January/February 2021 Volume 22 Issue 1

# In This Issue:

Prince Edward Island

POTATO NEWS

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# Prince Edward Island TATO NEWS

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# **Fox Island Elite Seed Farm**

Mark Pridham	Farm	Manager
Eleanor Matthews	Lab	Manager

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Cover: A field of Ranger Russet in flower in western PEI. Late July 2020. Photo: M.K. Sonier.



Chairman's Comments

by Wayne Townshend, PEI Potato Board Chairman



As my predecessor said, "it's quite an honor to be chairperson of the PEI Potato Board." I feel like I am stepping into some "big shoes," as Jason Hayden was a perfect fit for the role of chairperson for the past two years.

It is great to know that I have a supportive Board of Directors behind me. I would like to welcome our two new directors: Mary Gillis, seed representative for the Western District, and Rob Green, the processing representative for the Central District. I'd also like to welcome Michael Ramsay who is the new Young Farmers' representative. On behalf of the Board, I extend a warm welcome back to Brenda Simmons who has returned to her position as Assistant General Manager at the Potato Board office.

Through the provincially funded Seed Potato Recovery Program I am hopeful that seed growers have received help to offset some of their losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Agriculture and Land established the program in 2020 to offset extraordinary costs and loss in revenue for Island seed potato producers impacted by the pandemic. We thank the Provincial Government for supporting this program.

According to discussions around the Board table, processing potatoes are moving in a timely manner. Storage issues have become less of a concern. Next month will bring the start of contract discussions. We hope that everything goes well for our process growers.

We hope that growers have been able to book most of their seed for the 2021 crop, though it does seem that seed is in tight supply. Although CFIA has a management plan in place that has worked for many years to protect against the spread of wart to other farms or producing areas, the USA border is currently closed to seed potatoes from Prince Edward Island. We are eager for this issue to be resolved in the near future and are hopeful that this remains a scientific issue and does not become a political issue. We appreciate the support of Provincial and Federal governments who are working on this issue. Table markets remain strong with shipments up from this time last year and supply volumes down. There looks like there could be a short fall in this sector of the industry also.

It seems that everyone is talking about what a great winter we are having so far, with January nearly over and no significant snowfall. These are perfect conditions for the frost to help with the cleanup of volunteers and maybe some bugs. That being said, it would be nice to see some snow between now and spring to increase our water table following such a dry summer which led to a loss of yields up to 35% in some areas. This is not only a great loss to our growers, but also the economy of the Island as a whole.

This leads to the ongoing topic of irrigation and high capacity wells. There are a number of irrigation ponds that have been constructed recently on the Island, the majority in the Central Region. Farmers are building those because of uncertainty over future regulatory changes and the need to do something to provide better access to water for their crops. Ponds are permitted under existing regulations, as is the case in other provinces. Ongoing discussions have been quite positive with government officials regarding the increasing concern for farmers to be able to irrigate their crops. Environment officials say water resources are more than adequate in most parts of PEI so now is the time for a moratorium on high capacity wells to be lifted or eased. Without irrigation I can see that family farms may find themselves in financial difficulties. Take any business - it's that last 25-30% of revenue which makes or breaks a bank account. These losses are hard to recover without sufficient water to grow a crop.

Hopefully the COVID-19 situation improves, or at the very least remains the same, so we can continue to have in-person Board meetings

Waye Sounding

Find a list of links with the latest news and information about items involving COVID-19 that relate to your farm operation on our PEI Potato Agronomy Page:

https://peipotatoagronomy.com/covid19/

# **PEI Potato Board News**

# Welcome to 2021!

COVID-19 restrictions are still in place and, although vaccines are being rolled out, we will still be dealing with our new normal for the upcoming planting season. Many winter training events have moved on-line. While they do not replace the benefit of in-person gatherings, they can be more convenient by saving on travel time. Another benefit is that in some cases taped webinars are available to watch at whatever time best fits your schedule. Look for a list of topics and websites in the Upcoming Events table on page 26.

# **Status of Bifenthrin**

As growers are aware, bifenthrin, used for control of wireworm, was scheduled for phase out as of December, 2020. The registrant, FMC, has submitted a full registration package that contains data that PMRA had felt was lacking in the original application. However, the registration process can take several years and while other options are available, current equipment and regulatory issues could potentially limit their use in 2021. It is important for growers on PEI to maintain all possible control options. To this end, the Potato

Board has been working with the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land as well as the potato industries in Saskatchewan and Alberta to submit an Emergency Use application that would allow bifenthrin use in 2021. The Board will keep growers updated as the application proceeds through the regulatory process.

# Presentation to Land Advisory Committee Planned

The Land Advisory Committee that has been put in place under the Land Matters project began hearing presentations from stakeholders in the New Year. The Board will be making a presentation in late February. Similar to most Potato Board presentations, a brief introduction is made that highlights key facts about our industry and grower commitment to sustainability, sol conservation and soil health. Information will then be provided on potato industry concerns with the Land Protection Act and Land Use Planning including:

- It appears that some sales may not be aligned with the spirit, intent and laws of the Lands Protection Act.
- Concern that some land purchases are occurring without meeting residency requirements or are exploiting loopholes to exceed land limits.
- Some sales have resulted in land being no longer available for agricultural use.
- Sellers often wish to sell as one parcel, which limits the number of potential buyers.
- It is currently challenging for a group of farmers to buy a block of land and then divide it out to multiple farms while abiding by LPA regulations.
- "Not for Profit" Organizations it seems possible that one organization could set up multiple not-forprofit organizations each with separate landholdings if connections are not reviewed.

Recommendations include:

• the provincial government needs to adhere to the



Spirit, Intent & Rules of the LPA.

- Need to Close any loopholes and ensure rules and regulations are the same for everyone (including notfor- profit organizations)
- Provide clarification (i.e. clear definition and how implemented) on draft changes to LPA regarding direct and indirect control while addressing concerns that this could negatively impact existing farms and prevent young farmers from securing financing to buy land.
- Develop a mechanism (possibly by independent body) to evaluate land limits every 3 to 5 years.
- PEI needs to develop a clear land use policy that will ensure agricultural land will remain in agriculture.

- Develop a mechanism for selling large parcels of farm land ( ie . whole farm) to a group of farmers.
- Evaluate necessary resources (financial/human) for land conservation work.
- Review ALUS payment levels .

# Agrilnsurance Update for 2021

# Bev Francis, Insurance Manager, PEI Agricultural Insurance Corporation

Under the 2021 Agrilnsurance Agreement, the Unharvested Acreage Benefit Rider will no longer be available to producers that insure their crop at a ninety percent coverage level. Due to federal regulations, the rider benefit can only be selected when a maximum coverage level of eighty percent is selected under the Production Insurance portion of the program. In order for producers to participate in the Storage Program or the Colour Rider, producers will still be required to select the ninety percent coverage level on their potato crops. Reminder to growers in the Storage Program of the requirement to file a Notice of Loss (NOL) with the Agricultural Insurance Corporation (AIC) when insurable perils are identified that could potentially result in a loss in the Potato Storage Program. Notice of Loss are required under the regulations of the program and are to be filed within five working days from when the loss was noticed, to notify the AIC of the potential of an indemnity. Agricultural Insurance Officers can be contacted to assist the producer in filling out the forms when required.

