels.

Other points that were discussed included:

Other important points:

- Additional CFIA cost recovery fees could severely impact the competitiveness of Canadian potato farmers.
- We need a strong potato breeding program in Canada so that we have varieties that will be in demand in export countries.
- We need to keep important crop protectants and greater support / engagement by Environment and Climate Change Canada to help farmers protect the environment rather than using only heavy handed and unfair enforcement and court system tactics.



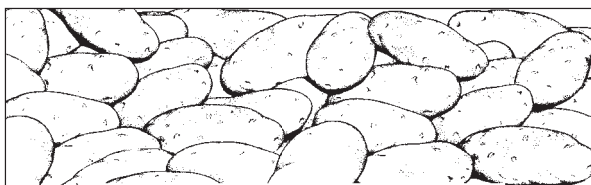
Federal Minister for International Trade Diversification Jim Carr (center) makes a point in discussions with (left to right) Greg Donald, General Manager of the PEI Potato Board, Wayne Easter, MP Malpeque, and exporters Terry and Derrick Curley.

- Efforts to maintain and grow our current export markets and develop new ones is important to the continued success of our potato farms and our Island economy.

Canada GAP AGM

A reminder to Island growers that the 2019 CanadaGAP AGM will be held on Thursday, November 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the Red Shores Racetrack and Casino. This is an opportunity for local growers to make their concerns known in person.

AGM business begins at 2 p.m. and will be immediately followed by an interactive "Town Hall"-style session, during which program participants will have the opportunity to provide feedback and ask any questions about the CanadaGAP program. The day will wrap up with a dinner at the Top of the Park restaurant, generously sponsored by Syngenta. All members attending the AGM are invited to join us for dinner. Advance registration is required by October 14, 2019. Contact the CanadaGAP office or visit our website <https://www.canadagap.ca/events/annual-general-meeting/> for more information.



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AGgrowth Coalition: Enough stalling - immediate support needed for Canada's export-oriented farmers:

August 26, Ottawa, ON -- On the heels of the government of Canada's announcement of trade support for market losses for 11,000 Canadian dairy farmers, AGgrowth, the coalition representing farmers from across the country, demands support for its export-oriented farmers facing significant market disruptions as a result of global trade action.

Despite attempts by the AGgrowth Coalition, the government of Canada is ignoring the significant challenges currently facing Canada's largest agriculture sector. Over 100,000 export dependent farmers producing \$62 billion in farm cash receipts are facing the impacts from key international market closures and yet the government's support is currently limited to only one sector. Agriculture as a whole requires the support of government when faced with risks caused by political decisions outside of their control.

"Enough stalling, the government of Canada needs to provide support to farmers facing the impact of escalating global trade volatility," said Markus Haerle, AGgrowth Co-Chair. "Equitable treatment is expected and reasonable. This isn't about dividing farmers, this is about consistency in policy and the need to protect and support agriculture as a whole."

"Urgent action is needed, BRM programming needs to be reinstated to its former levels immediately for all farmers across Canada," said Chris van den Heuvel, AGgrowth Co-chair.

"The government of Canada needs to stand up for farmers facing this critical situation created by geopolitical decisions and market risks outside of their control," said AGgrowth Co-chair, Jeff Nielsen.

The AGgrowth Coalition will be seeking meetings in the immediate future with representatives from the Canadian government and the Official Opposition including Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, **Marie Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Trade Diversification, Jim Carr, and the Leader of the Opposition, The Honourable Andrew Scheer, to raise the need for a commitment of support for all the farmers represented by the Coalition.**

For details of the AGgrowth Coalition four-point plan for addressing the shortfalls in the BRM suite go to <http://aggrowthcoalition.ca/>

Three Missions Tour PEI in September

The Philippines is an Island country of Southeast Asia in the western Pacific Ocean. It is an archipelago consisting of some 7,100 islands and islets lying about 500 miles (800 km) off the coast of Vietnam. It has a population of over 100 million and is the 13th most populous country in the world. There are 837,130 people in Canada with Filipino ethnic origin based on the census conducted in May, 2016.

Canada's bilateral relations with The Philippines are strong and friendly and marked by close cooperation in a variety of areas. Canada and The Philippines are partners on the international stage, working together to find solutions to global issues. Canada cooperates with The Philippines as an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Dialogue Partner, and within the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The Philippines currently serves as Canada's ASEAN coordinating country. Both countries are active participants in the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) Forum and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In The Philippines, Canada is represented by the Embassy of Canada in Manila. Staff of the PEI Potato Board, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Innovation PEI, and AAFC worked closely with the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service in The Philippines to organize three potato related

trade missions to PEI in September 2019. These missions followed the successful shipment of Canadian seed potatoes to The Philippines in early 2019. Working with a food processing company involved in the production of potato chips for the Asian market and The Philippine Department of Agriculture on the Philippine Sustainable Potato Program, seed was shipped to three growing areas in The Philippines. Results from the subsequent crop were very promising and led to the development of a culinary/food service mission, a media tour for the Philippine Food Show "Food Prints" and a potato/agricultural trade mission.

The culinary/food service mission was the first to arrive on September 15. Visitors included chefs and representatives of prominent Philippine hotel and food service operations. After a day to recuperate from 24 hours of travel, the group had a jam packed schedule of visits to producers and processors of PEI food products including seafood, beef, blueberries and of course fresh and processed potato products. All visits showcased PEI food products as well as local technology and expertise. Business meetings were built into the schedule and the week wound up with a "Next Steps" session before a visit to the PEI Shellfish Festival.



The culinary/food service delegation from the Philippines started their tour with an opening session at the PEI Potato Board office. The group, led by Angel Cachuela of the Canadian Trade Commission office in The Philippines (above center), was welcomed by officials from the PEI Potato Board (far left: Greg Donald, General Manager), AAFC (far right: Valerie Bruce), Innovation PEI (second from right: Darryl Bradley), and ACOA (third from right: Jeff Burry). Photo: M.K. Sonier.

The potato/agricultural group was a little larger and included representatives from The Philippine Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Plant Industry, food processing companies, a state university and farmers. Visits for this group focused more on potato production from seed to fresh to processed product. There was also interest from this group in other agricultural products from PEI such as peas and grains as well as in research and education. One of the highlights of the visit was a session at the University of Prince Edward Island involving presentations on the UPEI School of Sustainable Design Engineering and applications in precision agriculture, the Climate Change Lab and the Atlantic Veterinary College. After a very full week on the Island the group headed to Dal Agricultural College to discuss the potential for research and training collaboration. They also visited the port of Halifax. As with the previous delegation, a "Next Steps" session was held towards the end of the week. Officials from the Canadian Trade Commission office in Manila accompanied the delegations and will be working with Canadian and Philippine businesses in follow up for positive trade results.

The third group visiting PEI was from a media company that produces a Philippine TV show called Food Prints.



Potato farmer Donald Stavert (left) discusses the characteristics of various potato varieties with members of a trade delegation from the Philippines.

