

*Prince Edward Island*

March/April 2021  
Volume 22 Issue 2

# POTATO NEWS



Publications Mail Agreement # 40011377

## *In This Issue:*

- Variety Evaluation
- Award Winners
- Canadian Horticultural Council AGM



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# POTATO NEWS

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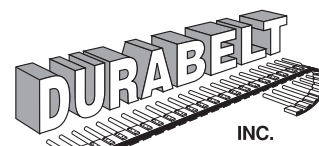
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Cover: Looking for a winner while harvesting the variety evaluation plots at AAFC Harrington Research Farm. Photo: E. Kouwenberg.



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# Chairman's Comments

by Wayne Townshend, PEI Potato Board Chairman



As I sit to write this volume's comments I look out my window to very little snow cover, if any. The river is free of ice, which it has been all winter; this is the first time that this has happened in many years! There is minor run off as the snow melts, which indicates very little frost in the ground. Looks like an early spring, but it may be too soon to tell... We can only hope that it's not an early spring followed by a dry summer. The 2020 season is not far from our minds - a season that brought minimal rainfall that resulted in crop reduction province wide.

It is hard for growers to get overly optimistic as spring and a new season are upon us with the issues the industry faced over the past several years in the back of our minds. The Board feels that it is positive news that the Province has proclaimed the Water Act. We were also pleased to see that the Act includes provision for research on high capacity wells for supplemental irrigation. We need our use of resources to be based on science and research, not on emotion. We have seen this clearly with how the world has dealt with COVID-19. It has been very disappointing to see local politicians and activists question the intent to do proper research on this issue. The Potato Board and the Federation of Agriculture continue to work to inform the public regarding facts on water and land issues. While we are pleased to hear that Environment Minister Myers has announced that research will begin, we need to start now to also develop a Water Strategy for Agriculture as one can only wonder how long these studies will take.

On March 10th, C.F.I.A. announced the removal of the suspension of shipments of PEI seed to the USA. This is not before we have lost most of our USA business for the 2020 crop. There is a feeling among some in the industry that the identification of a positive potato wart detection was premature with no positive tuber symptoms, no

positive bioassay test results and the fact that no resting spores were identified in any investigative testing after the initial detection. The detection was early and at a very low level, as the management plan was designed to find, and the spores may not in fact even be viable. Those tests are underway. The results of the suspension could lead to very little, if any, seed being shipped to the USA in coming years because of the risk of soil testing identifying problems that may not actually be viable disease. As well, buyers have had their faith shaken that they could not access the seed they had booked from our growers/dealers, and may go elsewhere in future. It's been a frustrating issue with short and long term impacts.

On a more positive note, we would like to thank the Province for establishing the Seed Potato Recovery Program, and the COVID-19 Mitigation Project for Potato Industry Sustainability, that provided assistance to the industry via some financial aid to seed growers who lost markets due to the uncertainty caused by COVID-19, and ensured the processing potatoes were purchased from contract growers as intended and used for food rather than being dumped with associated negative environmental issues. This assistance helped farmers to cope with the COVID-19 fallout.

As BRR can be a threat to any farm, I hope that each grower on Prince Edward Island practices some extra bio-security this spring when handling and transporting seed. Disinfection log books and slip books are available from the Board office.

It is promising to know that we have a new chemical registered to control wireworm for the 2021 season. Wireworm has become a major issue for farmers on PEI; and not only in potato crops, but other crops as well. The Potato Board was one of the sponsors of some of the field research work that contributed to this registration. We are pleased to see one more tool in the tool box to combat this pest, and it has very positive features from an environmental perspective.

I wish all fellow growers and farm employees a safe planting season. Old words of wisdom apply now more than ever – "only plant what you can sell". This year's market situation was ideal – more demand than supply. A return to normal yields in 2021 could tip the balance.



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# PEI Potato Board News

## Water Related Communications

The Prince Edward Island Potato Board welcomed the news that the Province has moved forward to proclaim the Water Act and enact regulations relating to the Act. The Water Act is a valuable piece of legislation which will enshrine in law the rights and responsibilities of Islanders with respect to water use and sustainability, and protect the Island's water resources.

Likewise, the Board is pleased to see that the Province will be moving forward with proposed research by the Canadian Rivers Institute and the University of Prince Edward Island on the impacts of high capacity wells for agricultural irrigation on the environment. Farmers are confident that this project will confirm for fellow Islanders in an open and transparent manner that responsible use of high capacity wells for supplemental irrigation can occur in Prince Edward Island without detrimental effects to household wells or flows to rivers and streams.

In addition, the announced enhancements to programming related to soil health is also most welcome. The Prince Edward Island Potato Board has been very involved in research and extension projects related to improving soil health, preventing soil erosion, and diversifying crop rotations for the past number of years in partnership with the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and others. We welcome these worthy investments in incentive programs that promote best management practices, soil health monitoring, and erosion control structures. A recent survey showed strong increases in the use of cover crops and soil building rotations on Island farms.

The extremely dry and hot summers in recent years have harmed a number of Island family farms. Islanders know the impact that the dry conditions have had on their lawns and gardens, and farmers have experienced those same challenges but on a scale that impacts their ability to continue to farm.

The Board has continued to work with the Federation of Agriculture to respond to items that have been published in traditional and online media in response to the proclamation of the Water Act. The Board and Federation feel that they need to respond to statements that are misleading or based on emotion rather than fact.

The Board welcomes the new research by the Canadian Rivers Institute and UPEI and urges government to begin the project this growing season. The development of a

supplemental irrigation strategy for Prince Edward Island agriculture needs to be an immediate priority.

## New Market Information Officer

Emmanuel Okpetu joined the Board on February 1, 2021 as the new Market Information Officer. This position had been vacant since last summer.

Emmanuel graduated from the Business Administration program at Holland College and was working in communications and customer service before accepting the position with the Potato Board. He has been busy learning the variety and format of information involved in buying and selling potatoes and how this summary information is used to generate reports for industry use.



The marketing section is now at full operation with Kendra back from maternity leave on a part-time basis and Mark Phillips sharing his time between marketing and market information duties. The Board welcomes Emmanuel to the team.

## CanadaGAP and GFSI

Shortly before the Canadian Horticultural Council AGM in mid March, a communique was sent from the CanadaGAP Food Safety program to remind members of the following change for 2021:

### ***Reminder of 2021 Program Change***

*A reminder that there will be a significant change to the audit passing score for CanadaGAP program participants who are certified to a GFSI-recognized option. These*

certification options include:

- Option B (Group Certification)
- Option C (Annual Audit)
- Option D for Repacking and Wholesaling

Starting April 1st, those requiring GFSI-recognized certificates must comply 100% with the audit checklist requirements. During the audit if full points have not been awarded for a requirement, corrective actions will need to be taken before certification can be granted. For more information, please refer to the 'Corrective Actions' page on the CanadaGAP website.

This change generated considerable discussion during the AGM and a late resolution was passed at the business meeting:

**LR2021-XX Impact of GFSI requirements on primary agricultural producers CARRIED**

CHC Board of Directors

WHEREAS the Canadian Horticultural Council designed and implemented CanadaGAP so that farmers could demonstrate the high level of safety measures and good agricultural practices undertaken on Canadian fruit and vegetable farms, and CanAgPlus currently owns and oversees the program; and

WHEREAS CanadaGAP has been benchmarked to GFSI for global recognition of the Canadian certification system, in answer to the requirement of farmers' customers; and

WHEREAS Version 9.0 of the CanadaGAP Audit Checklist comes into effect April 1st, 2021, and includes the stipulation that those requiring GFSI-recognized certificates must comply 100% with the audit checklist requirements; and

WHEREAS primary agricultural producers and businesses involved in farming and the pre-processing of plant products will be seriously challenged in achieving 100% compliance with the audit checklist requirements; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Horticultural Council is a member of the International Federation of Produce Standards,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Horticultural Council initiates dialogue with buyer representatives through the Canadian Produce Marketing Association and/or Retail Council of Canada, around expectations of major Canadian retailers that require GFSI and the necessity for primary agriculture to supply fruits and vegetables certified by GFSI or any GFSI benchmarked program,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Horticultural Council work globally with the International Federation of Produce Standards and nationally with the Canadian Produce Marketing Association, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and other primary agriculture organizations to pressure GFSI to create space at the table (e.g., GFSI Steering Committee, GFSI Stakeholder Advisory Forum) for representation from the primary production sector.

The Board continues to work with partners in the horticulture industry to support regulations that help keep the industry competitive and moving forward. However, these regulations need to serve the purpose for which they were put in place and not to place unrealistic or unneeded demands upon those participating in the program.

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# PEI Potato Industry Awards

## Peter McKenna

Peter McKenna grew up on the 48 Road in eastern PEI and learned the potato business from his father Terence and Uncle John. On leaving school in 1979, he started working in the family potato brokerage and packing business.