Due to COVID-19, we continue to encourage growers to conduct business electronically whenever possible. The Agricultural Insurance Officers are in the field and available to assist growers when required. We will continue to make adjustments to keep our processes as efficient and "user friendly" as possible and thank growers for your cooperation.

For inquiries, contact your Agricultural Insurance Officer, or email AICInsurance@gov.pe.ca.



# **Feedback Wanted on Temporary Foreign Worker Act**

Government invites the public to have their say on a proposed Temporary Foreign Worker Act.

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program is a federal program that allows employers to hire foreign workers to fill temporary jobs when qualified Canadians are not available.

"Temporary foreign workers play a very important role in helping address the labour shortage in Prince Edward Island. It's our responsibility as Government and Islanders to ensure temporary foreign workers are safe and have a positive work experience as they contribute to the success of our province."

- Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture Minister Matthew MacKay

The new provincial act would provide additional protection for foreign workers in PEI through the following:

1. Require recruiters of temporary foreign workers to be licensed;

- 2. Require employers to be registered;
- 3. Establish criteria for issuing, refusing, suspending or cancelling a license or registration;
- 4. Impose penalties for recruiters and employers who violate legislation;
- 5. Allow government to recover and return to workers, any fees charged illegally by recruiters;
- 6. Create two registries; one for foreign worker recruiters and one for employers; and
- Require recruiters and employers to provide temporary foreign workers with written contracts and information about their employment rights.

To view a draft of the proposed act and submit feedback, visit: https://www.princeedwardisland. ca/en/service/proposed-temporary-foreign-workerprotection-act. The deadline to submit feedback is Friday, February 12, 2021.

# **PEI Potato Industry Economic Impact Study**

The excerpts in the article below are taken from "The Prince Edward Island Potato Sector: AN ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS" released in late 2020 by the Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land. The research was carried out by Dr. Ziad Ghaith, an economist in the Strategic Policy and Evaluation Division, PEI Department of Agriculture and Land. A copy of the full report with accompanying tables, figures, footnotes and references can be found at: https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/ publications/af\_potato\_econ\_impact\_study.pdf

# Background

The potato was first introduced to Prince Edward Island (PEI) in the 18th century (Campbell & Keefe, 2008). Since then, potato farming has played an important role in PEI and is now an integral part of its economy, culture and way of life. In PEI, family ties often extend across households and generations.

Most of PEI's potato farms are considered as

multigenerational, family-owned and operated (PEI Potato Board, personal communication, September 29, 2020). According to Campbell and Keefe (2008), in 1827, PEI potatoes were exported for the first time from Charlottetown to Bermuda. After 1850, potatoes had grown to be a major export (MacDonald, 2000). In 1908, about 33,300 acres of land was devoted to potato production in PEI. This number has increased over the years making potato a foundational crop for PEI's agriculture (Statistics Canada, 2019a). The 1920s witnessed the development of the seed potato industry. This period of time was also the beginning of the modern potato industry in PEI with the introduction of two new varieties of potatoes: the Irish Cobbler and the Green Mountain (MacDonald, 2000). In the 1950s, large-scale mechanization was introduced to potato farming in PEI. As a result, the number of individual potato growers started to decrease (MacDonald, 2000). Today, PEI has long held the distinction of being the largest potato producing province in Canada. PEI's well-known "spud" can be found on almost



Figure 1. Average yield and production of PEI potatoes, 1920-2019. Source: Statistics Canada (2019a).

every dining table in Canada and its seed and table potato products are shipped to over 40 countries around the world (Trade Data Online, 2019).

The average yield by harvested acre is considered the best measure of endpoint productivity. In 1920, producers in PEI could expect a yield average of about 100 hundredweight (cwt) per harvested acre. This number has dramatically increased to reach 300 cwt/ac in 2019. With enhancements in farming practice, potato production in PEI has continued to grow over time. PEI has been Canada's largest potato-producing province since 1976 (Statistics Canada, 2019a). Potato production in PEI averaged 24.7 million Cwt between 2010 and 2019, representing 24% of Canadian potato production. Potato seeded acreage in PEI peaked in 1997 at 112,000 acres and then gradually decreased to 85,000 in 2010 and has been relatively stable since then (Statistics Canada, 2019a). Figure 1 shows the growth in PEI potato yield and production between 1920 and 2019 (Statistics Canada, 2019a).

The increased area planted with potatoes in Manitoba and Alberta, coupled with both the expansion of potato processing capacity in both provinces and greater flexibility in responding to weather-related challenges, point to Manitoba and Alberta emerging as Canada's leading potato producers in the future (Watters, 2018). This occurred

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CIBC Wood Gundy is a division of CIBC World Markets Inc., a subsidiary of CIBC and a Member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund and Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. in 2020 when, despite stable acreage, PEI's production dropped 15% in one year due to drought conditions experienced during the growing season.

# **Contribution of Potatoes to PEI's Economy**

As with any other sector, the potato sector in PEI does not exist in isolation. A chain of industries forms a potato industrial complex of linked buyers and sellers. The industries that supply inputs are "backward linked". The industries to which goods and services are sold are "forward linked" (Miller & Blair, 2009). Potato farming is at the center of the potato sector. Backward linked industries include: accounting services, fertilizer suppliers, fuel distributors and other inputs. Forward linked industries include the fresh packers and dehydration and frozen products processors.

The contribution of the potato sector to PEI's economy can be estimated using two measures: sector size and sector impact. Size is measured by conventional statistics, while impact is measured by the linkages of the potato sector to other industries. The later measure requires looking at and incorporating all the economic activities of other industries related to potato sector. To this end, Economic Impact Analysis (EIA) can be utilized to measure the sector's role in the economy in terms of jobs, sales, income and other economic indicators that are directly or indirectly created by business activity related to PEI's potato sector.

# Approach and Methodology

To capture the entire economic impact of the potato sector on PEI's economy, this study accounted for three types of economic impacts direct, indirect, and induced effects as described below (Pleeter, 1980):

Direct economic impact: accounts for activities related directly to the operation of the potato sector in PEI. Through this category, all impacts generated due to direct activities re captured (e.g. expenditures incurred by potato farmers, processors, etc.)

Indirect economic impact: accounts for the impacts that affect other industries and are linked to the potato sector (business-to-business). For instance, this captures how machinery provider spends the revenue received from producers.

Induced impact: accounts for impacts generated through the re-spending of income earned by the participants in the direct and indirect components of the direct and indirect expenditure. Induced impacts arise from re-spending that occurs in the economy at the household level (e.g., employees of potato processors using their income to purchase goods and services).

# Conclusions

The potato sector's economic contribution was assessed by estimating sector impact on output, GDP, labour income, employment and taxes. The potato sector in PEI provides a significant contribution to both the province and the country as a whole. The sector's economic contribution is generated through economic activity at the farm level, as well as from the industries that support farming activities, processing, and industries that support potato processing. Examples of these industries include fertilizer, financial service, transportation etc.