The show has been on the air for six seasons. The chef Sandy Daza is a major culinary star in the Philippines and internationally and he travels to different locations in search of unique cuisine. They recently aired a show done in Calgary featuring Canadian Beef. This trip was to obtain footage for two shows set in PEI featuring PEI potatoes and other food products.

Mission participants and organizers were very appreciative of the warm Island hospitality shown to the visitors by all Island industry members who hosted the groups for visits and tours during their stay on PEI.



The Philippine potato/agricultural trade delegation made a stop during the week at the AAFC Harrington Research Centre to discuss potato variety evaluation. The delegation included farmers and representatives from industry, government and academia.

Open Farm Day 2019

Open Farm Day is an annual event that in 2019 saw 25 farms open their doors to the public, providing fun and interactive ways to learn about life on a farm. This year the event was held on Sunday, September 15, 2019.

As usual, there was a good mix of farms taking part - market garden farms, livestock and dairy operations, wineries, specialty fruit and vegetable farms, an aquaculture operation, and two potato farms.

Farm Boys Inc., Kyle and Brian Maynard, in Arlington and the Keenan Family in Rollo Bay made sure that Islanders from east to west had an opportunity to learn about commercial potato production. Both families provided an opportunity for visitors to hand-dig a bag of potatoes to take home for dinner. Farm Boys also had a screen set up in the warehouse to show the Potato Production video short vignettes prepared last year by the Potato Board. Keenans had some old and new tractors on display and visitors could take a tour of their packing line.

Open Farm Day provides an excellent opportunity to maintain a connection between the non-farming population and farms involved in primary food production. Thank you to Farm Boys Inc. and Rollo Bay Holdings families for doing such a great job of representing the potato industry this year.



Digging potatoes was a popular pastime at both potato farms participating in Open Farm Day 2019. Above, Nancy Keenan and Basil Atwood (yellow shirts right and left respectively) help visitors old and young unearth some spuds. (Photo: Rollo Bay Holdings) Below, Tate oversees potato digging at Farm Boys Inc. in Arlington, PEI. (Photo: Mark Phillips)



PEI Living Labs Pilot Project

Government of Canada's launches Canada's first Living Lab in PEI – homegrown collaborative solutions to local environmental farming issues

August 15, 2019 – Bedeque, Prince Edward Island – Today, the Honourable Wayne Easter, Member of Parliament for Malpeque, announced Living Lab - Atlantic, Canada's first agricultural Living Lab designed to benefit farmers and Islanders by enhancing soil health, water quality and crop productivity on Prince Edward Island (PEI).

As part of the \$10 million investment in the Living Laboratories Initiative, up to \$2.4 million will be granted to the East Prince Agri-Environment Association. The Association will lead on-farm research activities in collaboration with over a dozen partners (including the PEI Potato Board) and local producers, including more than 20 science teams from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

The research will focus on developing and evaluating various beneficial management practices to address environmental issues in the province, such as water management, fertilizer use, conservation of soil organic


matter, and nutrient losses due to soil erosion.

The Living Laboratories Initiative is a new collaborative approach to agricultural innovation that brings farmers, scientists and other stakeholders together to co-develop, test and monitor new practices and technologies in a real-life context. The ultimate benefit will be more practical technologies and sustainable farming practices adopted more quickly by Canadian farmers.

"This significant investment and new, innovative, collaborative research approach will put PEI farmers at the core of developing and testing best management practices. With tailored tools, they will have the power to drive productivity in a sustainable fashion in the fields across this beautiful province," said - The Honourable Wayne Easter, Member of Parliament for Malpeque.

Andrea McKenna, East Prince Agri-Environment Association Inc. added "The East Prince Agri-Environment Association is pleased to be leading this exciting initiative in Atlantic Canada. This funding from AAFC will enable farmers to work directly with researchers, academia, government representatives, watershed groups and other environmental organizations such as Ducks Unlimited to carry out

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Wayne Easter (right) MP for Malpeque, chats with farmer Andy Toombs (center) and Andrea McKenna of the East Prince Agri-Environment Association about the Living Labs Project. (Photo: AAFC).

important trials that will help build and support a more sustainable ecosystem for growing crops and protecting our environment. Our organization is dedicated to building a more environmentally sustainable agriculture industry through evidence-based management practices.”

Details about the Living Labs Initiative:

- PEI is the first site in Canada to have a Living Lab, part of a nation-wide network led by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Additional sites will be announced in four regions across Canada: the Eastern Prairies, Quebec, Ontario, and B.C.
- This initiative is part of a \$70 million investment outlined in Budget 2017 to further support agricultural discovery science and innovation, with a focus on climate change and soil and water conservation.
- The East Prince Agri-Environment Association (EPAA) is a not-for-profit organization that represents 13 Prince Edward Island farms who are working together to improve and create sustainable agricultural practices.
- A Canadian-led Agroecosystem Living Labs approach – a novel way to accelerate the development of sustainable agricultural practices and technologies around the world – was endorsed by the G20 Ministers of Agriculture in 2018 and 2019.

For further information contact: Justine Lesage, Press Secretary, Office of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, justine.lesage@canada.ca.





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Toe Taps & Taters 2019

Toe Taps and Taters, a Fall Flavours Signature Event, was held on Friday, September 6, just prior to the arrival of Hurricane Dorian. The setting was once again the big blue warehouse owned by Skyview Farms and Sherwood Produce on the south shore in the community of Canoe Cove. Lynn Crawford was the Celebrity Chef for the event and the food was catered by Canadian Chef of the Year Chef Irwin MacKinnon and his staff from Papa Joe's restaurant in Charlottetown.

The evening opened with roving food stations featuring: Curried Roasted Potatoes and Cauliflower served by Chef Lynn herself, Fresh Island Blue "Moules Frites", Creamy Whipped Potato with Braised Island Beef Short Rib and Crispy Potato-Leek

Croquette with Smoked Salmon and Chive Sour Cream. Entertainment from local step dancers with Sheila MacKenzie on the fiddle eased people into the main event.

The sparkling clean potato warehouse held 350 guests who were treated to three course dinner that included Island Potato and Seafood Chowder, Carved Slow Roasted Certified Island Beef Strip Loin with a Twice Baked Potato and Seasonal Island Vegetables and finished off with Chocolate Potato Cake and Raspberry Sauce. Master of Ceremonies Rob Barry and Chef Lynn Crawford kept the meal lively with information about the event sponsors and the Island food everyone was enjoying and interacting with the guests during a fun potato related event. Music was provided during and after dinner by the Love Junkies. A great event that celebrated PEI's number one crop and encourages interaction between local potato farmers and those who enjoy their product!



Clockwise from top left: Tate was on hand to welcome guests to the ToeTaps andTaters Fall Flavours signature Event in Canoe Cove, PEI; Nancy and Donnie Allan, well known potato people from Covehead, enjoy the meal; local residents help visitors to the Island dress up for the PEI potato sack fashion show contest directed by Master of Ceremonies Rob Barry and Chef Lynn Crawford.