When McKenna Brothers were looking to expand into the offshore export market in the late 1980's, they recognized the value of mentorship and continued to work with Mitch MacLean when they took over his export business Island Shipping. Peter had a good grasp of how to calculate risks and a knack for being able to put together deals that at first glance had seemed impossible. He was well respected by buyers in South America and domestically and knew how to handle situations should they arise.

To Peter, his word is his bond and a handshake is binding. These characteristics have made him a trusted partner in an industry where trust is paramount. This trust, built over four decades, has enabled him to put together strong deals that have benefited Island growers, buyers, and industry partners.

Peter was active on the executive of the PEI Exporters Association for many years and was also a member of the Board of Potatoes Canada in the 1980's and 1990's. This organization was a partnership between potato export companies in PEI and NB and the Canadian government to promote the export of Canadian seed potatoes around the world. Peter helped to host numerous and diverse groups of visiting buyers from South America and Europe and used the personal contacts to broker many deals that benefited PEI potato farmers.

He also advocated strongly to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for the negotiation of phytosanitary agreements that would allow the shipment of Prince Edward Island/Canadian seed and fresh potatoes to export markets, including Uruguay and Venezuela. Some of the agreements negotiated at that time became models for



*Peter McKenna (right) received a 2021 Industry Recognition Award at the monthly Board meeting in March. The Award was presented by Board Chairman Wayne Townshend (left.) (Photo M.K. Sonier)*

future phytosanitary agreements relating to potatoes.

Peter continues to live on the 48 Road with his wife Kelly, daughter Morgan and son-in-law to be Jean- Marc Evans-Renaud. Peter is now in business with his son Matthew, who resides in Stratford with his wife Dr. Michelle McKenna, as they continue the family legacy of buying and selling Prince Edward Island potatoes. Their focus now is in the shipment of high-quality seed potatoes and bringing new potato varieties to Island farmers in an effort to increase marketable yield.

## Charles and Wilhelmina Murphy

Charles grew up on a mixed farm with dairy, pork, chickens, potatoes and cash crops. He graduated from St. Dunstan's High School and took several business and law courses at UPEI and also completed a farm mechanics course at PVI. This continuing education has been helpful in running the farm business

Wilhelmina immigrated to Canada with her parents from Holland in 1953 at the age of 5 and went to school in Vernon Bridge and Montague. Following High School she graduated from Union Commercial College in Charlottetown with a Diploma in Bookkeeping and Financial Planning.



Charles and Willie Murphy have had a life-long passion for agriculture and have farmed for more than 53 years, with experience being their greatest teacher.

In the early years, they had dairy, pork, beef, cole crops, turnips, tobacco and cash crops. In the 70's their interests led them to growing contract seed potatoes for the PEI Potato Board.

Charles was one of the early Elite Seed potato contract producers working closely with Agriculture Canada and the Potato Board to produce high class seed potatoes for Island commercial producers. For a time, the Murphy farm provided a back up location for the Fox Island Elite Seed Farm called the China Point plots, growing as many as 96 lots of various varieties and classes. In 1993 they started their own screenhouse nuclear production which they continue to the present day. Seed potatoes remain the focus of the operation, and while no longer in the livestock business, they also grow seed wheat and corn.

In the year 2007, the Murphy Farm won the Canadian Horticultural Council International Award for Champion Seed Potatoes at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto.

Charles and Willie both maintain strong ties to their community and have served on various committees and organizations over the years. Charles has served in a number of leadership roles in the potato industry and served on many agricultural committees and boards such as:

- Four years as a director, one year as vice-president, and one year as president of the PEI Potato Producers Association
- During the PVYn years, in the early 1990's, he was appointed to the federal provincial committee as a representative of the PEI potato farmers. The work of this committee contributed to the lifting of the ban on PEI seed shipments at this time.
- Two terms on the PEI Potato Board, one year as Secretary-Treasurer



*Charles and Wilhelmina Murphy (right) received a 2021 Industry Recognition Award at the monthly Board meeting in March. The Award was presented by Board member Jason Hayden (left.)*

- Two terms on the Farm Practices Review Board
- An active member of the Ministerial Advisory Board to the Minister of Health.
- A current member of the PEI Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers' Union, the Canadian Seed Growers' Association, and Secan.
- A member of the PEI Farm Business Management Advisory Committee from 1992-1995.
- A founder of the PEI Weaner Pig Producers Association.
- Part of the PEI Cole Crop Marketing Commission.
- Two terms on the PEI Marketing Council.

The Murphy Farm has adapted over the years and many changes have been made to comply with environmental and food safety requirements such as observing buffer zones and stream and waterway setbacks, meeting pesticide applicator certification and crop rotation requirements and enrolment in the CanadaGAP food safety program.

Charles and Willie are very busy with their six children, 17 grandchildren and now 3 great grandchildren, all of whom live on PEI. They are proud of the family farm operation that they have built and are pleased to transition the farm over to their two sons Randy and Francis. They have always strived to maintain family farms that contribute to a positive way of life on PEI.

## Morley Wood

Morley Wood grew up in Mount Tryon and is the fifth generation to farm the land near Albany, PEI. His two sons Greg and Jeff are the sixth generation, and Morley's grandson Alex is home on the farm, making it seven generations of tilling the soil and growing food, most notably seed and tablestock potatoes. They also have a packing shed on the home farm, are licensed potato dealers, and Morley was one of the founding partners of Mid-Isle Farms, a major packing shed operation in Albany.

Morley has provided leadership to the Prince Edward Island potato industry for decades. He served four terms as Chair of the PEI Potato Board, the most ever by an individual, was Vice Chair for two terms, and served a total of nine years on the Board during the period 1994/95 to 2008/09. He represented the Potato Board on the PEI Federation of Agriculture Board of Directors, and served on local committees including the Farm Practices Review Board and the Continuing Education Credits advisory committee for pesticide licensing.

He has contributed to national and international potato organizations for many years as well. Morley has been a long term director on the Canadian Horticultural Council, representing the Potato Board and more recently, Mid-Isle

Farms. He provided wise counsel around the Canadian Potato Council table, and his ability to explain things from the farmers' perspective while at times challenging PMRA, CFIA, AAFC, Stats Canada and others was effective. People paid attention when Morley approached the microphone at those meetings.

He served on the Board of United Potato Growers of Canada and attended many meetings with United Potato Growers of America. Morley was very involved in the formation of both sister organizations: when Albert Wada first proposed creating United Potato Growers of Idaho (UPGI) with a mission of increasing returns to farmers via improved supply and demand information, Morley and then General Manager Ivan Noonan attended a meeting in the US to learn more about UPGI. They saw the potential of what Albert was trying to do and invited him to PEI to share his vision with Island growers. The PEI Potato Board developed an acreage buydown not long after that, and United of America and United of Canada were formed. They did not always have an easy road, and Morley was the voice of reason that encouraged those involved to remember their objective of improving market information for growers, thereby allowing them to make the best possible decisions to match supply and demand. Returns for growers have improved over the years as United built

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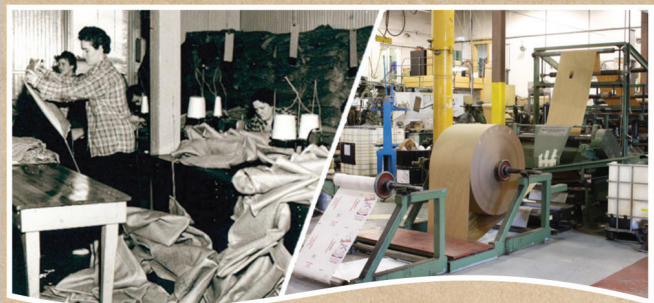
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its supply and demand data collection capabilities and that information was shared with farmers, building relationships between potato industry representatives have strengthened over that time.

Morley's interest in the latest developments in potato technology led him to attend World Potato Congress meetings in many countries, and he has actually been to all seven continents of the world. Not many people can say that, and it is a sign of his determination and interest in the broader world. He has attended the Potato Expo in the U.S. for years, and developed relationships with potato industry representatives from many provinces, states and countries. He has always been welcome wherever he goes and we are honoured by and thank him for his leadership and advice over the years.