This study provided a comprehensive analysis of the economic impacts of PEI's potato sector on the province and the Canadian economies in 2016. The economic contributions of potato farming were estimated separate of potato processing. Potato processing is an important sector in PEI; it impacts the service industries that support their operations. The additional contribution of potato processing was estimated for the PEI and Canadian economy so that the results could be combined to provide a detailed view of the contribution of the PEI's potato sector.

The potato sector in PEI is a significant economic driver for the province.

In 2016, through its direct, indirect and induced impacts, the sector generated \$1.35 billion in PEI output, boosted the provincial GDP by over \$527 million, created 5,016 FTE jobs and generated \$48.9 million in taxes.

Nationally (i.e. the impact on Canada's economy including PEI), the analysis showed that PEI's potato sector generated about \$1.89 billion in output, boosted the national GDP by \$784.6 million, created 7,086 FTE jobs, and generated over \$73 million in taxes.

From a policy perspective, policies are needed to support projects that enhance the sustainability of the potato sector in PEI, given that it is a vital economic driver of the province's economy. These projects might include research to enhance economic growth of this sector and invest in promoting PEI's potato nationally and internationally to a diverse range of markets. It is also important to ensure that regulations that may be affecting growth and investment returns in the sector activities have been carefully examined to protect the environment and ensure sustainable economic growth. From a diversification perspective, it is important for PEI's potato sector to move to a more diverse production and January/February 2021 trade structure and to invest in exploring new international markets. A lack of diversification increases the sector's vulnerability to external shocks.

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# **Seed Regulation Modernization Initiative**

#### by Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator

As introduced in the previous issue of PEI Potato News, CFIA has begun what will be a several year process of modernizing the Seed Regulations. The Seed Regulatory Modernization Initiative seeks to conduct a full-scale review of the seed and seed potato system to strengthen existing requirements and ensure that it's still equipped to function within the context of our modern, fast-changing world. This review encompasses regulations for seeds covered by both Part 1 (Seeds other than Seed Potatoes) and Part II (Seed Potatoes) of the Seeds Act. The first phase of this initiative is the Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM) Needs Assessment Survey. This survey has been developed over the fall of 2020 through a working group involving CFIA staff and industry members. The survey will soon be live on the CFIA website and we strongly encourage all seed producers to have their say by completing the survey. Please go to:

# www.inspection.gc.ca

and look for the link. We expect the survey will be up until March 31, 2021.

While the survey is ongoing, the Seed Potato Regulation Modernization Working Group is convening Task Teams to look at various sections of the current regulations in detail. They will use survey response information as well as knowledge of Task Team members to provide recommendations to maintain regulations as is, or changes that would modernize that section of the regulations, avoid duplication and increase efficiency.

Some of the key themes for the various Task Teams include:

- Field inspection: application for crop inspection, conditions for crop inspection, etc.
- Certification: standards for classes, importation for certification
- Movement of seed potatoes.
- Traceability: tuber storage, tags, record of bulk movement, shipment of non-registered

varieties.

- **Grading:** standards for tubers, tuber grade sizes, and packaging.
- Variety registration.
- Lab capacity and testing requirements.

The Task Teams will participate in virtual meetings spread over the spring and summer to help develop drafts of recommended revisions to the regulations that will then be made available for wider consultation. The knowledge of seed growers who deal with the CFIA Seed Potato Regulations on a regular basis will be most helpful for these Task Teams.

Regulation review does not happen frequently. It is important that growers have input if you feel either that the regulations are doing their job and the status quo should be maintained or if you feel changes are required. If any PEI seed potato growers are interested in participating in a particular Task Team please contact Mary Kay at (902) 892-6551.



# **Cleaning & Disinfection**

#### by Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator

It has become a point of pride in the Canadian seed industry that we rarely see visual symptoms of Bacterial Ring Rot (BRR) anymore. If we do get infections, they are found through the lab test required for seed certification purposes. In the 1960's and 1970's, BRR was a common occurrence on potato farms in Eastern Canada (Figure 1.) We reached the low levels today because of the efforts that more senior members of our industry will remember from that time: the BRR eradication programs that were instituted in several provinces to move away from the physical loss of potatoes due to rot, the adoption of the BRR lab test as part of the Canadian Seed Potato Certification program, and the implementation of stringent controls that include decertification of all seed lots on a farm with a positive test and prescriptive cleanup and disinfection protocols to break the cycle.

Due to the nature of the potato crop we deal with, many disease issues every year are influenced by new variety susceptibility, some by environmental conditions, and some by genetic changes in the pathogen. Disease control recommendations for most pathogens almost always include the use of certified seed and following cleaning and disinfection protocols. However, as disease concerns ebb and flow, so does the priority that we attach to voluntary cleaning and disinfecting activities.

In 2013, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in



*Figure 1: Incidence of Bacterial Ring Rot in Eastern Canada, 1965-1997. Source: Canadian Food Inspection Agency.* 

collaboration with the Canadian Potato Council developed the Producer Guide to the National Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for Potato Growers, a booklet that is available from the Potato Board Office or on-line. Several of the suggestions from this booklet are included in the following recommendations.

Seed potatoes and soil are the main pathways for transmission of many potato diseases. Farmers may limit possible transmission by planting certified seed, controlling the movement of people, vehicles and equipment and following disposal plans for waste water, soil and plant material.

### **Cleaning & Disinfection:**

- Cleaning is the first and most important step to get the maximum benefit of the application of disinfectant. Remove all dirt and debris and clean surfaces thoroughly. A pressure washer will help to penetrate cracks and fissures in porous material such as wood.
- General Storage Disinfectant (ACTIVE INGREDIENT: n-Alkyl [40%C12, 50%C14, 10%C16] dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride - 10.0%) is registered in Canada for use in potato storages to control against BRR.
- 3. Follow label directions for rates and application procedures, which include applying the solution liberally to all surfaces and ensuring that all surfaces are thoroughly saturated and remain wet for at least 20 minutes to break down bacterial films.

Several pathogens such as Bacterial Ring Rot and Pectobacterium (blackleg) will spread during the seed cutting process. Practices such as continuous disinfecting of cutting blades reduces bacterial numbers, but there can be so much organic matter that builds up on blades during the set cutting process that disinfectants are inactivated quickly and disease spread can still take place.

One of the Best Management Practices to minimize disease spread during cutting is to thoroughly clean and disinfect the set cutter and surrounding area between handling of different seed lots.

## **Seed Potatoes:**

- 1. Plant certified seed.
- 2. Be aware of the seed production history of the farm from which you purchase seed.
- 3. Learn the disease susceptibilities of new varieties before planting.
- 4. Follow Canadian Food Inspection Agency requirements for disinfection when transporting seed and storing seed prior to planting.
- 5. Thoroughly clean and disinfect the work area and equipment between handling of different seed lots.

### Movement of People, Vehicles and Equipment:

- 1. Thoroughly clean and disinfect any new equipment coming on to your farm property.
- 2. Train staff in proper cleaning and disinfection procedures for themselves and visitors.
- Ensure that visitors to your farm are aware of your protocols for people and vehicles coming onto farm properly - provide a hose for rinsing off tires and make boot brushes and disinfectant foot baths available and ensure that they are used.