Around the Board Table

by Jason Hayden, Chairman, PEI Potato Board

One of the things that I commonly get asked by growers now that I am a Director on the Board is, "What does the Board do anyhow?" Being an elected Board member certainly opens your eyes and I can now easily answer that question with a few key points:

- the Board does marketing and promotion work to support the sales of PEI Potatoes in key markets domestically and internationally.
- the Board works with growers elected to the Processing Committee to negotiate processing contracts.
- the Board operates the Fox Island Elite Seed Potato Farm to ensure the Island Potato Industry has a secure supply of quality elite seed potatoes of public and a selection of protected varieties – currently the source for as much as 40% of our planted commercial acreage.
- the Board collects market information and distributes summaries of market information to local growers and dealers to aid them in making buying and selling decisions.
- the Board works with various partners to ensure research is conducted on potato production priorities identified by growers. Staff continue to work to bridge the gap between research and adoption of improved production practices on the farm with agronomy extension activities.
- the Board advocates on behalf of growers and makes sure the grower voice is heard where decisions are made in government circles.

Acting as Chairman of the Board has certainly driven home the time and expertise it takes to do all these tasks successfully. Lobbying and working closely with government staff and elected representatives is a critical effort that impacts all Board tasks. While government representatives put a lot of weight on hearing individual farmer comments

and concerns – and this often provides the incentive for them to focus on a particular issue - it is the regular contact and follow-up work done by directors and staff of the Board and organizations like the Canadian Potato Council that provides the details and information to get things done. This is something that we as individual growers do not have the time or money to do on our own.

As Chairman, I have met with our provincial Ministers of Agriculture and Environment and previous Chairs have had the opportunity to make presentations to various provincial Standing Committees and meet with federal and provincial Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture, Environment and Trade. I have also been a participant at meetings of the Canadian Potato Council, the Canada/US Annual Potato Meeting and many more on behalf of our industry. This type of work, conducted by Board directors and staff on a regular basis, has tangible results and we can see several recent examples:


- the increase in the base price for the potatoes in the Crop Insurance Program this spring;
- decisions at PMRA that have resulted in the continued use for potatoes of important crop protectant products such as chlorothalonil;
- the recent announcement of AgriRecovery assistance to help potato growers with extra costs experienced as a result of the terrible fall of 2018.

We could always do more, and everything we try is not always successful, but being able to speak with a strong united voice for the industry is a positive aspect of the Board and helps to keep our issues at the forefront and getting the attention needed from provincial and federal representatives.


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Maritime Agrologists Meet

The PEI Institute of Agrologists was proud to present their first Island Agrology Workshop on August 18-20th, 2019 at Stanley Bridge Resort, PEI.


The theme was “Building Resiliency in Maritime Agriculture,” touching on how farmers and agricultural professionals can respond to a changing climate to ensure our farms remain profitable and sustainable. Over 85 attendees from all three Maritime provinces took part in the event. It was a chance for attendees to learn and share experiences with production challenges faced in the agriculture industry in the Maritime region. Agrologists were able to learn about climate adaptation conditions and challenges within our region as well as how similar challenges are being met in locations such as the UK, Vermont and in central and western Canada.

PEI Minister of Agriculture Bloyce Thompson was on hand to provide welcoming remarks.

PDF versions of the presentations from the Workshop can be found on the PEIIA website at www.peiia.ca. Congratulations to the organizers for the very successful and high quality event.



PEI Minister of Agriculture and Land Bloyce Thompson provides greetings to the Maritime Professional Agrologists gathered in PEI for a conference on “Building Resiliency in Maritime Agriculture”.


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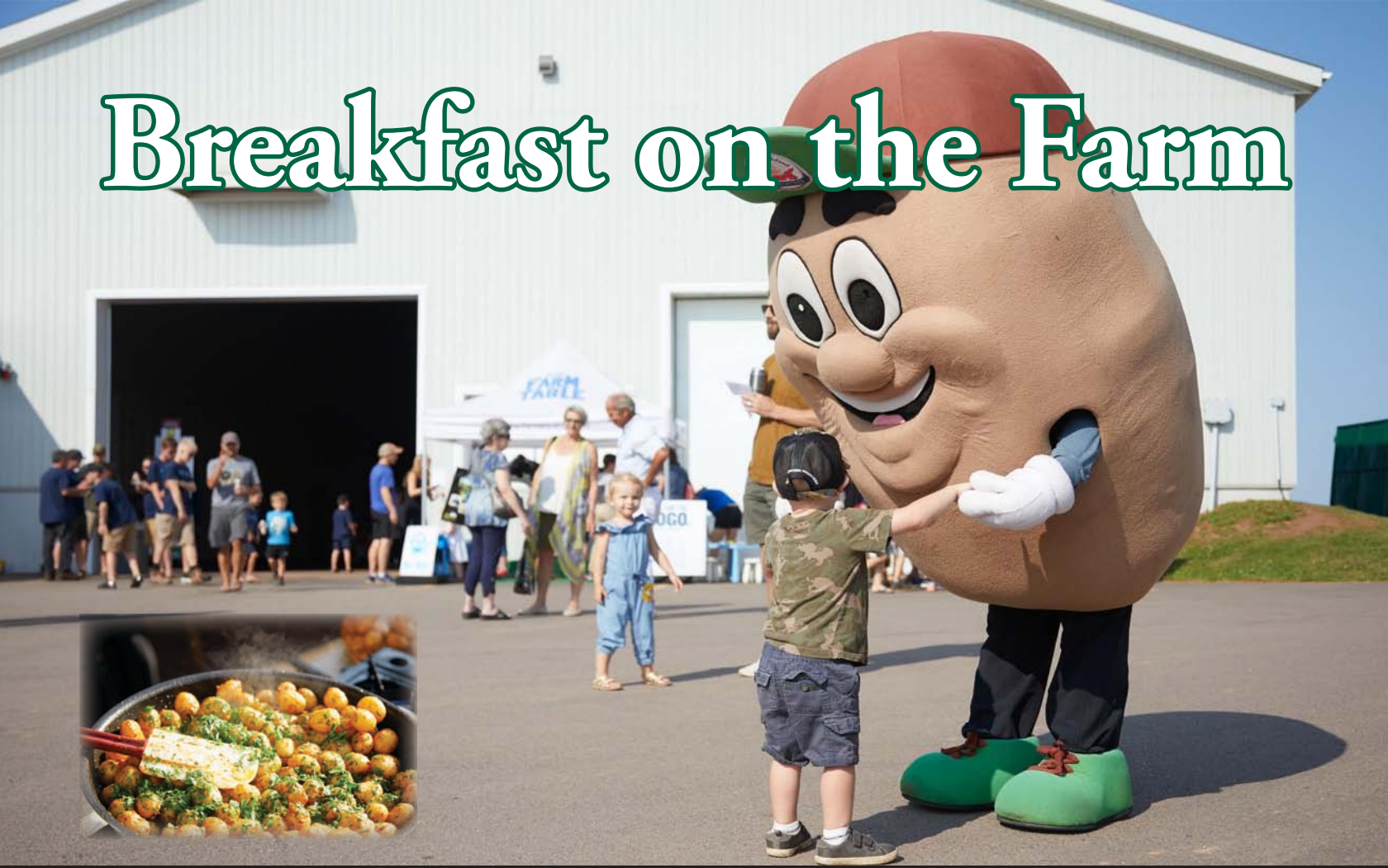
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Breakfast on the Farm



August 13, 2019. Mt Albion, PE - Farm and Food Care PEI's second annual Breakfast on the Farm was hosted at Vanco Farms Ltd in Mt Albion on Saturday, August 3rd, 2019 and it was a huge success. One thousand people took advantage of this excellent opportunity to visit a unique potato and tulip farm, enjoy an all-PEI sourced breakfast, learn what it takes to get creamer potatoes from the field to food plate, the process of growing tulip bulbs, and enjoy farm tours, agricultural displays, children's activities and much more.