*Morley Wood (right) received a 2021 Industry Recognition Award at the monthly Board meeting in March. The Award was presented by Board member Donald Stavert (left.)*

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# 2020 Post Harvest Test Results

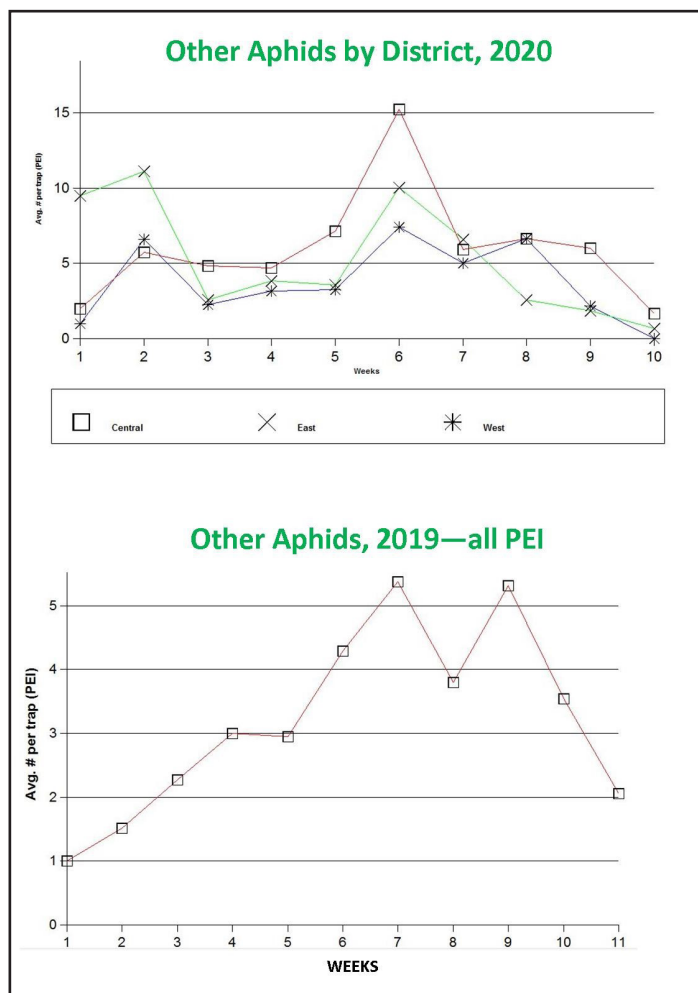
by Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator

Although seed acreage was down slightly in 2020, the number of samples submitted for post harvest testing has remained steady. One change for the lab was a much higher percentage of samples submitted for PCR testing, that provides test results to growers earlier than those obtained using the ELISA test method.

After a hot and dry growing season, there were some concerns that post harvest virus levels would increase in 2020. This was the case with the percentage of samples meeting the planting cap maximum of 3% total virus slightly lower than in 2019.

The “other aphid” level data in the accompanying graphs shows that averages in aphid alert trap catches in the 2020 season were higher than those in 2019. Although there were slight differences between the west, central and east regions of the provinces, peaks in aphid movement were similar.

Seed availability continues to be influenced by variety characteristics: particularly the susceptibility to different diseases. As new varieties are adopted, it is apparent that all have one weakness or another and there is a learning curve to growing these varieties. New varieties may be susceptible to PVY, scab or blackleg and it takes several years of commercial evaluation before the determination is made if the strengths of the variety outweigh the weaknesses and if the weaknesses can be overcome through changes in growing practices - for both seed and commercial production.



Year	% PHT Pass Rate
2020	82
2019	84
2018	86
2017	88
2016	92
2015	77
2014	89
2013	78
2012	57

# PEI Potato Industry Variety Trial

by Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator

Variety evaluation is an ongoing process in the potato industry. New varieties are one tool in the toolbox to assist growers in yield and quality improvement. New varieties may also have increased resistance to pests and disease and better tolerance to adverse climate conditions such as heat and drought that can lead to reduced input needs.

A potato variety trial is planted each year on PEI at the Harrington Research Farm of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as part of a Potato Research Cluster Project funded through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership's Agri-Science Program. Trial collaborator is Dave Main, a biologist with AAFC. The objective of the trial is to compare the performance of recently released varieties and advanced breeding selections to standard varieties for yield and quality under Prince Edward Island soil and climate conditions. The industry sponsored trial places its focus on fresh and chipping potatoes to avoid duplication of the processing variety evaluation trials carried out by Cavendish Farms on PEI.

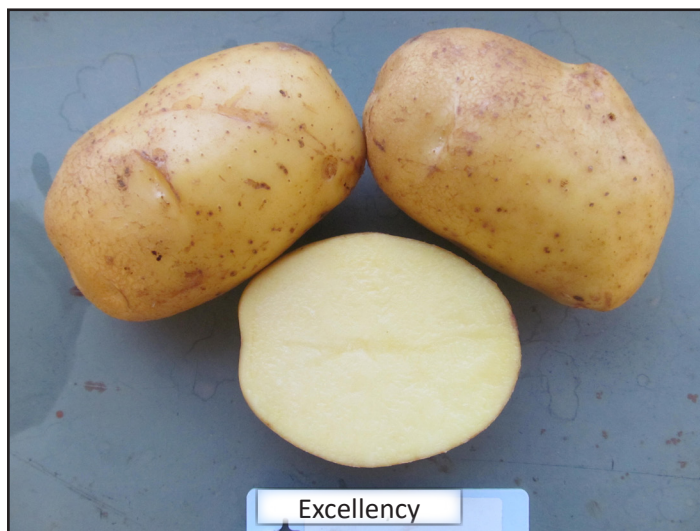
The 2020 trial was conducted in a field with a soil pH of 6.1 and an organic matter content of 3.1%. Plots were 25' long single rows, replicated four times in a randomized complete block design.

The growing season at the Harrington farm was predominantly hot and dry with only 105 mm of rainfall being recorded between May 31 and September 2.

Some of the newly available varieties that were in the trial in 2020 include:

## Excellency

Excellency originates from the Agrico breeding company in the Netherlands and is available in Canada through



Parkland Seed Potatoes. Excellency is a fresh market variety with processing capabilities. It has yellow skin and light yellow flesh. Tubers are long oval, rather big and have very shallow eyes. Tuber numbers are moderate.

In the 2020 PEI trial, Excellency had good emergence and strong mid-season vigor. It weathered the drought fairly well with vine senescence of 45% on August 24, similar to Russet Burbank and better than many other varieties in the trial which had vine senescence at this time of over 50%. Harvested tubers had a clean bright appearance and a specific gravity of 1.092 and a yield comparable or better than standards.

## AAC Hamer

Another entry from Parkland Seed potatoes was AAC Hamer. This variety is an early-round white variety good for the fresh market and is also suitable for chipping. It has an attractive smooth skin finish with shallow eyes. AAC Hamer was developed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

In our trial, AAC Hamer had a marketable yield similar to



*The variety trial plot on July 17 (left) and one month later on August 17, 2020 (right) with the effects of drought stress clearly visible - yellowing leaves and early senescence of some varieties. Photos: D. Main, AAFC.*

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Atlantic and a specific gravity of 1.095. Tuber appearance was very good and tubers were clean, bright, and uniform in shape & size. Yield was similar to other varieties in the chipping category but plants died early as a result of the dry weather.



### Mackinaw

Mackinaw comes from the Michigan State University breeding program and is marketed in Canada by Real Potatoes. It is a chipping potato with a number of built in disease resistance characteristics - tolerance to heat and drought, resistant to PVY, late blight and moderate to high tolerance to common scab and Verticillium wilt. MacKinaw is reported to have slightly better gravity than Lamoka and smaller overall tuber profile.

In the 2020 trial Mackinaw had moderate to strong mid season vigor and tolerated the drought very well with only 30% vine senescence on August 24. Tubers had a clean uniform shape and yield and specific gravity were slightly better than the standard Lamoka.

### Manistee

Manistee also comes from the Michigan State University breeding program and is marketed in Canada by Real Potatoes. It is a Maincrop maturing (Manistee is 7-10 days earlier maturing than MacKinaw) variety with attractive round tubers that has excellent chip processing ability from short term and long term storage and has a proven record to chip consistently longer from long term storage better than Snowden.

Manistee had moderate to strong early season vigor but was more affected by the dry conditions than Mackinaw and a 75% vine senescence on August 24. Due to this the yield was slightly below that of Mackinaw and the standard Lamoka but the specific gravity was similar to Mackinaw. Tubers were clean with a somewhat flattened shape.

### AR2018-07

This is an early maturing chipping line from the



Production from one trial replicate of Mackinaw and Manistee alongside one of the standard Lamoka. (Photos: D. Main, AAFC)

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada breeding program. Information from the breeder indicates that it is extremely resistant to PVY and carries a marker associated with resistance to golden nematode.

In our 2020 trial it had strong mid season vigor but likely due to a combination of the early maturity characteristic and the dry weather, vine senescence on August 24 was 70%. Tubers were clean, with a uniform shape. Marketable yield and specific gravity were similar to that of Atlantic.

A full report on the trial is available by contacting the Board office or on the research cluster website at:

[www.potatoresearchcluster.ca](http://www.potatoresearchcluster.ca)

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# Annual General Meeting

# Canadian Horticultural Council

## Potato

The Canadian Potato Council (CPC) is supported by the membership of eleven provincial potato grower organizations from eight provinces. Three CPC meetings were held this year, one in-person meeting in Ottawa in March 2020 and two virtual meetings held in July and November.