# Waste Disposal (water, plant and soil):

- 1. All waste disposal should be done in accordance with federal, provincial and municipal legislation.
- Culls could be buried according to provincial regulations, fed to cattle, composted or spread on a field in late fall or early winter - if spreading is an option they should be spread back on the field that they came from.
- 3. Tare soil should be buried according to local regulations or returned to the field of origin.
- 4. Sediment from washing should be disposed of in a burial site or in an area that will not be used for potato production.

Several years ago the Board held workshops and prepared short videos on different aspects of disinfection and biosecurity for potato growers. These videos are currently available on YouTube:

#### https://www.tinyurl.com/PEI-biosecurity-videos

The Canadian Potato Council is planning a webinar to take place in mid to late February to review the latest research on disinfection and cleaning practices. Details will be sent out to growers when they are available.

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# **PMRA Final Decisions**

The Final Decisions for the Re-evaluation of Mancozeb and Linuron have been published by the PMRA. You can find the documents here: https://www.canada.ca/en/ health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/reportspublications/pesticides-pest-management/decisionsupdates/reevaluation-decision/2020/mancozeb.html. The following summaries were provided by the Canadian Horticultural Council.

### **Mancozeb Final Decision**

The proposed re-evaluation decision for Mancozeb was published in 2018, and all uses were proposed to be cancelled. Stakeholder comments and new data submitted to the PMRA resulted in revisions to risk assessments, which resulted in changes to the proposed decision.

Many CHC members filled in surveys, charts, and helped shape the CHC comments and data, for which we are very grateful. Your efforts made a difference to the outcome of the re-evaluation.

In summary, the registration of mancozeb is continued with the following risk mitigation measures:

- Acceptable for continued use: foliar applications on potatoes, apples, onion, sugar beets, ginseng, field cucumbers, field tomatoes, grapes, pumpkin, squash, melon (including cantaloupe, excluding watermelon), and in-furrow application to onions
- Cancelled due to lack of support from manufacturer: all seed treatments (incl. potato), greenhouse use, pears, carrots, celery, lettuce, watermelon, lentil, wheat, alfalfa grown for seed, ornamentals, forestry, all applications using handheld equipment, and wettable powders or dusts

Other risk mitigation measures include:

- Reduced use pattern (lower rates and number of applications), new PHIs, added engineering controls, increased PPE, no handheld equipment, longer REIs for certain crops and activities, revision of MRLs for supported crops, revocation of MRLs for unsupported crops, and added buffer zones
- Labels will be updated within 24 months. Users have 24 months from day of publication to transition to using newly amended labels for the modified/continued applications (Nov 19, 2022)
- Cancelled labels will be phased out:
  - November 19, 2021: last day of sale by registrant
  - November 19, 2022: last day of retail sale

 November 19, 2023: last day for application of cancelled uses.

New Supported Use Pattern: Mancozeb

Maximum Rate	# Applications	Interval between
(kg ai/ha)	per year	applications
1.69	8	5
4.5	4	7
1.69	6	7
6.6	1	-
1.69	5	7
3.3	6	14
2.44	3	7
2.44	2	7
2.25	1	-
2.44	3	7
2.44	3	7
2.44	2	7
2.44	3	1
	Maximum Rate (kg ai/ha) 1.69 4.5 1.69 6.6 1.69 3.3 2.44 2.44 2.25 2.44 2.44 2.44 2.44 2.44	Maximum Rate       # Applications         (kg ai/ha)       per year         1.69       8         4.5       4         1.69       6         6.6       1         1.69       5         3.3       6         2.44       3         2.44       2         2.44       3         2.44       3         2.44       3         2.44       3         2.44       3         2.44       3         2.44       3

# **Linuron Final Decision**

PMRA has published the Final Re-evaluation Decision document for linuron (RVD2020-10) that includes label amendments as risk mitigation measures.

For potatoes, the required label amendments as a result of Re-evaluation and Special Review are:

- the maximum application rate is reduced from 4.5 L/ha (1.8 L/ac) to 3.7 L/ha (1.5 L/ac);
- there is a limit of 77 kg a.i. or 160 litres handled/ applied per person per day. At the maximum application rate of 3.7 L/ha (1.5 L/ac), a maximum of 43 ha (106 ac) could be applied by one person in a day;
- the re-entry interval (REI) has been set to 4 days;
- the buffer zones required between the treated area and sensitive habitats are:
  - 5m for freshwater habitat less than 1m in depth and 1m for greater than 1m depth;
  - 1m for estuarine/marine habitat;
  - 4m for terrestrial habitat.

The amended labels must be in place within 24 months of the publication of the final decision (November 5, 2022).

Also, in addition to potatoes, uses that were retained are carrots, parsnips, asparagus, shelter belts and uses that are to be discontinued include tree fruit, field and sweet corn, cereal crops.

# **Operation Pollinator:** Planting Pollinator Refuges

Operation Pollinator, a Syngenta program focused on research and partnerships to promote the health and well-being of bees and other pollinating insects, is expanding its footprint in Prince Edward Island through a partnership with the PEI Potato Board.

The program's mandate is to support activities that enhance biodiversity, habitat and other practical initiatives that can contribute to healthy pollinator populations. Operation Pollinator offers a practical and meaningful way to increase and improve biodiversity on the farm.

Interested producers agree to convert up to two acres of lower-productivity land to establish a dedicated Operation Pollinator site. They receive a provision of high-quality, pollinator-friendly commercial seed, agronomic advice, and financial assistance to help offset site establishment costs.

"We know that agriculture depends on biodiversity, and the Operation Pollinator program is a key component of our commitment to sustainable agriculture," explains Erin McGregor, stewardship and policy manager with Syngenta Canada. "We are very excited to be partnering with the PEI Potato Board this spring on their delivery of the program."

One out of every three bites of food that we eat is made possible by pollination. That is why programs like Operation Pollinator are so important. Farms provide great potential to create essential habitat and food sources for a range of native bees and pollinating insects.

For more information on the 2021 Operation Pollinator program in PEI or if you are interested in enrolling, please contact Ryan Barrett at the PEI Potato Board office. Seed will be delivered directly to participating growers prior to the planting season. In the summer, a Board staff member will visit farms to validate that the pollinator refuge has been planted and install Operation Pollinator signs. After this validation is complete, the \$200 per acre payment up to a maximum of two acres per grower will be issued.



#### Operation Pollinator is a trademark of a Syngenta Group Company. © 2021 Syngenta

Operation



# What's in the mix?





**Alsike Clover** 

**Birdsfoot Trefoil** 





Phacelia

Red Clover





Timothy

Sweet Clover

# Application Deadline: March 15th, 2021

# **AgriWatershed Partnership Update**

#### by Gwen Vessey

In the last PEI AgriWatershed Partnership update in July 2020, we reported the AWP was in the pre-planning phase on two land management BMP demonstration projects.