Breakfast on the Farm brought together consumers and producers, with an overall goal of increasing the public's trust in our food and agricultural industry here on Prince Edward Island. Guests who attended this event were treated to a free locally sourced breakfast and also had the opportunity to tour a PEI family farm. Coffee was offered to attendees in exchange for a donation to PEI 4H and as a result, \$145.85 was donated to the PEI 4H Trust.

Breakfast on the Farm created a unique opportunity for Island farmers, tourists, and non-farming Islanders to have a conversation about food and farming on Prince Edward Island. This event allowed the public to have all their questions and concerns answered by the people who are actually involved in the production of the food that is on

our plate; this ensures that the public is receiving accurate and credible information. It truly provided a showcase for food production on PEI and gave non-farming islanders the opportunity to meet real farmers and members of the agri-food industry. This was a positive and effective event for the food and agriculture industry on Prince Edward Island.

Farm & Food Care PEI would like to thank everyone who helped make this important event happen. We are profoundly appreciative of the VanNieuwenhuyzen family and their staff for their excellent hospitality and graciously opening up their beautiful farm to us and the public to host this event. To all our partners, we are grateful for their support and contributions to Breakfast on the Farm, including the local businesses who donated all the tasty Island sourced food; Ilona Daniel and her team for all their hard work preparing and cooking all the delicious food for all attendees; and all the incredible volunteers who came out to help make Breakfast on the Farm run smoothly by directing traffics, handling questions and set up and take down for this event.

Breakfast on the Farm 2019 Gold Partners included: the Little Potato Company, ADL, Cavendish Farms, the PEI Potato Board and the PEI Wild Blueberry Growers' Association.

2019 Field Days

AIM Summer Socials

Three summer socials were held in early August 2019 across the Island sponsored by the Agrology Initiative for Marketable Yield (AIM). Brief presentations were made on cover crops, provincial Department of Agriculture and Land programs aimed at supporting soil conservation practices and the use of cover crops, and Provincial Department of Environment, Water and Climate Change tree planting programs. After the presentations there was a lot of time for casual conversation and an opportunity to speak with the presenters one on one for further information.

The socials were hosted at Fox Island Elite Seed Potato Farm in West Prince, at R&L Farms in Kinkora in Central PEI and at Townshend Potato Company in Rollo Bay in eastern PEI. At Fox Island, attendees went on a tour of the grower owned tissue culture laboratory, screenhouse and field production facilities to view the specialized production requirements for early generation seed potato production. R&L Farms provided a tour of the Roberts family antique farm equipment collection and in Rollo Bay Peter Townshend had a variety of set cutters out for display.

Tours were followed by a BBQ and a chance to socialize and catch up on crop developments in the area.



Attendees at the AIM Social in West Prince listen to presentations in the shade at Fox Island Elite Seed Potato Farm.

PEI Variety Trial at AAFC Harrington Research Farm

The Annual AAFC/PEI Potato Board Variety Field Day was held at the AAFC Harrington Research Farm on August 29, 2019. For the past two years the field day has been combined with a research tour at the station. In 2019, it

returned to a stand alone event to provide more time for those attending to view the selections in the various trials, compare them with standards and have discussions with representatives from AAFC and various variety agents in attendance.

There were selections from three different trials on display:

1. AAFC Tier 1 and Tier 2 Advanced Breeding Line selections. The trial is part of the National Potato Research Cluster. It is replicated at eight different sites across Canada with local sponsors and AAFC participation at each site. Tier 1 and Tier 2 selections are at the 4th and 5th field year of evaluation. Tier 1 lines are replicated 2 times and Tier 2 lines are replicated 4 times. The best selections from Tier 1 will move on to Tier 2 evaluation next year. Virginia Dickinson and David DeKoeper from the AAFC breeding program were on hand to describe changes to the breeding program that have taken place over the past couple of years, provide information on the selections and receive feedback from growers and industry personnel.
2. The PEI Potato Board Trial - this trial features newly released commercial potato varieties and lines that are in early stages of commercialization. If people see a variety in this trial that they are interested in, there are usually quantities of seed available from breeders or variety agents for on-farm trials or to purchase for a commercial acreage.
3. AAFC Organic Trial - AAFC Biologist David Main, who is responsible for all the variety evaluation trials at AAFC Harrington Research Station runs an evaluation trial, primarily featuring AAFC selections, that is grown under an organic production system. He has been able to achieve yields over the years that are comparable to yields achieved using conventional methods. He attributes this in part to a four year rotation and the





Good discussion took place amongst industry members while viewing the breeding line selections and newly released varieties at the annual AAFC/PEI Potato Board Variety Day at AAFC Harrington Research Station.

Several agriculture industry representatives, including Greg Donald and Billy Cameron from the Potato Board, accompanied the MLAs on the tour.

Cavendish Farms Variety Trial Tailgate Sessions

On Monday, September 16 and Wednesday, September 18, Cavendish Farms and Cavendish Agri-Services hosted Variety Trial Tailgate sessions. Commercial scale plots were grown in four locations across the Island to evaluate the production and characteristics of new varieties that Cavendish Farms has

excellent weed control he is able to obtain most seasons.

Full reports on the trial results including yield and quality data in comparison to standard varieties will be available in early February 2020.

MLA Tour

On Thursday, September 12, the PEI Federation of Agriculture hosted Island MLAs for a PEI Farm Tour. The group visited dairy operation Crasdale Farms Inc. and potato operation Blue Bay Farms both located in South Rustico, PEI as well as Schurman Family Farms owned by Marc and Krista Schurman, where they grow a variety of greenhouse vegetables and sell under the brand Atlantic Grown Organics.

identified as having potential for the french fry plant. Locations included: Montague, Souris, Summerside and O'Leary. With the variable weather experienced across PEI in 2018 and 2019, it has been valuable to see how the varieties have performed under different heat and rainfall conditions. The majority of the new varieties are long russets and are compared to standard varieties Russet Burbank and Prospect. The tailgate sessions provide an opportunity for growers to see the plants in the field and get an indication of their maturity, growth habit and tuber size distribution and number. During winter research forums, information will be provided on total and graded yield, grade defects, and processing quality. Several varieties have been added



Klaas and Randall Nieuwhof of Blue Bay Farms (first and third from right) describe the challenges faced by their potato farm operation to MLAs and ag industry representatives taking part in the MLA Farm Tour organized by the PEI Federation of Agriculture. (Photo: PEIFA)



Clearwater Russet (above left) and Mountain Gem (center) are two of the varieties in the variety trial being evaluated against the standard Russet Burbank (above right).

to the list in recent years, but it takes several years of careful evaluation to determine if new varieties consistently outperform the standards.