### COVID-19 IMPACT

A major early impact of the pandemic in the spring of 2020 for the potato sector was the uncertainty of demand created by the shutdown of foodservice in North America. Large on-farm stocks of the 2019 contracted processing potato crop were no longer required due to significantly reduced demand for frozen potato products. Additionally, contracts for the 2020 crop were reduced, resulting in fewer planted acres and a surplus of seed potatoes. On May 10, there were 6.8 million hundredweight (\$92 million) of processing potatoes and 0.65 million hundredweight (\$11 million) of seed potatoes remaining in storage. Fortunately, foodservice re-opening (particularly in the US) in the summer allowed resumption of processing and the movement of some potatoes. However, due to delays in processing, significant losses in storage potatoes were evident in Manitoba and surplus seed was destroyed in many provinces due to reduced acreage. Existing AAFC Business Risk Management programs failed to address grower losses.

As in all sectors, the shift to virtual meetings for two CPC meetings in July and November was implemented to continue the work of CPC. Several Working Groups continued to meet virtually and demonstrated progress on objectives. As an exception, export market development activities of Potatoes Canada were greatly reduced since March 2020 and the AAFC Contribution Agreement amended in response to the significant decrease in spending in the AAFC 2020-2021 fiscal year.

### POTATO RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Progress continued in eight potato projects (Colorado potato beetle, late blight, necrotic viruses, variety evaluation, smart farming, wireworm, potato early dying) funded under Cluster 3 with the third field year completed. The CPC Research Working Group developed the *Potato Cluster 3 Knowledge Transfer Plan* to articulate the activities that will be delivered to extend the information on results developed under the research projects that can be implemented on-farm by growers.

As a first step in an ongoing activity to engage researchers with grower organizations, Dr. Christine Noronha presented wireworm Cluster 3 research to the CHC Potato Open Meeting in March. The Canadian Potato Research Cluster website was launched in 2020 for growers to access research project highlights and annual reports and to provide information on funding partners and research priority setting (<https://potatoresearchcluster.ca/>). *SpudSmart* magazine published an overview article of Cluster 3 potato research in the summer 2020 issue and will continue to feature a project article in each issue over the next three years. The first CPC webinar (wireworm) was delivered in November 2020 with subsequent project webinars planned each year.

The Alliance for Potato Research and Education (APRE) is funded by Canadian processing growers (PE, NB, MB, AB) along with US grower counterparts and the major processing companies. Clinical research trials in potato nutrition are funded each year (approximately \$1 million USD). Fourteen funded studies have now been published in peer-reviewed journals with an additional twenty-five studies ongoing.

### POLICY AND REGULATIONS

A DRC/Industry Working Group reviewed the Potato Grade Standard with the view of modernizing and aligning where possible with US standards. Significant changes were recommended for revision to a table-based format that will be the basis for the incorporation by reference document.





These pages are taken from the Canadian Horticultural Council Annual Report. The AGM was held virtually with sessions held from March 10 to March 17, 2021. Meetings were held for commodity specific issues with committees for Potatoes, Apples, Tender Fruit & Grapes, Greenhouse Vegetables, Field Vegetables and Berries. There were also working group meetings covering Trade & Marketing, Crop Protection, Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Industry Standards & Food Safety, and Labour. PEI representatives take part in these committees on behalf of the PEI Potato industry. For more information on specific topics please look on the CHC website at [www.hortcouncil.ca](http://www.hortcouncil.ca) or call the Board office at (902) 892-6551.

A CFIA/Industry Working Group including all sectors (grains, oilseeds, forages, vegetables) was established to review the *Seed Regulations* and modernize to current practices. Concurrent with this, a Seed Potato Sub Working Group was established to review Part II (seed potato) of the *Regulations*. As a first step, stakeholder surveys were developed by both Working Groups to identify those areas of the *Regulations* that are adequate, and those that are problematic or could be improved. Surveys will be open for public input in early 2021.

### CROP PROTECTION IN POTATOES

Significant CPC efforts in previous years responding to PMRA re-evaluation consultations that proposed to cancel uses in potatoes resulted in positive outcomes in the *Final Re-evaluation Decisions* published in 2020. The submission of use information and/or grower use data for the critical active ingredients, mancozeb fungicide and linuron herbicide and others including thiophanate-methyl potato seed piece treatment supported registrant responses and contributed to the continued use of those critical active ingredients in potatoes.

CPC has continued to advocate that the PMRA continue the registration of bifenthrin (*Capture* insecticide) for wireworm control in potatoes, after the expiry of registration at the end of 2020. CPC is supporting an Emergency Use Registration application of the provincial government in PE for bifenthrin use in potatoes.



## LOOKING AHEAD

The CPC looks forward to continuing to implement the activities of the Potato Cluster 3 Research Knowledge Transfer Plan to encourage and demonstrate to potato growers the benefit of adoption of research that they fund. Over the upcoming year, research results will be communicated to growers through published articles and the delivery of CPC webinars by project researchers. The Canadian Potato Research Cluster website will continue to be an important resource for research progress in each of the eight projects.

Looking forward, potato research priority setting for the next funding cycle (2023-2028) will start with provincial consultations in the summer 2021 to be followed by CPC Research Working Group meeting to agree upon national priorities in early fall 2021. A revision of the Potato Research and Innovation Strategy will be presented to the CPC in November 2021.

The publication of PMRA Proposed Re-evaluation Decisions will continue to be monitored to identify those decisions that will negatively impact the potato sector and require a CPC consultation response.

**CPC has continued to advocate that the PMRA continue the registration of bifenthrin (Capture insecticide) for wireworm control in potatoes, after the expiry of registration at the end of 2020.**



# Agricultural Employer of the Year Award

The 2020 PEI Agriculture Sector Employer of the year is being awarded to G. W. Visser and Sons of Orwell. G.W. Visser has been nominated by Allan Glover.

G.W. Visser and Sons is one of the most progressive, responsible and generous farm employers on PEI. They treat their employees with great respect and fairness. They take the time to work with their employees and listen to ideas employees have to better their operation.

G.W. Visser and Sons strive to provide a culture of safety and professionalism among their many employees. They ensure that employees have all the necessary training to complete the tasks that are needed to be executed in the day to day operations. They regularly send employees to off-farm training sessions to maintain necessary licenses and certifications. This past year, G.W. Visser and Sons held on-farm forklift training sessions for all their employees.

Being a family run operation, the Vissers are always showing an interest in the lives of their employees and their families. They host periodic events through the year to reward employees for the work they do. They have created a generous family farm community for their employees. Allan Glover commented in the nomination, "As an employee, I enjoy working for them and getting to do what I love to do every day which is to farm. My three daughters get to be involved in agriculture and see the potential of a career in agriculture. I am very happy to go to work every day to a place that appreciates their employees."

The 2020 PEI Agriculture Sector Employer of the Year Award is sponsored by T&K Fire and Safety.



Randy (left) and William Visser of G.W. Visser and Sons accept the PEI Ag Sector Council Award for Employer of the Year. (Photo: C.L. Chapman)

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# Perfecting the Formula

## AAFC Scientists Help to Develop New Weapon for Wireworm Control

They live in soil, feed on roots, stunt plant growth and ruin crops. Wireworms, like cockroaches, are notoriously difficult to control, and their populations are increasing in farm fields across Canada. These pests, which are the larval stage of click beetles, are a common potato, corn and cereal crop pest.

For many years, farmers have struggled with limited options to control wireworms, leading to crop damage and loss. Now, thanks to support efforts from three Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) research scientists, farmers have a new wireworm defence in their arsenal.

In October 2020, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) through Health Canada approved the registration of Broflanilide, the active ingredient in two new insecticides developed by BASF Canada Agricultural Solutions. Launched in January 2021, Teraxxa F4 is an insecticide-coated seed treatment that targets wireworms in cereal crops, such as wheat, and Cimegra is a liquid soil-level spray for potato and corn crops.

BASF has had long-running and successful partnerships with AAFC research scientists to support the research and development for new insecticide products. For the past eight years, three AAFC scientists, Dr. Christine Noronha in Charlottetown, PEI, Dr. Bob Vernon and Dr. Wim Van Herk in Agassiz, BC, have worked with BASF in the testing and research data collection for Teraxxa F4 and Cimegra. Their research is funded by BASF in partnership with the Government of Canada's Horticulture Cluster under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP). CAP is a five-year, \$3 billion investment by

federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector. The AAFC researchers have been assessing the performance of Broflanilide on cereal and potato crops at the Harrington Research Farm in PEI, the



*Dr. Noronha inspects wireworm populations at an AAFC research field in Harrington, PE.*

Agassiz Research Farm in BC, and with local farmers. Their research consisted of observing wireworm populations and wireworm damage to various potato and wheat varieties following different application rates of Broflanilide, as well as wireworm populations after harvesting these crops. What they discovered was very promising.