In early September, the projects, both of which focused on soil conservation structures, were completed. The first project was on a farm owned by J & S Visser Inc. of Orwell. The field is located in Uigg. Farm owner Stephen Visser and Clarence Ryan, Coordinator with the Pisquid River Enhancement watershed group, had been discussing some possible measures to address impacts to the nearby watercourse from the field. Clarence promoted the site to the AgriWatershed Partnership, and when contacted, J & S Visser immediately agreed to participate in the project. Tobin Stetson, P.Eng. Soil & Water Engineer with the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land, worked with Stephen to develop a soil conservation plan that controls erosion, protects the stream, and aligns well with the farm equipment and the way the field is cropped.

The second demonstration site is in Red Point, in a field owned by Arthur Mooney & Sons Ltd., of Saint Catherines. Fred Cheverie, Coordinator with the Souris & Area Branch of the PEI Wildlife Federation, has a long history of working with farmers in the Souris area. He was key to promoting the idea of a pilot project on the Mooney property. The Mooney farm operation has installed numerous soil conservation systems over the years, so they were comfortable getting involved with this project. PEIDAL Soil & Water engineers; Janeen McGuigan, P.Eng. and Tyler Wright P.Eng. provided



J&S Visser soil conservation project site.



the project's technical services, including a central grassed waterway with short terraces to confine the overland flow and establishing a rock chute to stabilize a bank incision at the outlet.

Based on the framework established by the 2020 demonstration projects, the AgriWatershed Partnership is launching a BMP Support Program for the 2021 growing season. Project proposals are now being accepted for fields near watercourses or wetlands. The Program offers support for eligible soil conservation measures, similar to the Canada PEI Agriculture Stewardship Program. Projects will be selected based on their potential to improve the local environment by addressing identified runoff impacts. Funding for eligible expenses will be rebated at a rate of 75%. Details of the AWP-BMP Support Program can be found on the new AgriWatershed Partnership website at https://peiawp.com/ Applications will be received until

Friday, February 26th, 2021.

To complement the work on refining a list of best management practices for agricultural cropping near watercourses, the AWP is currently coordinating the update of the 1999 reference booklet, Soil Conservation for Potato Production -Best Management Practices. The revised document is due out in February and will be available in printed form and on the AWP website.

The AWP Steering Committee meets monthly and is continuing to work on several other initiatives to help the agriculture and watershed communities improve the health of PEI's soil and water resources.

For more information visit the PEI AgriWatershed Partnership website at https://peiawp.com/, contact us at email: info@peiawp.com or Follow us on Twitter: PEI AgriWatershed Partnership @watershed.

# RE Contraction of the second s



# **RELIABLE INOCULANTS** MYCORRHIZAE • APPLICATION EQUIPMENT

AGTIV POTATO

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# **Marketing Report**

#### by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

It's good to be back from maternity leave, and back at the office. It's been a busy year in many ways, and there have been lots of changes in the marketplace that I couldn't have been fathomed when I left. Kaley and Mark did an awesome job adapting the marketing plan to respond to the "new normal." There are some very cool projects underway and I get to show you!

#### **A New Commercial**

Over the last few years, we were able to get our money's worth out of the spot we filmed in 2016, however it was time for an update. Having a new set of eyes on the marketing approach while I was away was beneficial because we have a new commercial that has a new direction – aimed more at the end consumer. It's fresh, uses kids, a little humor, and focuses on the final product. It's a whole new message that's very exciting and was filmed this fall on PEI. We will be using this imaging in the coming months, so look for it. You can watch it here:

#### https://www.tinyurl.com/made to enjoy



To go along with the commercial, we will be promoting the commercial through a strategic online media plan targeting consumers in Ontario & Atlantic Canada so people will be able to see it! We will also be airing TV locally, so you will see it this winter. The air dates are: Jan 18 – March 18.

#### **New Retail Promotion!**

We wanted to put something together to have a little more impact at retail, given the strength of grocery stores these days. We wanted to keep it very simple – for both the consumer and the packer. In Willy Wonka-style, we will be putting winning tickets in bags of potatoes destined for the marketplace, and people can go online to see what they won! We will also have a micro-website for people to enter online. The Grand Prize is a trip for two to Fall Flavours (when travel is allowed again) and 20 secondary prizes of Meyer Pots and PEI Potato gift pack, worth \$250 each! Thanks to Tourism PEI and Meyer Canada for coming on as Prize Sponsors! I will be sending out a note to packers soon with tickets and instructions, so watch for that. We filmed a complementary promotional ad that will run in tandem with the brand spot:

#### https://www.tinyurl.com/golden-ticket-potato

#### **Canada's Food Island Cookbook**

This has been a long time in development, and we are finally seeing the end result. We couldn't be happier with how it has turned out. The recipes, photography, and overall look of this gorgeous book, with all PEI products, fisher and farmers, and Island scenes is making this book a total show-stopper and I can't wait to share it. This book will help solidify our place as Canada's Food Island. It's a great example of the power of collaboration, with contributions from all different food industries, government and associations working together to produce something great.

#### **Virtual Reality**

This is a project that I am so excited to tell you about. After seeing some of the 3D virtual reality footage that was filmed this fall of the harvesting process at the Lawless farm, and the plans to film more of the growing and packing process, I was absolutely blown away. The incredible technology to LITERALLY put someone in the driver's seat or on farm in the middle of the action in truly astounding. The equipment and technology used is cutting edge. We will be cutting several 2-3 minute videos that will require Virtual Reality goggles to view (though it can be viewed in non-VR as well) and will work on all modern platforms. The Virtual Reality goggle technology has come a long way - they can be purchased for your phone for as low as \$20 now. We will be sending these to our buyers that can't travel to see us, so they can still get the PEI Potatoes experience. The educational, trade, and retail potential is enormous. I truly can't wait to show you all!

It's been a challenging year for us all in so many ways. From a marketing perspective, a (small) silver lining of Covid has been the boost to retail potato sales as consumer's cook from home.

Thanks to you all for your support. I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year, and all the best for a healthy and prosperous 2021.

# Canadian Holdings as of January 1, 2021 ('000 cwt)

					20-21 vs.
	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>19-20</u>
PEI	18,095	16,650	17,550	15,009	-14.5%
New Brunswick	11,106	10,309	10,294	7,061	-31.4%
Nova Scotia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Maritimes	29,201	26,959	27,844	22,070	-20.7%
Quebec	7,898	7,440	7,986	7,603	-4.8%
Ontario	4,431	3,777	4,016	4,472	11.4%
Total Eastern Canada (inc. Maritimes)	41,530	38,176	39,846	34,145	-14.3%
Manitoba	13,589	12,160	12,240	14,568	19.0%
Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	N/A
Alberta	15,916	15,335	16,022	14,711	-8.2%
British Columbia	618	813	675	747	10.7%
Total Western Canada	30,123	28,308	28,937	30,026	3.8%
CANADA TOTAL	71,653	66,484	68,783	64,171	-6.7%