Cavendish Farms Research Field Day

The 2019 Grower Field Day was hosted on Friday, September 27 at the Cavendish Farms Research Farm located behind Plant 2 in New Annan, PEI. Growers and industry personnel were welcomed by Jubs Bristow, VP of Agriculture and the Cavendish Farms Research Team and Cavendish Agri-Services Sales team. A similar format to that in 2018 was followed: attendees were divided into a number of small groups which then travelled to a variety

of stations to hear about ongoing research projects and discuss preliminary results.

Topics covered during the morning session included:

Fertilizer Trials

- Nitrogen sources and rates
- Potash Sources and application timing.

Crop Management

- Phos-Acid application timing and rates
- Plant spacing for commercial production
- Plant growth enhancement products

Seed Quality and Seed Management

- Gibberelic Acid on Seed Production
- Physiological seed aging

Variety Evaluation

- Dryland vs Irrigated Variety Trial
- Regional PEI Variety Trials

Pollinators and Rotational Crops

Tours were followed by lunch and time for discussions. Full trial results, including yield and quality data, will be presented to growers at winter research sessions.



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Potato Farming in Kenya

Grower's Corner

Potato Farmer Peter Townshend and his wife Lynn from Rollo Bay, PEI have long been involved in the international world - from hosting foreign exchange students in their home to participation in Farmers Helping Farmers activities.

The roots of Farmers Helping Farmers reach back to 1979, when CIDA organized an international farm consultation across Canada, including a session on Prince Edward Island. After the visitors returned home, the Island farmers met for a follow-up to the conference. Inspired by the experience, a group of them decided they would like to see what it was like to farm in a developing country. The group prepared a proposal for CIDA asking for \$250,000 towards projects in Kenya and Tanzania.

Over the years, Farmers Helping Farmers has carried out hundreds of development projects in Kenya. The dollar value

of those projects since 1980 exceeds \$10 million Canadian, including funds contributed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). These projects are estimated to have touched the lives of at least 100,000 people in East Africa.

In 2018, Peter and Lynn had the opportunity to travel to Kenya with a Farmers Helping Farmers delegation. The following are Peter's impressions from that trip:

"I had a farm in Africa". These are the immortal words of Karen Blixen in her wonderful autobiography about her time in Kenya which was made into the critically acclaimed movie "Out of Africa" with Meryl Streep and Robert Redford, a great movie!

There are countless people in Kenya who can say the same except the word is shamba not farm. If you meet 100 people in Meru County and ask them if they have a shamba ninety nine percent would say, "yes of course!" Even the private secretary to the Governor of Meru County, a lawyer, is very proud to say he has a shamba and is working to build up his dairy herd.

In Canada, over the last two generations, most people could not get away from the farm fast enough, but that is not the Kenyan experience. Having a shamba in Kenya, typically one or two acres, gives you food security because you can grow virtually any crop.

Where we were in Meru County, we were in the foothills of Mt. Kenya. There is lots of productive farmland at elevations between 1,500 to 2,500 meters which allows for a wide diversity of crops and fruits.

Coming from Prince Edward Island, where Tea Hill is the highest elevation around, I did not have any appreciation of the impact the change in elevation has on crops. We were on the equator and the climate was actually perfect. Daytime is similar to a hot day in July on P.E.I. but at night the temperature drops dramatically and is quite cool. We saw a potato field that looked like it had been hit by blight but had actually been hit by frost.

Harvesting potatoes with Mount Kenya in the background.





Peter helping Kisima employees show their improved varieties at a field day.

Visiting potato farms in Kenya felt like I had a time machine and had gone back to the 1930s. Most farms had no machination at all; in many cases the land is cultivated with a grub hoe. A few farmers had oxen to do some work, tractors are extremely rare.

I helped harvest potatoes on a large shamba of ten acres with two acres of potatoes where we literally dug potatoes out of the ground with our bare hands. My fingers have not recovered yet!

This farm had a 350 hundred weight crop of beautiful potatoes that were one hundred percent saleable. I never saw such perfect quality! No insect damage or scab or internal issues at all. Any P.E.I. farmers would have been proud to offer these to his or her customer.

Kenyan potato production is in a time of rapid transition, they are seeing the value of using certified seed and proper inputs of fertilizer and pest control.

The land is naturally fertile and they only need to apply half the fertilizer growers on P.E.I. would need. There are no Colorado Potato Beetles or wireworms which make life much easier, but they have a lot of pressure from late blight the same as we do on P.E.I.

The biggest concern is water. They have two rainy seasons when they can usually grow crops without irrigation. The rain can be very localized and depends on the proximity to Mt. Kenya.

The soil is volcanic in origin, red in color, stone free and has a neutral pH but when it dries out it can make hard lumps.

They can grow potatoes year round in Kenya if they have water but they typically plant two crops a year to coincide

with the rainy seasons. Growing two crops per year can create challenges with having seed potatoes break dormancy and become ready to plant. The most common variety is Shangi. It works well because it tastes good, cooks fast and has a very short dormancy. We actually saw them sprouting at harvest time.

Traditionally, farmers sell the large potatoes for consumption and keep the small ones to plant the next crop. As a result, many of the fields are one hundred percent virus infected with a very low yield potential.

Dutch seed companies HZPC and Agrico are in Kenya supplying new varieties and virus free versions of old varieties. In order to make them affordable to local farmers, they are multiplying three generations in the county in seventeen months. This is done on large commercial farms with modern techniques and equipment. These farms are a carryover from the British Colonial days and a surprising number are still in place, although Kenya gained independence from the UK in 1963 and now operates as a



A cutting edge potato storage in Meru County, Kenya - many potatoes are stored in barns or sheds with no protection from light or high temperatures.

commonwealth nation similar to Canada. It is odd to see small hold farms beside large farms with self-propelled sprayers and GPS. There are many challenges for Kenyan potato farmers. The marketing system is bizarre. Brokers come to the farm at harvest to buy potatoes. They buy by the bag which is not weighed and typically holds over 100 kilograms!

Good storage is practically non-existent except on the very large farms so farmers are forced to sell cheap even though they know the price will double or triple in several months. Another major issue is the application of pesticides which is done with a back pack sprayer walking through the fields with no safety equipment at all. I gave out a lot of spray gloves which were donated by Cavendish Agri Services but they are only a small help to a very large problem which needs to be addressed.

In many ways, farmers face the same problems we do with production, transportation, marketing and regulation. It was my great privilege to spend some time there as a fellow farmer and share some experiences with them. I will never forget walking down dusty roads in the “cradle of humanity” and receiving the wonderful hospitality of the Kenyan people. Even with all of its challenges, I would describe it as a beautiful land with endless opportunities.