Since the early 1990s, Drs. Vernon and Noronha have been testing the effectiveness of different insecticides from a variety of companies, and were both excited to find that Broflanilide worked extremely well in eliminating wireworm populations in wheat and potatoes.

“To have been a part of the team of scientists that will help introduce these highly effective insecticides to farmers is an exciting accomplishment,” says Dr. Noronha.

Drs. Vernon and Van Herk also planted wheat seeds treated with Teraxxa F4 at the Agassiz Research Farm in BC where he saw “outstanding results.”

“What makes these new products exciting to farmers is that they effectively kill wireworms rather than other insecticides, such as the neonicotinoids, which just paralyze them, and it does so with low application rates, which makes this a safer option for the environment,” says Dr. Van Herk.

The years of data and expertise that Dr. Noronha, Dr. Van Herk, and Dr. Vernon shared with BASF has been vital in the development and recent registration of these two new products. According to BASF, the research team provided an invaluable conduit to connect with experts across the country who helped them understand the biology of the pest, identify and map the different pest species across the country and develop a solution that would be able to control the pest, no matter where the farmers lived.

“BASF is incredibly appreciative of the work by Dr. Bob Vernon, Dr. Wim van Herk, and Dr. Christine Noronha in the development of Broflanilide. Simply put, their contributions were integral in helping us create a robust solution to help Canadian cereal and potato farmers contend with the significant challenge of wireworm control,” says Wayne Barton, Manager, Research and Commercial Development, BASF Canada Agricultural Solutions.

With initial praise from researchers and industry alike for these new insecticides, it's easy to see why Canadian farmers are eager to implement for the 2021 growing season. Teraxxa F4 and Cimegra just might hold the key to vanquishing wireworms once and for all.

*Story provided by AAFC Media Relations: [aafc.mediarelations-relationsmedias.aac@canada.ca](mailto:aafc.mediarelations-relationsmedias.aac@canada.ca)*

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# Marketing Report

by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

It's been said so many times in so many ways ....what a crazy year. Just over a year ago, no one could have predicted what was in our future. Every single business and industry on Earth has been affected in some way. But we have now learned to live in these times. Living with COVID-19 isn't new or even strange to us anymore. Masks, social distancing, homeschooling, and restrictions are all part of our daily life experience and dialogue now.

We have all learned to make modifications in our industry, farms and businesses to adapt, and because our industry is large and diverse, that means something different for us all. We have all worked together with our customers, our suppliers, our employees, and so many others to change the way we do things to get through this time. For some things, these changes were difficult and unwelcomed and we will return to the old ways once this is behind us. For other things, it has brought on new processes or ideas that may be positive and we will continue doing.

For the fresh sector specifically, we have experienced a surge. Overall retail sales were up 40% in the first quarter of COVID as consumers cooked most meals at home and stockpiled necessities. Staple items such as vegetables, pasta, rice, potatoes, flour were big drivers of this spike. Of course, we all know about the toilet paper and hand sanitizer shopping craze, but many unexpected items saw huge increases in sales for obvious reasons, such as yeast and at-home hair dye. The grab-and-go mentality isn't a priority these days, because really, where are you rushing to? Everyone (including myself!) was learning to bake bread, cook larger meals, and posting their dalgona coffee and banana bread pictures to social media. According to Google Trends, online food and recipe searches were up 850%. As I watched and participated, one thing that really struck me is how widespread potatoes have become. Potatoes are (finally) fitting into most of the current diet trends: flexitarian, gluten free, Whole30, plant-based or vegan. Potatoes now fit into our new lifestyle: dinner table meals, comfort cooking and

more elaborate recipes.

The other change that will have a lasting impact in food consumption is the permanent working-from-home situations. Jobs that were able to transition home during lock-down may continue on, and that means lunchtime meals and supertime meal preparation will look different. We will be grabbing fewer sandwiches from the café, and you may take a few minutes in the afternoon for some supertime meal prep, as opposed to scrambling at 5:30. I also think that the potato section at retail is catching up to the rest of the grocery store. I see vibrant colours, new varieties and modern packaging to cater to new audiences and make sure potatoes are relevant to everyone going forward into our new world. We have unique opportunities to capitalize on, and we are lucky to have such a versatile product.

Of course, as restrictions begin to lift and as we progress in 2021 and into 2022, we do know there will be a shift as people do go back to eating out at restaurants more - it's just inevitable. So how do we keep potatoes on the plate at home and when people eat out? My hope is that some perceptions around potatoes have changed permanently. Attributes of potatoes that were previously portrayed as "negatives" are now considered positives. Where potatoes were once called "fattening", they are now wholesome. Where they were once boring, they are now trendy. There

have now been several viral potato-centric Tik Tok and Instagram recipe sensations that have surfaced, including accordion potatoes and the perfect roast potato videos that have garnered millions and millions of views.

For me, there are several big takeaways from the past year: 1) the word "essential" doesn't begin to describe the need for farms and farmers on this country and beyond; 2) our industry is way more adaptable and resilient than I think most of us ever believed 3) Many consumers are learning things that our industry already knew, which is that potatoes check so many boxes – they are healthy, affordable, nutritious, easy to find and prepare, and they are delicious. But most of all, they are comforting in uncomfortable time.

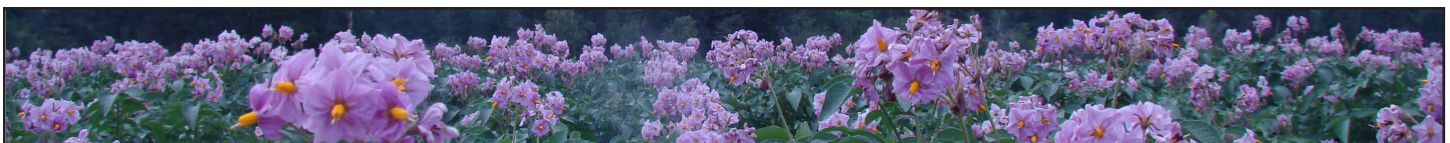


*Accordion-potatoes-on-a-stick - one of the potato recipes that went viral during the pandemic.*

# Through the Years

## Popular Seed Potato Varieties on PEI

Late 1860's	1881	1890	early 1900's	1916
Emperor Germany	Early Rose	Bliss Triumph	Dakota Red	introduction of:
Regent	Black Kidney	Pearl of Savoy	McIntyre Blue	Irish Cobbler*
Jackson White	Sherry Blue	White Star	Bliss Triumph	Green Moutain*
Calicoes	Prolific	Beauty of Hebron	Black Kidney	* these would become
Early Rose	Snowflake	McIntyre	Early Rose	the main seed potato
Goderich	Compton's Surprise	Black Kidney	Burpee's Superior	varieties in PEI for
	<b>Burbank Seedlings*</b>	Early Rose	Jenny Lind	the next 40 years.
	* derived from Early Rose and precursors to Russet Burbank			
1947	1965	1979	1985	1990
Irish Cobbler	Sebago*	<b>Russet Burbank</b>	<b>Russet Burbank</b>	<b>Russet Burbank</b>
Green Mountain	Kennebec*	Kennebec	Kennebec	Kennebec
Sebago	* these replaced Irish	Sebago	Sebago	Superior
Katahdin	<i>Cobbler and Green</i>	Superior	Superior	Shepody
	<i>Mountain as the two</i>	Red Pontiac	Shepody	Sebago
	<i>main varieties.</i>	Green Mountain	Red Pontiac	Atlantic
		Irish Cobbler	Atlantic	Yukon Gold
			Norchip	Russet Norkotah
1996	2000	2005	2010	2015
Kennebec	Shepody	<b>Russet Burbank</b>	<b>Russet Burbank</b>	<b>Russet Burbank</b>
Superior	Superior	Yukon Gold	Kennebec	Goldrush
<b>Russet Burbank</b>	<b>Russet Burbank</b>	Superior	Superior	Eva
Shepody	Atlantic	Shepody	Goldrush	Kennebec
Yukon Gold	Yukon Gold	Kennebec	Atlantic	Shepody
Goldrush	Russet Nortkotah	Goldrush	Yukon Gold	Superior
Chieftain	Kennebec	Atlantic	Shepody	Atlantic
Atlantic	Chieftain	Chieftain	Prospect	Norland
2020	<p>The variety mix has been constantly changing over the years as growers adopted new varieties that met market needs and offered improved yields and resistance to pests and disease.</p> <p>Frozen processing took a hold in PEI in the 1960's and this sector grew rapidly during the 1980's and 1990's. Russet Burbank has been the predominant processing variety through the years, but acreage is now being replaced with a number of new varieties that suit particular time frames of the processing season and show advantages over Russet Burbank in terms of higher yield, increased disease resistance and reduced defects.</p> <p><i>Information on top seed varieties obtained from "Freetown Past and Present" published by the Freetown Historical Society in 1985 and PEI Seed Directories from 1985 to 2020.</i></p>			
<b>Russet Burbank</b>				
Eva				
Goldrush				
Dakota Russet				
Norland				
Superior				
Kennebec				
Mountain Gem				



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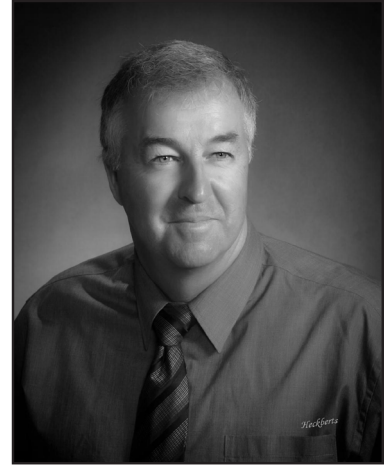
# Two PEI Potato Farmers Named in Top 50 in Canadian Agriculture

(Charlottetown, PEI – February 24, 2021) - The Prince Edward Island Potato Board is proud to share that two PEI potato farmers have been recognized as leaders in the inaugural Top 50 in Canadian Agriculture campaign, organized by the Canadian Western Agribition (CWA). The CWA sought nominations from across Canada for influential and dedicated individuals working in the agriculture industry in five categories: Upstarts, Mentors, Innovators, Deal Makers and Designed Hitters.