# Prince Edward Island Disposition as of December 31, 2020 (cwt)

	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	20-21 vs. <u>19-20</u>
Production	24,463,000	22,600,000	24,302,000	21,000,000	-13.6%
Canadian Shipments	741,639	727,298	782,837	996,089	27.2%
U.S. Shipments	1,002,224	800,733	769,994	1,047,105	36.0%
Export Shipments	332,627	468,478	402,741	275,588	-31.6%
Total Fresh	2,076,490	1,996,509	1,955,572	2,318,782	18.6%
Processing / Local Use	3,645,953	3,344,394	3,977,875	3,065,848	-22.9%
Seed for Next Crop	0	0	0	0	
Cullage	645,376	608,830	818,629	606,452	-25.9%
Total Disposition as of December 31	6,367,818	5,949,733	6,752,076	5,991,082	-11.3%
Holdings at January 1	18,095,182	16,650,267	17,549,924	15,008,918	-14.5%

# Projected Utilization as of January 1, 2021 (cwt)

<b>Projected Utilization as of January 1 (cwt)</b>					
Fresh	4,777,260	3,983,608	5,103,983	3,597,117	-29.5%
Processing	11,394,608	10,636,982	10,488,820	9,540,169	-9.0%
Seed	1,923,313	2,029,677	1,957,122	1,871,632	-4.4%



LES PRODUCTEURS UNIS DE POMMES DE TERRE DU CANADA

# The Canadian Potato Pile in 2021 by Kevin MacIsaac, General Manager

The supply of Canadian potatoes available to market as we head into the heart of winter is down substantially this year. Overall, as a country, we are down 4.8 million hundred weight, or 7% below 3-yr. averages. The Eastern provinces are responsible for a big portion of that reduction as we all recognize the damage caused by the hot, dry, summer of 2020.

The most significant decrease is in the province of New Brunswick, which has one third less potatoes than their 3-yr. average, (7 million cwt vs. 10.5 million cwt). This is the lowest January 1 inventory since 1991. Prince Edward Island follows with 13.9% less potatoes (2.5 million cwt less) on January 1st, making it the lowest January inventory since 2002, which many of us remember as the crop from "the year of the drought". The province of Quebec shows a 2.2% decrease after having to leave part of their acreage in the field at harvest time. Alberta stocks on hand are surprisingly 6.6% below average; however, their reduction is more related to rapid early movement of both their processing and seed crop.

On the positive side, Manitoba shows an increase of 15% over their 3-yr. average; however, their stocks increase is still not enough to prevent the need to import potatoes on a weekly basis into the province. British Columbia holdings are 6.4% above average, the result of a good crop. Finally, potato piles in Ontario warehouses are almost 10% above average, as a result of good yields for both chip and table potatoes in the storage area of the province.

So how do the above stats affect the marketing and shipment of potatoes going forward?

Not surprisingly given the lower supply, disappearance for the Maritime provinces in the month of December is 19.4% below last year. As a country, disappearance in December was down 6.5% below that of December 2019.

At this point, potatoes destined for processing are seemingly most limited. The country has 9.4% less potatoes (4.4 million cwt less) than 3-yr. averages. New Brunswick again leads the category decline at -39%, P.E.I. at -12%, and Alberta at -15%. With shorter supply, several French

Fry plants have been taking down time for scheduled maintenance and line upgrades. Others, such as the new Simplot plant and McCain plant in Manitoba, have been importing potatoes since harvest from Alberta, North Dakota, and Idaho. Fryers are taking a more cautious approach this year as they wait for reaction by the food service restaurants to the second wave of COVID-19. Processing usage is now approaching pre-pandemic levels, even with December disappearance being down 9% below last year. Processing potatoes destined for chips appear to be in good supply although there may need to be some regional shifts from Ontario and Quebec to New Brunswick and P.E.I.

Potatoes available for table use are down 1.8% below 3-yr. averages for the country; however, there is a large decline in P.E.I. stocks at -22%. New Brunswick would be expected to show even greater declines; however, potatoes were imported from Quebec earlier in the fall to stockpile storages in that province. Quebec fresh holdings currently show an increase of 2.6%; however, it is widely anticipated that fields dug after very cold temperatures could have storage issues and also contain more off type tubers in the crop, leading to lower pack outs. Manitoba, largely a red producer, shows an increase of 24% above average fresh holdings, indicative of slower movement in this year's red potato market.

Finally, seed needed to plant the upcoming crop will be tight. Seed stocks on January 1 are down 2% below 3-yr. averages. All four eastern provinces show declines, led by New Brunswick at -37%. Alberta produced a good seed crop, with their stocks up 19.5% even after record movement to date. Many seed growers in Canada report being completely booked for seed sales.

Look for further market updates from Canada, United States, and Europe at our virtual Canadian Spud Congress on February 24. Register at https://canadianspudcongress. ca.



# Weed Control in PEI Potato Rotations

2020 was a very challenging year for Prince Edward Island potato producers when it came to managing weeds. Dry weather after potato planting resulted in many pre-emergence herbicides to not be very effective. In addition, a number of growers battled a range of weed species that they have not previously had an issue with, requiring a re-assessment of herbicide options and cultural practices.

On January 12th and 13th, AIM hosted a series of local workshops on the topic of weed management. Guest speaker was Dr. Andrew McKenzie-Gopsill, Weed Scientist with AAFC in Charlottetown. Over three in-person meetings as well as a live-streamed meeting via Zoom, Andrew reviewed some of the weeds of interest to PEI potato growers, current herbicide options, managing herbicide resistance, and some of his current research interest in cultural weed management tools. These are some of the highlights from his presentation. A recording of the presentation is available on the PEI Potato Agronomy website along with a PDF copy of the slide deck. Please refer to the label for the correct rates and usage of any herbicide product.

# **Herbicide Options:**

# EPTC (Eptam 8E) | Group 8

- Applied before planting. Has to be soil incorporated and doesn't need rainfall for activation.
- Primarily targets grasses, with moderate activity on corn spurry, lamb's quarters, nightshades, and pigweed.
- Provides season long control, can be tank-mixed with Sencor

# Metribuzin (Sencor, Matrix, Tricor, etc) | Group 5

- Can apply from planting up to emergence for both pre and postemergence weed control.
- Uptake primarily from the roots, with some uptake via foliage
- Rainfall needed for full activation, need heat and sunlight to maximize efficacy
- Controls a broad spectrum of broadleaves and annual grasses, but significant evidence of resistant lamb's quarters populations in PEI.

# Linuron (Lorox) | Group 7

- Can apply from planting up to emergence for both pre and postemergence weed control.
- Uptake primarily from the roots, much less by foliage.
- Rainfall needed to move product into the root zone. Too much rainfall can cause injury to potatoes on low organic matter soils.
- Investigating potential resistant lamb's quarters populations.
- Recently re-registered by PMRA with a few minor label changes.

# S-metolachlor (Dual II Magnum) | Group 15

• Can apply from before planting up until ground crack.



Potato field with significant presence of mature lamb's quarters and red root pigweed in 2020 (photo by Ryan Barrett)



Herbicide efficacy trial at AAFC Harrington Farm in 2019. Photo courtesy Andrew McKenzie-Gopsill, AAFC.