Peter gets tips on the hand planting technique used by local women.

Farmers Helping Farmers has been asked to assist the Meru County potato producers to improve their production practices. If anyone is interested in helping they can contact Farmers helping Farmers or Peter at 902-969-8670.

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Real Potatoes was established in 2007 and has grown steadily each year. In order to continue this growth, we need to enhance our ranks with a new Sales Associate. We are looking for an individual who takes pride in developing business relationships and wants to become part of the evolving potato industry. An individual who not only wants to stand behind our products, but also wants to get involved in shaping our product offering moving forward.

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An Update From the:

PEI Department of Agriculture & Land

by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator



HARVEST CONSIDERATIONS

Mother Nature has been unkind to agriculture this month with heavy rainfall and some frosty mornings. This is the time to make assessments and plans (if necessary) for harvest. Time and efforts spent doing this now can help eliminate further consequences down the road. As we've heard before, a potato warehouse is not a hospital!

It's my hope that not a lot of potato acreage was underwater after Dorian, and that the soil absorbed the water quickly. However, if you know that parts of your fields were submerged for over 24 hours, you should flag these areas and monitor them before harvest. Keep an eye with test digs, checking for enlarged lenticels or rot. Although we've had no late blight reported, other diseases can take hold in these conditions – namely Pink Rot, Pink Eye and Pythium.

Best of luck to all producers, and look out for each other out there this fall.

UPDATE ON PMRA PROPOSED DECISIONS

The PMRA released a proposed decision on mancozeb products (Manzate, Penncozeb, etc) last October, and a consultation period followed. That consultation period has now closed, and we await the news of the final decision. The proposed decision was to cancel all uses (except greenhouse tobacco), but the industry put forward efforts to keep this broad spectrum fungicide available. If mancozeb is cancelled for potatoes, a phase-out period will most likely apply; but growers will need to adjust their fungicide programs and budgets.

Consultation is still open for thiophanate-methyl (including Senator potato seed piece treatment). In July, the PMRA proposed the cancellation of some uses

including potato seed piece treatment. Growers and industry are encouraged to put forward comments regarding the continued registration of Senator.

With regards to pesticide re-evaluations, decisions and pesticide applications, there's something applicators should keep in mind. When carrying out re-evaluations of pesticides, the PMRA considers the level of risk to both humans and the environment. Pesticide labels contain instructions that PMRA assumes are being followed, and as such they deem the products to have an acceptable level of risk for use. If PMRA perceives that label instructions are not being met (such as the proper usage of PPE), they may feel there's no choice but to propose cancellation of certain pesticides.

AIM SOIL WORKING GROUP STUDY TOUR

In early September, I joined

1 (800) 799-4711 gowagriculture.com

GOW INSERTS



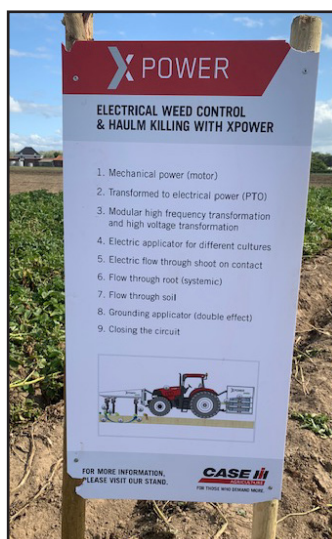
The perfect addition to your fleet. All aluminum trailer inserts will transform your dry vans into self-unloading bulk trailers. Built lightweight without troughs for maximum product capacity.

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GOW GROUP

members of the AIM Soil Health Working Group on a study tour to Belgium and the UK. This was my first direct exposure to advanced European potato technology and practices. I derived tremendous value from this study tour, and returned with an appreciation for the challenges UK potato farmers face. I'm grateful that PEI growers aren't challenged by things like potato cyst nematode, multiple and voracious resistant strains of late blight, market instability from Brexit,

fewer pesticide options, and continuous destoning of fields. As Ryan has written in his report, we learned a great deal about how UK farmers strive to increase soil organic matter (SOM) levels and soil health. In many cases, SOM is under 2%. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Ryan for putting together an excellent itinerary for this study tour; there's no question his objective of optimizing our learning was met. Thank you to the AIM Initiative for allowing me to take part.



Cameras attached to an implement on the front of the tractor sense weeds/ green plant material, then electrical pulses target and kill the plant. Can be used for pre-emerge weed control or for top-killing. Diquat (the active ingredient in Reglone/ Armoury) is being phased out, and growers seek alternative top-killing options.



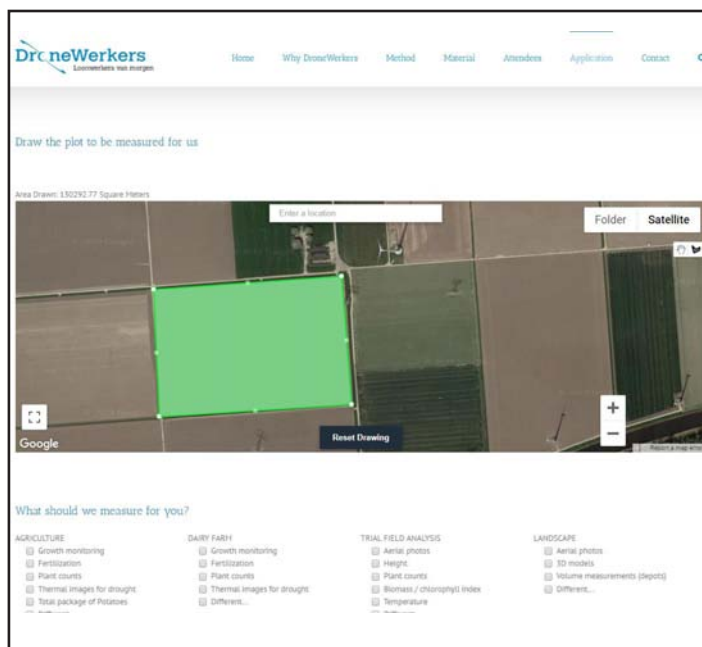
The Dezeure Turbocleaner is a multipurpose bulk box, dirt eliminator, and conveyor with the option of unloading into tote boxes/bags or trucks.



This pull-type hopper harvester unloads into a bulk box at the end of the row. Without windrowing, only 3-4 rows are harvested each pass, and the harvester can complete the length of the field before unloading. This reduces traffic and thereby compaction in the field.