One of the ten recognized in the Mentor category was John Phillips of WestCountry Farms in Arlington, PEI, where he farmed for almost 40 years with his brothers Barrie and Sherwin. Over time, they built WestCountry Farms into a successful farming operation. One of the biggest factors in their success was their willingness to try new methods to better the farm while humbly accepting guidance from peers in the industry. The potato industry has seen many changes throughout John's career, and he often was a level-headed voice through difficult and challenging times. While he was never one to gravitate towards the front of the room, when John spoke, people listened. John volunteered his time to producer organizations for twelve consecutive years and was a valued member of the Potato Processing Committee and the Potato Producers organization. John has also given countless hours to his local community.

John's passion for agriculture is very evident. He always had time for a tour of their farm, to speak to a classroom, or to host community outreach events at the farm such as Open Farm Day. He was keenly interested in the environment and sustainability of the land was a key focus whenever he considered how best to manage his fields. His ability to 'meet in the middle' and not always see things as black and white allowed him to better relate to those who are not as familiar with his industry. John's success in agriculture was contingent on the advice of his peers early in his farming career, and he never forgot that. As younger generations of farmers begin to farm, he is quick to offer advice and help whenever needed.

In 2019, WestCountry Farms was selected as producer of the year at the O'Leary Potato Blossom Festival as well as runners up for Cavendish Producer of the Year. When the time came to make a decision about the future of the farm, John's neighbours, Bryan and Kyle Maynard were interested in purchasing the farm so the decision was made to sell. The transition was smooth, as both parties had enjoyed a harmonious relationship. Rather than enjoying his retirement life, he has begun work with Bryan and Kyle; offering his years of perspective as a mentor to this younger generation of farmers. The example he has set and the dedication he has taken towards mentorship makes him a worthy recipient of this recognition.



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One of the ten individuals recognized in the Deal Maker category is Terry Curley from Monaghan Farms in Norboro, PEI. Terry's ancestors emigrated from County Monaghan in Ireland in the 1840's during the Great Potato Famine and settled in Freetown, PEI. Terry himself began to farm commercially with his father, Pat, as Monaghan Farms. An early focus in the 1980's was on processing potatoes for both the French fry business and a local potato chip manufacturer. In 1988, Terry began growing for Frito Lay. This diversity worked to his advantage and he was ready to move in a new direction and expand further into the chip industry when Frito Lay approached him in 2001 with an idea to grow and export their own varieties. Terry knew his strength was in production and looked to West Isle Enterprises Ltd and Rod MacNeill for his long experience in international export to complete a successful team. Starting with three loads in 2002, the business has expanded and Monaghan Farms is now one of



the largest international suppliers for Frito Lay in terms of high quality potatoes that can be exported in top condition for use in processing plants around the world.

The whole potato industry in PEI has certainly benefitted from the successful partnership between Monaghan Farms, West Isle Enterprises and Frito Lay, with acreage and prices expanding in recent years. In addition, Terry and his son Derrick have expanded the acreage of chip potato seed on PEI in recent years. Monaghan Farms has been the recipient of many awards over the years for their production excellence and their contribution to the local industry, including top supplier awards from McCain Foods and Frito-Lay, Entrepreneur of the Year from Ernst & Young, and a Recognition Award from the Prince Edward Island Potato Board in 2011. With innovation often comes big risks; nonetheless, Terry Curley has demonstrated an ability to make the deals necessary to continually grow and advance his business, benefiting not only Monaghan Farms but the whole potato industry here on Prince Edward Island.

These two worthy recognitions demonstrate that while we may be Canada's smallest province, our industry is full of leaders and visionaries to advance agriculture on a national scale. The Prince Edward Island Potato Board would like to congratulate John Phillips and Terry Curley on these very well deserved recognitions.

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## Canada's Agriculture Day:

# Celebrating the Work of Farmers with Statistics

*Statistics Canada, February 23, 2021* - February 23 is Canada's Agriculture Day! It's an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of Canadian farmers and workers in the food industry, especially during the challenges of the pandemic. Canadian farmers have been working harder than ever to ensure the stability of the food supply chain and to maintain the supply of agricultural products to local and international markets.

The collection of agricultural statistics has a long history in Canada, and it continues with the support of farmers, key stakeholders, local governments and agricultural associations. New technologies, alternative data sources and innovative modelling strategies are now being used to generate numerous statistics about agricultural commodities, food, land use, farm finances and much more.

Canada has nearly 270,000 workers in agricultural industries, including 55,000 temporary foreign workers

Many people earn a living in agricultural operations; in 2018, Canada employed approximately 268,000 agricultural workers who produced a wide variety of grain, livestock

and commodities that contributed to the food safety of Canadians through a strong value chain.

The primary agriculture sector grew by 4.5% in real terms from November 2019 to November 2020, against the backdrop of a 2.8% decline for the economy as a whole. Agriculture accounted for 2.1% of total gross domestic product in November 2020 and is a strong driver of economic activity in rural areas. In January 2021, the primary agriculture sector accounted for nearly 9% of total employment in regions considered to be rural.

The agriculture sector is highly dependent on temporary foreign workers. In 2018, they filled nearly 55,000 jobs, representing one-fifth of total employment in the sector. The proportion was particularly high in greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production; vegetable and melon farming; and fruit and tree nut farming (where they accounted for at least one-third of total workers). More information on the role of temporary foreign workers in Canadian agricultural industries and the issues they faced during the pandemic can be found in this study.



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Thanks to farmers who answer our surveys and the Census of Agriculture, Statistics Canada regularly produces statistical information on a wide variety of agricultural products. This information can be used to understand how farmers contribute to the Canadian economy and to the food security of Canadians.

For example, a recent infographic indicated that, in 2019, Canadian farmers produced 32.3 million tonnes of wheat, 2.17 million tonnes of pork, 1.30 million tonnes of chicken and 1.26 million tonnes of beef, as well as a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and dairy products. Readers interested in accessing more statistics are invited to consult the Agriculture and Food Statistics web portal, as well as the Agriculture Stats Hub.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed numerous challenges for agricultural producers, including labour shortages, safety regulations, transportation challenges and other issues that impacted the industry. Fruit and vegetable sales, for example, were down slightly in 2020 from the previous year (-0.8% to \$2.5 billion). Harvest area for fruits and vegetables also fell by 1.4%, to 180 815 hectares. Over the next few months, Statistics Canada will produce a series of data releases for the year 2020 that will provide a full picture of the way the industry has been impacted by the pandemic.

That said, recent information suggests that 2020 was a relatively strong year for the production of several crops, thanks to higher seeded areas, relatively good weather and better yields. In fact, Canadian farmers produced more wheat (+7.7%), soybeans (+3.5%), corn for grain (+1.2%), barley (+3.4%) and oats (+8.2%) in 2020, while canola production was down from 2019 (-4.5%).

Increased production of these crops aligned with an opportunity to increase marketing, as decreases in rail use by the petroleum sector allowed greater capacity to get these grains to market. As a result, farm cash receipts for crop farmers were up for the first three quarters of 2020.

Even though a large proportion of Canadian agricultural production is intended for domestic consumption, Canada is a net exporter of food. On a customs basis in 2020, Canada exported \$44.0 billion worth of farm, fishing and intermediate food products, and posted a positive net export value of \$22.5 billion in this category. Farm, fishing and intermediate food products accounted for 8.4% of total Canadian exports. The United States remained Canada's most important trading partner in this category of products (37% of exports), followed by China (16%).