# **Additional Resources:**

(links on PEI Potato Agronomy site)

PEI Pest Control Guide for Potatoes PEI Dept of Agriculture & Land

Guide to Weed Control: Hort Crops OMAFRA (Pub 75B)

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Weed ID Guide for Ontario Crops
OMAFRA
```

- Primarily effective on annual grasses, some effect on nightshades and pigweed.
- Rainfall required within 10 days for maximum activity, can be soil incorporated
- Can be tank-mixed with Lorox or Sencor to improve control of grasses
- Boundary LQD is a pre-mix of S-metolachlor + metribuzin

## Glyphosate (Roundup, Touchdown, etc) | Group 9

- Contact herbicide with no residual activity and no selectivity. Only effective if the weed is emerged.
- Can be applied pre-plant or pre-emerge before ground crack. Do not apply after ground crack.
- Because it is absorbed through the foliage and translocated through the plant, it should be applied when plants are actively growing. For perennial species, it may take some time to move throughout the plant and into the roots.

# Glufosinate (Ignite) | Group 10

- Contact herbicide with no residual activity and no selectivity. Only effective if the weed is emerged.
- Can be applied pre-plant or pre-emerge before ground crack. Do not apply after ground crack.
- Better option on annual species than perennial, as it doesn't tend to translocate through the plant. More of a "burn-down" option.

# Dimethenamid-P (Outlook/Frontier Max) | Group 15

- Can be applied after planting before potato emergence.
- Only effective if applied to soil before weeds are emerged. Effective on annual grasses and some broadleaf species (pigweed, nightshades).
- Rainfall required within 7-10 days after application, some shallow cultivation can be done to soil incorporate.
- In PEI and NB trials over two years, showed about a 10% yield boost compared with weed-free check strips.
- Can be tank mixed with Sencor or Lorox to improve grass control.

# Fomesafen (Reflex) | Group 14

- Can be applied at planting up to potato emergence. More effective after weeds are emerged. Post-emergence control of ragweed, wild mustard, Eastern black nightshade. Not good for lamb's quarters.
- Should be applied at 3-4 leaf stage or earlier for most broadleaf weeds.
- 70 day post harvest interval. Can only be used once every two years.

# Notes on Integrated Weed Management:

1. Everyone is well aware of the benefits of crop rotation. However, it's important to also rotate herbicides. By using different herbicide groups on different crops, it can help prevent the development of herbicide resistant weed populations. Important to know what group your herbicide is in and rotate groups, not just products.



different levels of herbicide rotation

2. Research at Harrington has shown that both buckwheat and brown mustard grown the year before potatoes significantly reduced weed populations in the potato crop, compared with timothy or a multi-species mixture. Cover crop termination by discing also tended to maximize the reduction in weed populations.

3. Research is ongoing at AAFC on the use of alternative practices to prevent weeds from producing viable seeds, including above-canopy mowing or wick-weeding with concentrated contact herbicides.

# Sulfentrazone + metribuzin (Sencor STZ) | Group 14 + 5

- Only effective as pre-emerge herbicide. Not effective on weeds that have already emerged.
- Provides control of broadleaf weeds that might be resistant to metribuzin alone, such as lamb's quarters, pigweed, wild buckwheat.
- Applied after planting with minimum of 1 inch of soil covering potatoes, no soil incorporation.
- Requires rain or irrigation for maximum efficacy.
- STZ is persistent in the soil and can last for years. Wait a minimum of 24 months before reapplying to the same field. Additional rules on the label relating to plant-back restrictions and usage requirements.

### Group 1 Grass Herbicides (Arrow, Select, Poast, etc)

- Post-emergence control of grasses only (no broadleaf species)
- No injury on potatoes.
- Poast labelled for annual grasses as well as perennial grasses (like quackgrass)
- Check post application harvest restrictions. Generally, 60-80 days before harvest.

# Rimsulfuron (Prism) | Group 2

- Can be used from potato emergence up until flowering. Post-emergence control of annual grasses and some broadleaf species.
- While the label says that it can be used on 2-3 leaf stage lamb's quarters and pigweed, efficacy on these weeds in recent years has not been great.
- Can be tank-mixed with Sencor. Can injure potatoes, particularly if already stressed.
- Widespread resistance to Group 2 herbicides reported worldwide.

### For more information, visit the PEI Potato Agronomy site at www.peipotatoagronomy.com

published January 15th, 2021. Compiled by Ryan Barrett, PEI Potato Board

# **Canadian Potato Council Launches**

# Potato Research Cluster Knowledge Transfer Website

The Research Working Group of the Canadian Potato Council (CPC) recently announced the launch of a new bilingual website to inform Canadian potato producers on the research that is underway in the Canadian AgriScience Cluster for Horticulture 3, as well as sharing the latest updates on research progress from each of the project leads.

On this website, each of the eight Cluster research activities is introduced. Each activity page includes early outcomes of cluster project research, key messages for growers, and links to periodic research updates as well as additional extension materials relating to each activity. The eight research activities included in CHC's Cluster 3 include:

- Generate and Evaluate Integrated Pest Management Tools for Wireworm Control in Potatoes in Canada
- Canadian Potato Early Dying Network (CanPEDNet)
- Potato Variety Evaluation
- Late Blight: Tracking Pathogen Strains and their Characteristics
- Development of Regional Management Strategies and Decision Making Tools for Control of Colorado Potato Beetle
- Increasing Profitability of Canadian Potato Producers by Controlling Common Scab
- Investigating the Occurrence and Distribution of Potato Tuber Necrosis-Inducing Viruses in Canada
- Enhancement of Canadian Potato Industry through Smart Agriculture

# Visit the bilingual website: www.potatoresearchcluster.ca

# An Update From the: PEI Department of Agriculture and Land



by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator

For this issue, I sought out information from my colleagues in the Sustainable Agriculture Section to talk about some of their activities. I'd like to thank Peter Webb and Hardy Strom for their contributions to this article.

My favourite time of year on PEI has always been spring. It marks the start of a new season for our three main industries – farming, tourism and fishing. Islanders emerge from hibernation and there's an energy and excitement in the air. In spring, one of my favourite sights when travelling the Island is the fresh, green growth across the landscape.

This past fall resembled spring on the Island, with so many farmers investing in winter cover crops. We did have favourable conditions for establishment, but that shouldn't detract from the increased efforts producers made to plant cover crops. The PEIDAL offers funding to support this activity, and I want to congratulate potato farmers, who made up 73% of applicants to the program. Additionally, my colleagues who work on this program have informed me that most growers planted far more than the three field limit the program is able to fund, showing a real interest in investing in soil cover.

Applications for 2021 will be accepted starting April 1, 2021. For information on programs like the Winter Cover or Spring Tillage, growers can contact my colleague Peter



A well established cover crop in winter 2021. Photo: L. MacKinnon.

Webb at 902-316-1600 (he's filling Kyra Stiles' parental leave), or go to our website:

https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/service/ agriculture-stewardship-program