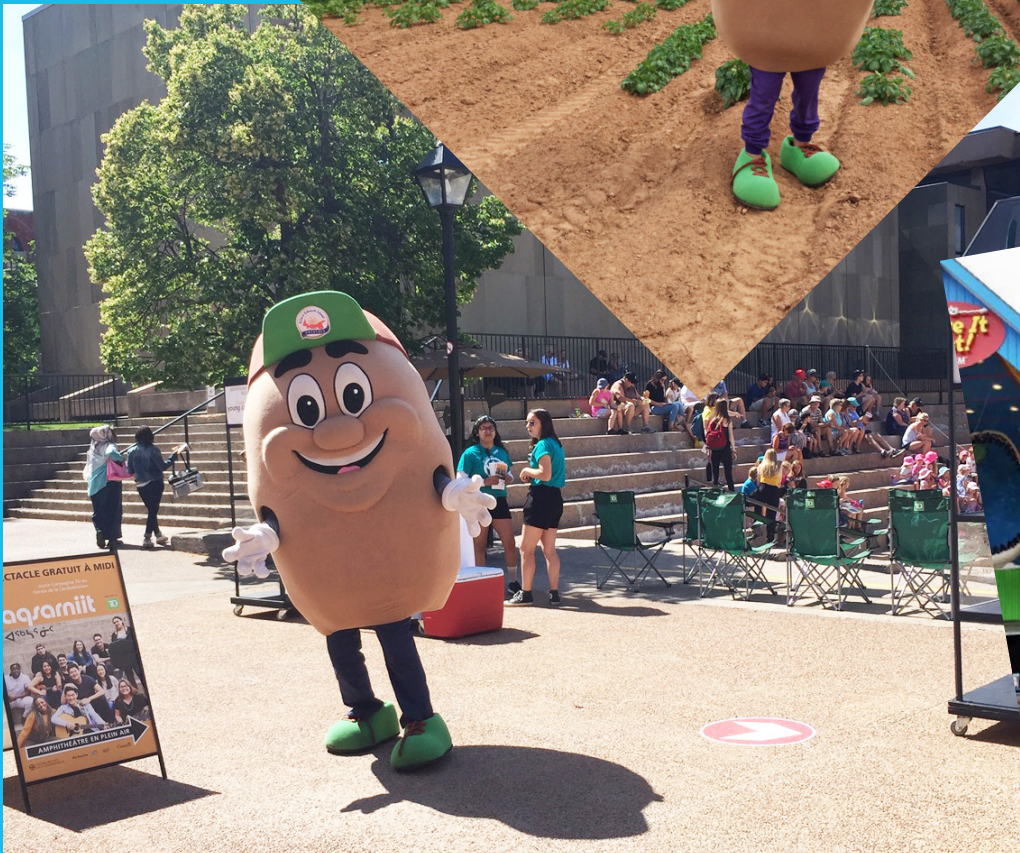
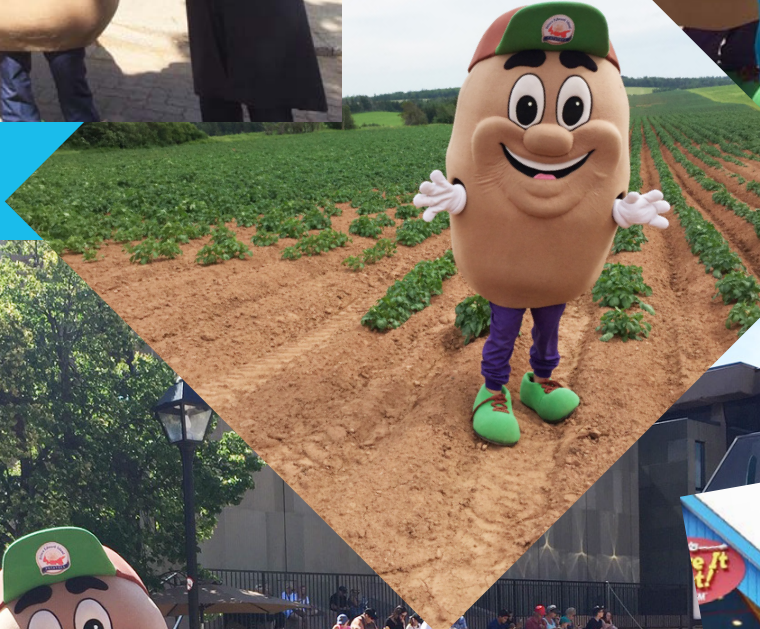
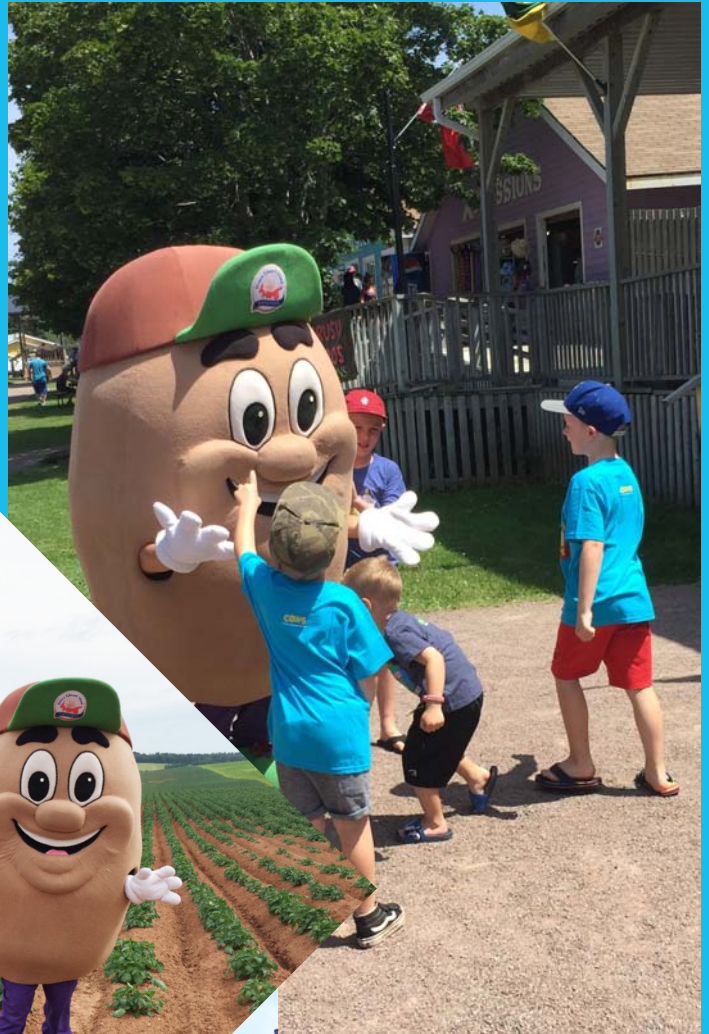
As a means of increasing organic matter, pigs graze cover crops in rotation with potatoes, add back organic matter, and eat the potato volunteers that survive frost-free winters.



Dronewerkers allows you to pinpoint your field from a satellite map on their website, request a drone flight, and then they provide you with customized aerial imagery, including 3D images (to measure plant height). Images are so detailed that individual plants can be identified and assessed.

Tate's Travels

Tate was busy again during the summer of 2019. He is comfortable going straight from the potato field right to downtown Charlottetown and points in between. He is a very social tater who loves meeting with tourists and locals alike to have his photo taken and promote healthy, nutritious and delicious PEI Potatoes.



INDUSTRY UPDATES

CHC welcomes new Communications Manager

CHC is very pleased to welcome Karl Oczkowski as our new Communications Manager as of August 6.