For more information about the commodities available for consumption in any given year, readers are invited to access our data tables on food availability in Canada:

[https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/subjects-start/agriculture\\_and\\_food](https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/subjects-start/agriculture_and_food)

## **2021 is a Census Year for Farmers**

The Census of Agriculture will be conducted in 2021 at the same time as the Census of Population, allowing the public to see a snapshot of the state of agriculture and its importance in Canada. The previous census counted 193,492 farms in 2016 and showed that the decline in number of farms had slowed, compared with other census periods.

Statistics Canada's Census of Agriculture is an important tool that helps farmers see emerging trends in agricultural technologies and practices. It is also a vital source of community-level data that includes the unique perspectives of farmers, farm communities and agricultural operations that are affected when decisions about them and their livelihood are made.

To support farmers at this busy time of year and to help reduce their reporting burden, steps have been taken to make the 2021 questionnaire quicker and easier to complete.

## **Statistics Canada's Ongoing Commitment to Reduce the Response Burden of Farmers**

In an attempt to reduce the response burden on farmers while continuing to provide quality statistical information, Statistics Canada launched an initiative to move beyond a survey-first approach. This was done by using alternative data such as Earth Observation and tax data, and advanced technologies such as modelling and machine learning, to replace traditional surveys.

For example, in July 2019, the agency implemented a new crop yield model for the July 2019 Field Crop Survey in Manitoba, using satellite imagery and administrative data. This resulted in fewer survey questions for respondents and also provided a value-added product to the crop insurance agency for its operations. The goal is to expand this model to as many provinces as possible by 2022, depending on the availability of administrative data such as crop insurance data. Other initiatives also resulted in better, more timely estimates for the number of agriculture employees and temporary foreign workers in agriculture businesses, without making direct contact with farmers. New data-replacement projects will soon contribute to further diminishing the response burden of farmers.

Through this process conducted in collaboration with partners and stakeholders, Statistics Canada will continue to provide the same high-quality information while applying the same rigorous privacy and confidentiality standards that Canadians expect and deserve. You can read more about this initiative in the StatCan Blog: Reducing the response burden imposed on farmers and businesses.

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

	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>20-21 vs. 19-20</u>
<b>PEI</b>	<b>14,074</b>	<b>12,379</b>	<b>13,391</b>	<b>11,507</b>	<b>-14.1%</b>
New Brunswick	8,616	7,550	7,711	5,123	-33.6%
Nova Scotia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total Maritimes</b>	<b>22,690</b>	<b>19,929</b>	<b>21,102</b>	<b>16,630</b>	<b>-21.2%</b>
Quebec	5,702	5,281	5,698	5,598	-1.8%
Ontario	2,941	2,570	2,724	3,251	19.3%
<b>Total Eastern Canada (inc. Maritimes)</b>	<b>31,333</b>	<b>27,780</b>	<b>29,524</b>	<b>25,479</b>	<b>-13.7%</b>
Manitoba	10,977	8,640	8,974	11,146	24.2%
Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	N/A
Alberta	12,300	11,811	11,711	10,269	-12.3%
British Columbia	361	548	391	463	18.4%
<b>Total Western Canada</b>	<b>23,638</b>	<b>20,999</b>	<b>21,076</b>	<b>21,878</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
<b>CANADA TOTAL</b>	<b>54,971</b>	<b>48,779</b>	<b>50,600</b>	<b>47,357</b>	<b>-6.4%</b>

## Prince Edward Island Disposition as of February 28, 2021 (cwt)

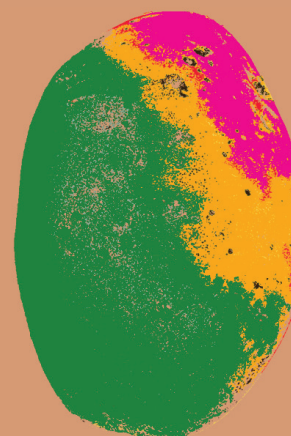
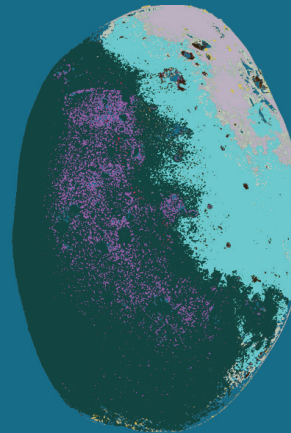
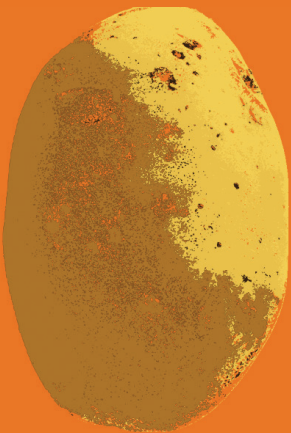
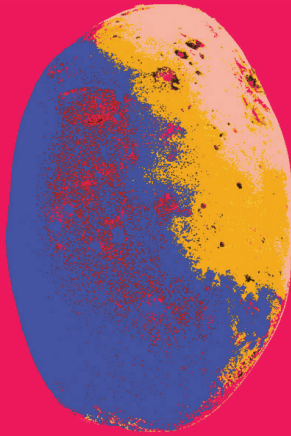
	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>20-21 vs. 19-20</u>
Production	24,463,000	22,600,000	24,302,000	21,000,000	-13.6%
Canadian Shipments	1,320,085	1,347,677	1,391,555	1,556,616	11.9%
U.S. Shipments	1,679,409	1,327,113	1,363,275	1,658,224	21.6%
Export Shipments	409,152	556,518	509,501	367,201	-27.9%
<b>Total Fresh</b>	<b>3,408,646</b>	<b>3,231,308</b>	<b>3,264,331</b>	<b>3,582,041</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
Processing / Local Use	5,886,966	5,587,091	6,187,379	4,897,430	-20.8%
Seed for Next Crop	0	0	0	0	
Cullage	1,093,488	1,402,164	1,459,745	1,013,777	-30.6%
<b>Total Disposition as of February 28</b>	<b>10,389,100</b>	<b>10,220,562</b>	<b>10,911,455</b>	<b>9,493,248</b>	<b>-13.0%</b>
<b>Holdings at March 1</b>	<b>14,073,900</b>	<b>12,379,438</b>	<b>13,390,545</b>	<b>11,506,752</b>	<b>-14.1%</b>

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

Fresh	3,276,370	2,512,287	3,580,896	2,148,232	-40.0%
Processing	8,911,260	7,939,203	7,917,163	7,502,509	-5.2%
Seed	1,886,270	1,927,948	1,892,487	1,856,011	-1.9%



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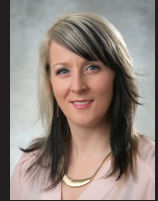
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*An Update From the:*

# PEI Department of Agriculture and Land

by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator



It seems like most of us have put 2020 in the rear-view mirror and are looking forward to the fast-approaching spring. As we put a wrap on the winter season, I'd like to report on two programs which have been my focus since fall.

## **PEI Emergency On-Farm Support Fund**

The Emergency On-Farm Support Fund (EOFSF) was established through an agreement between the Department of Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and the Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land. The EOFSF has supported producers in taking action to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on-farm and to protect the health and safety of farm workers. The Department of Agriculture & Land was responsible for administering this program on PEI, and I'm pleased to report that just over half a million dollars of federal funds has been dispersed to forty farms who participated in the program. Farms claimed expenses going back to March 15, 2020. The program covered expenses such as disposable and non-disposable PPE, but Island farms went well beyond those basic items. Projects included larger investments such as modifications to field equipment and common workspaces, expansion of temporary foreign worker housing, enhanced screening of employees and visitors, and adjustments to employee washroom facilities and break areas. The measures taken by Island farms helped employees and families stay safe and healthy, but also helped the entire community. Hats off to producers for putting risk-mitigating measures in place early in this pandemic and for staying the course an entire year later.

## **PEI Seed Potato Recovery Program**

In order to support PEI producers affected by a seed potato surplus that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Agriculture & Land administered the PEI Seed Recovery Program. Thirty-eight producers applied and received a total of \$1.189 million to cover lost revenue and extra-ordinary costs when they were unable to find a market for seed potatoes in spring of 2020. The program is now complete and all payments have gone out.

## **Capture – Bifenthrin**

On December 21, 2017, PMRA published the registration decision for Capture 240 EC (bifenthrin), RD-

2017-19. In it, PMRA canceled the uses of bifenthrin with a 3 year phase-out period. December 31, 2020, was the last day of permitted use by users. In late January 2021, the PEI Department of Agriculture & Land submitted a package for the Emergency Use Registration (EUR) of Capture (bifenthrin) for use in potatoes. My colleague Sebastian and I have been collaborating with the registrant FMC for this submission, and as I write this article, we are awaiting the response from PMRA.