# PEIDAL Soil Health Analysis Package Submitted by Hardy Strom, Soil Health Research Coordinator

In Fall of 2019 the PEI Soil Health Analysis package became available to the public. This was made possible by the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land, in partnership with Cornell University and the Atlantic Soil Health Laboratory. The package consists of 5 newly developed soil health tests, as well as a detailed soil chemical analysis. As the name suggests, these tests assess the overall health of the soil as a functioning agro-ecological system. Since its inception, the soil health lab has processed over 1300 soil samples from 112 growers and producer groups.

Soil health analysis can help identify soil quality issues that may be causing crop limitations; limitations could be nutrient related, or caused by physical or biological soil parameters. These parameters can affect how well soil can hold water and nutrients, resist environmental stressors like drought and heavy precipitation, and actively cycle nutrients and crop residues. In the past, the lab could only assess the nutrient status of soil. This new analysis gives growers another tool in the toolbox when it comes to making well rounded management decisions on farm. When considering soil health, you are in turn considering long term sustainability, not just for the soil but for the Island in general.

Unlike the traditional nutrient analysis, soil health analysis is focused on determining the soils ability to function as an ecosystem, so recommendations are more long term, and require assessing the individual soil's distinct needs and limitations. Many of the soil health based recommendations are in line with soil conservation beneficial management practices that are currently encouraged and funded by the Department of Agriculture and Land. These recommendations include winter cover cropping, reduced/ spring tillage, and increased crop residue in the soil. These practices focus on creating an appropriate environment for soil biota, which are responsible for the most important soil functions such as nutrient cycling, disease resistance, and



maintaining a soil's porousness.

PEI growers with a valid gas tax number are able to have their soil health analysis 100% funded. As soil health testing requires a tandem soil nutrient analysis, growers still do have to pay the fee (\$11 for island growers) for that nutrient analysis sample. It's important to remember that since these samples are connected at the lab, they should be sampled at the same time and from the same area, to ensure a uniform result. This is a great time to have your soil health tested, as the full price for non-island growers is \$135.50, plus the nutrient analysis fee. More detail on the analysis package, sampling information, as well as request forms can be accessed at the PEI Analytics Lab, or on the provincial website under PEIAL.

Soil Health Analysis Uptake, 2019-2021: Total samples – 1320 2019-2020 – 597 2020-2021 – 723

112 growers have used the program; however this number is most likely higher due to multiple growers submitting under co-ops, corporations, and watershed groups.

# Canadian Agriculture Partnership Program Reminder

To wrap up this article, I'd like to remind producers that there are two years remaining in the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP) funding agreement (2018-2023). Some producers may be approaching the limit of funding available to them through this five year agreement, while others have yet to participate. In addition to some of the Agriculture Stewardship programs listed above, there's an entire suite of funding programs to assist producers with business development, research and innovation on farm. As Potato Industry Coordinator, it's my job to help potato producers maneuver through the application process, so feel free to reach out. The program year runs from April 1 to March 31.

# **Upcoming Events**

Please call the Board at (902) 892-6551 for further information on any of these events. In person events require pre-registration to ensure public health guidelines for gathering limits are met.

# February 2021

# Feb 3, 2021

# **Canadian Potato Summit**

https://www.potatoesincanada.com/virtualevents/canadian-potato-summit/

# Feb 9 & Feb 10

AIM Local Workshops: Soil Building Crops Feb 9 - Emerald Community Centre (9 AM) and Mill River Resort (1:30 PM)

Feb 10 - St. Peters Community Centre (9 AM) and PEI Potato Board Office (1:30 PM)

# mid to late February Date TBA

CPC Biosecurity Webinar

# Feb 24-25, 2021

**2021 Canadian Spud Congress** https://canadianspudcongress.ca/

# March 2021

# March 9 & Mar 10

# AIM Local Workshops: Seed Management

Feb 9 - Emerald Community Centre (9 AM) and Mill River Resort (1:30 PM)

Feb 10 - St. Peters Community Centre (9 AM) and PEI Potato Board Office (1:30 PM)

# Mar 16-17, 2021

Canadian Horticultural Council Annual Meeting https://www.hortcouncil.ca/

# Mar 23-24, 2021

Northeast Potato Technology Forum

https://northeastpotato.com/

# Industry Updates



# Announcing the PEI AgriWatershed Partnership Land Management BMP Support Program

The PEI AgriWatershed Partnership is an initiative of the PEI Federation of Agriculture and the PEI Watershed Alliance. The PEI AWP's primary goal is to foster collaboration between the agriculture and watershed communities to improve the health of soil and water resources on PEI.

The AgriWatershed Partnership is offering funding for the 2021 growing season for land management BMP implementation on fields within 200 metres of a designated watercourse or wetland. For approved projects, eligible costs incurred (see Program Guidelines on the PEI AWP website) will be rebated at a rate of 75%.

The AWP, BMP Support program will allocate funding on a "priority basis" rather than a first-come, first-served model. Project proposals will be evaluated and prioritized by their potential to improve the local ecosystem. Project review will be done by the AgriWatershed Partnership Technical Working Group. Technical assistance for approved projects will be provided by the Sustainable Agriculture Section of the PEI Department of Agriculture & Land, as is provided now with the Canadian Agricultural Partnership Agriculture Stewardship Program.

Landowners/farmers applying for funding will be required to seek endorsement of the project from their local watershed coordinator. Watershed coordinators wishing to nominate a site for funding will be required to engage the landowner/farmer in the project proposal and obtain their signature on the Application Information Form. Applications will be accepted until 4:00 pm, Friday, February 26th, 2021

For More Information, please visit the PEI AgriWatershed Partnership website at: https://peiawp. com, email: info@peiawp.com, telephone 902-394-7933.



# Pesticide Applicator

# Certificate Training 20/21

All Pesticide Courses will be delivered on-line only in 20/21 to meet COVID-19 Public Health Directives

Pesticide Applicator Certificates are valid for a five year period. The fee is \$75 per individual (HST included) for the 5-year certificate.

There are three ways to renew your Class A Pesticide Applicator Certificate and two to obtain a new license:

# **Option 1 - Renewal Only**

Attend Continuing Education Credit Training Days A & B (only one day per year) over the 5 year period.

**Option 2 - Renewal or New License** 

Take the on-line Pesticide Class A training course and write the exam.

# **Option 3 - Renewal or New License**

Make an appointment to write the exam with no training.

# Option 1:

Courses run from 9 AM to 4 PM and Pre-registration is required. Call Muriel Power at (902) 368-4154.

Day A February 9 and March 9, 2021

Day B February 11 and March 11, 2021

# Option 2:

Courses are offered through the University of Guelph. Training modules are available for a one week period and can be completed during that week at your convenience. Pre-registration is required. Call Muriel Power at (902) 368-4154. Courses are scheduled for the weeks of:

February 8, March 15 and March 22, 2021

# <u>Option 3 :</u>

An appointment can be made to write the two hour open book exam with no training by calling Debbie MacRae at (902) 368-5024 or Thane Clark at (902) 368-5599 at the Department of Environment, Water and Climate Change in Charlottetown.

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To learn more about Miravis<sup>®</sup> Duo fungicide, speak to your Syngenta Sales Representative, contact the Customer Interaction Centre at 1-87-SYNGENTA (1-877-964-3682) or follow @SyngentaCanada on Twitter.

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