Karl is an experienced communications professional with a background in strategy development, writing, social media and stakeholder engagement. He also has several years' experience in health care and not-for-profit organizations.

He joins the Canadian Horticultural Council from Stiff, a branding and communications agency located in Ottawa. Karl is a graduate of Western University's Master of Arts in Journalism program, and also studied English Literature and French for his undergraduate degree.

Karl may be reached at: koczkowski@hortcouncil.ca or by phone: 613-226-4880 ext. 218

Cavendish Farms Announces New Potato Research Centre in Prince Edward Island

New Annan, PEI - Cavendish Farms is pleased to announce the construction of a new potato research and plant breeding centre in New Annan, Prince Edward Island. The \$6 million facility, which is fully funded by the company, is an investment in the sustainability of PEI's all-important potato industry.

As witnessed over the last two summers, the growing season is changing with hotter temperatures and less precipitation at critical times. This is a real challenge for PEI growers and places the potato crops at risk. The new research facility, with the state-of-the-art greenhouse, will allow Cavendish Farms to conduct research year-round. Different lines of potatoes with promising traits such as superior yields and a reduced environmental footprint specific to soil, climatic and seasonal conditions on PEI will be evaluated.

"In the face of this changing climate, our research will be focused on high yielding potatoes that can withstand and be resistant to hot dry summers and disease pressures," said Robert K. Irving, President of Cavendish Farms. "Developing a potato variety that grows better yields in shorter seasons with less fertilizer will be beneficial to the PEI environment."

The Cavendish Farms Research Centre will be studying different potato varieties. All seeds will produce a different type of plant so that the best lines can be used in future potato growing seasons.

"A locally driven approach to developing varieties that are more suitable to our specific climate will be an asset to the entire PEI potato industry," said Greg Donald, PEI Potato Board General Manager.

The Cavendish Farms Research Centre will open in 2020 and create 4 full-time and up to 12 seasonal jobs.

McCain Foods Invests \$12 Million in its Florenceville, New Brunswick Potato Processing Facility

27 August 2019 - Florenceville, New Brunswick - McCain Foods Canada, a division of McCain Foods Limited, shared today, the company's plan to further invest \$12 Million dollars in its potato processing facility in the French fry capital of the world, Florenceville, New Brunswick. This investment will add capacity to the existing line that produces French fries for the company's food service and retail business and will be completed in two phases, one starting in August and the second phase completing the project in early 2020.

This capacity build will require an additional 400 hectares (1000 acres) of potatoes from local growers in the community. It follows a recent \$65 Million dollar investment adding a new potato specialty line to the same production facility in 2017.

"McCain French fries continue to be in high demand and we are investing in a strong and sustainable future," says Danielle Barran, President, McCain Foods Canada "Investing in Florenceville, the birthplace of McCain, where we have long-standing relationships with employees, the community and with local potato growers always feels great."

Since 1957, McCain Foods has grown proudly from its Florenceville, New Brunswick roots. With 30 employees and sales of \$150,000 in its first year of business, the company has grown to become a global enterprise with more than 21,000 employees operating out of 53 production facilities on six continents with sales in excess of CDN \$9.5 billion globally, while remaining Canadian headquartered and family-owned.

For more information: Andrea Davis, Director Government Relations and Public Affairs, media@mccain.ca.

Agricultural Excellence Conference

Farm Management Canada is hosting the 2019 Agricultural Excellence Conference this December 2-4 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

The Agricultural Excellence Conference (AgEx) welcomes anyone and everyone from farmers to advisors, academia,

organizations, private industry, and government to join us in Fredericton to exchange expertise and insights to continue to position Canada's farmers for success through farm management excellence.

The theme "Cultivating Resilience" focuses on building the capacity for you and your farm to weather any storm and seize opportunity. A healthy farm depends on a healthy farmer, healthy relationships and healthy business. We will discuss the future of Canadian agriculture, the implications for farm managers, and the practical ways farmers can achieve sustainable growth and prosperity. Conference-goers will come away from AgEx equipped with information and tools to enhance Canada's farm businesses.

From our farm management showcase to expert speakers, you'll be introduced to farm business management like never before, with ample opportunity for interactive learning and networking through discussion and breakout sessions.

For more information, visit: www.fmc-gac.com/content/agricultural-excellence-conference

Another Step Forward in Advancing Public Trust in Canada's Food System

GUELPH – September 13, 2019 – A respected body for public trust in Canadian food, the Public Trust Steering Committee (PTSC), has endorsed the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI) to be the national coordinator of public trust activities in Canada's food system.

"After thoughtful consideration and discussion with the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity, the Public Trust Steering Committee felt many of the same mandate and goals of the committee could be achieved through the coordinating efforts of CCFI," says Ron Bonnett, Co-Chair of the PTSC. "We are pleased to make this decision in this journey to public trust."

Advancing public trust in Canada's food system led to the formation of the Public Trust Steering Committee (PTSC) in 2017. The committee was organized to create a strategic direction for public trust and was composed of industry partners across the agri-food industry, working together and with government.

Similarly, CCFI was established in 2016 to help Canada's food system earn trust. The research conducted by CCFI shows that a significant portion of Canadians are interested in learning more about their food system and the people behind how their food is grown as food-related topics are relevant and top-of-mind for consumers. The agri-food industry recognizes the importance of providing a more coordinated, values-driven approach when addressing public trust and speaking to consumers about their food.

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.

Upcoming Events

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

October 2019

Oct 18-20 **PMA Fresh Summit**, Orlando, Florida.

November 2019

Nov 2-11 **Royal Agricultural Winter Fair**, Toronto, Ontario.

Nov 20 **PEI Potato Board Annual General Meeting**. Charlottetown, PEI.

Nov 21 **Canadian Phytopathology Society - Atlantic Region Meeting**. AAFC Charlottetown Research and Development Centre, PEI.

Nov 28 **CanadaGAP Annual General Meeting**. Charlottetown, PEI.

December 2019

Dec 2-3 **Canada/US Potato Meetings**. Ottawa, ON.

Dec 4 **Potato Association of America Seed Certification Section Meeting**. Ottawa, ON.

Dec 11-13 **New York Produce Show**. Javitz Convention Centre, New York City.

January 2020

Jan 14-15 **NPC Potato Expo**, Las Vegas, NV.

February 2020

Feb 19-20 **International Potato Technology Expo**, Charlottetown, PEI

Feb 19 **PEI Potato Industry Awards Banquet**. Charlottetown, PEI.

Plan to attend the
PEI Potato Board

Annual General Meeting

- ~ Financial Report ~
- ~ Chairman's Report ~
- ~ Sector Updates ~
- ~ 2019-2024 Strategic Plan ~
- ~ On-Island Seed Levy ~
- ~ District Changes ~

**Wednesday,
November 20, 2019**

PEI Potato Board Office
Meeting Room
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Agriculture and Land



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A close-up photograph of a green aphid on a leaf. The leaf is covered in water droplets, and the aphid is positioned in the lower center of the frame. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly soil or a leaf underside.

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