Since this submission, maximum residue limits (MRLs) for Cimegra (broflanilide) have been established in several export countries, and some PEI potato growers have received confirmation from their customers that they can apply it. Nonetheless, PEIDAL and FMC continue to pursue this EUR for Capture so that producers can have choice in wireworm control products. There's no guarantee that the EUR will be granted, so stay tuned.

## **Reducing Risk of Disease Spread in the Spring**

With seed movement in the spring comes risk of disease spread – from farm to farm, from bin to bin and from field to field. Proper cleaning and disinfecting of vehicles and equipment is key to reducing the risk of disease spread. The Canadian Potato Council recently held a webinar on Sanitization (available online; contact me for the link), and there are numerous other resources available to producers, including a National Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for Potato Growers (just Google that phrase).

## **PEI Agriculture Climate Solutions Program**

The Departments of Agriculture and Land and Environment, Energy and Climate Action are launching the Prince Edward Island Agriculture Climate Solutions Program to help Island farmers combat climate change.

The pilot, beginning April 1, 2021, will support activities in the field or on the farm that reduce greenhouse gases or that store carbon in the soil.

"Our government and our province's agricultural sector are committed to addressing climate change. Together we will help the industry adapt at the same time as we reduce agriculture's impact on climate change." says Hon. Bloyce Thompson, Minister of Agriculture and Land.

Applications open April 1 and can be accessed at: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/news/new-program-help-farmers-fight-climate-change>.

# Industry Updates

## \$2.1M in Funding to Assist Temporary Foreign Workers Who are Affected by COVID

(Ottawa, ON) – KAIROS Canada is pleased to announce that the Government of Canada has awarded it \$2.18 million to support and to assist temporary foreign workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on the agricultural sector.

Funded by the Government of Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program, this project targets the Maritimes and Ontario and will end on June 30, 2021.

Government of Canada funds will be used to expand support and services to temporary foreign workers in these regions. It is a timely and much-needed funding infusion for our partners and community organizations that have been supporting workers with limited means throughout the pandemic.

The project's key components are information sharing, and capacity building to provide access to resources and services for temporary foreign workers. Through government information resources, tutorials, workshops and webinars, temporary foreign workers will learn about health and safety precautions related to COVID-19, and the proper and effective use of personal protective equipment, hygiene and sanitation, and other related public health protocols.

The funding will strengthen network capacity to accompany workers in accessing services and benefits (including medical), exercising their rights, and receiving direct services and emergency assistance. KAIROS and partners will also identify any service gaps that need filling.

Partner organizations are the Cooper Institute in PEI, Filipino-Canadian Community of New Brunswick (FCNB), No One Is Illegal – Halifax; and in Ontario: The Neighbourhood Organization (TNO), Durham Region Migrant Workers Ministry, Center for Migrant Workers Solidarity in Simcoe. Collaboration with additional community organizations and service providing agencies in these regions is anticipated.

## Opportunity to Support New Research

### Understanding the Experience of Farm Women A Proposed Research Project

Much has been said about the role of women on the farm, but little has been measured. The roles and participation of women in farming is changing. While the Census of Agriculture reports that about 1/3 of farms have a woman as a primary decision maker (either as sole proprietor or in a partnership), there is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that women are positioned to influence decision-making in ways that go far beyond Census measurement. Furthermore, as the majority of graduates from Canadian post-secondary agricultural programs are female, women are leading in expertise development, suggesting that the number of females involved in farming will not only continue to rise, but their roles will strengthen.

Recent research indicates farm women play a critical role in farm business management, decision-making, and farm transition, however report significant levels of stress related to these and other roles including maintaining family and farm team harmony.

Farm Management Canada and CentricEngine Inc.

are undertaking an important and timely research project that will provide a comprehensive baseline for understanding the roles, status, barriers and opportunities to support women involved in farming.

The research will cover:

- Participation/leadership in decision-making
- Participation/leadership in specific farm management tasks
- Participation/leadership in specific operational tasks
- The current experience of farm women
- Perceived level of recognition by internal and external stakeholders
- Perceived barriers and constraints to further participation/leadership
- Goals for the operation
- Personal goals of farm women
- Advisors and influencer relationships

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In order to undertake the proposed research project, public and private sector support is required.

To discuss further or to find out how your organization can participate contact: Heather Watson, Heather.Watson@fmc-gac.com, (613) 295-3386.

## Éco+ Distributor of the Stockosorb660 Hydrogel in Eastern Canada.

Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu, January 2021 - Éco+ is proud to announce the addition of a revolutionary technology, Stockosorb660, to its product line.

Marc Richard Agr., President of Eco + said: "We are very proud to offer Stockosorb660 to farmers, as this product responds well to current environmental issues. This product registered by the CFIA absorbs extra water from rainfall and releases it whenever the crop needs it. In addition, it mixes well with fertilizer to ease application and leaves no harmful residues for the environment. We are proud to present an eco-friendly product. Producers will be able to purchase this product from their local supplier today."

In fact, this hydrogel technology consists of storing water and nutrients in small hydrogel granules to release it

later on according to the plants' needs. The root is hydrated more regularly and over a longer period thus reducing the whims of mother nature. Thanks to this technology, a single Stockosorb660 crystal can absorb up to 200 times its weight in water. Under irrigation, it can reduce the watering frequency by up to 50%. Stockosorb660 allows a better management of our precious natural resource.

In 2020, farmers have used this product over 3500 Acres across Eastern Canada and PEI. We have been following up on 12 plots and the results demonstrate a very promising increase in yield. Check our website for field trials near you!

For more information please contact us or visit our website [www.eco-plus.ca](http://www.eco-plus.ca)

Geneviève Richard 450-584-1122 [grichard@eco-plus.ca](mailto:grichard@eco-plus.ca)  
[www.facebook.com/ecoplus.ca](http://www.facebook.com/ecoplus.ca)

## Peak of the Market's Larry McIntosh Retiring after Twenty-Seven Years

March 10, 2021 (Winnipeg, MB) - It is with mixed emotion that we announce the retirement of Larry McIntosh after 27 years as Peak of the Market's President and CEO.

"Larry's commitment, dedication and extreme passion to the produce industry and to Peak of the Market will not be forgotten, stated Peter Loewen, Chair of Peak of the Market. We are grateful for his contributions and wish him nothing but the best in the future."

Larry McIntosh stated "I am very proud of the entire Team at Peak of the Market. Together, over the years, we have grown the Company and have accomplished so many major milestones. The Team's dedication to Growers, Customers, Suppliers and to each other says so much about the Company."

Larry will continue to be with Peak of the Market until at least June. He plans to continue his volunteer work as a Director on the Canadian Red Cross, a Past Chair of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association and on his recently appointed position to the new Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council.



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## AIM 2021

The Agrology Initiative for Marketable Yield (AIM) is looking for cooperating growers for the following projects:

### Living Labs – Full Season Soil Building Crops:

- For growers in EPAA, Kensington North or Souris Watersheds
- Evaluating one or more full-season soil-building crops versus a check crop (red clover or ryegrass). Potatoes in 2022.
- Per acre payment to help cover seed/management costs.
- Additional funding available if interested in planting flowering species (pollinator friendly)

### Biofumigation: Caliente mustard

- Looking for growers interested in comparing Caliente Rojo mustard/arugula mix with Centennial mustard, sorghum sudangrass, and check (ryegrass). Potatoes in 2022.
- Caliente Rojo seed supplied (up to 10 acres). Also a small payment to help cover management costs
- Mustard to be established in May, incorporated in late June/early July, followed by cover crop.

### Seed Piece Size:

- Looking for growers interested in comparing performance (on field scale) of different seed piece sizes or segregated seed sizes (small whole planted separately from large whole or cut) versus grower standard practice.

### Subsoiling Ahead of the Planter:

- Looking for growers interested in comparing subsoiling done directly ahead of the potato planter using GPS. Subsoiler shanks should be spaced at same width as rows (34 or 36 inch). Visits to suggested fields will take place in advance of tillage to do compaction testing. Have a couple of fields lined up already, looking for 1 or 2 more.

### Velum Prime:

- Looking for growers interested in comparing the use of Velum Prime in-furrow versus Velum Prime plus early application of Luna Tranquility at row closure, versus check.

Contact Ryan Barrett at (902) 892-6551 or [ryan@peipotato.org](mailto:ryan@peipotato.org) if interested in participating.

## 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.

### April 2021

April 13 Monthly Potato Board Meeting.

### May 2021

May 31 PEI Potato Crop Insurance Application Deadline.

### June 2021

June 22 United Potato Growers Transition Conference, Minneapolis..

June 23 Monthly Potato Board Meeting.

June 30 CFIA Seed Potato Crop Inspection Application Deadline.

June 30 Potato Acreage Registration Deadline.

## Fox Island Elite Seed Potato Farm

### Seed For Sale

Clearwater Russet	400 cwt
Yukon Gem	150 cwt
Defender	15 cwt

Call Mary Kay at (902) 892-6551 for more information and to book seed.



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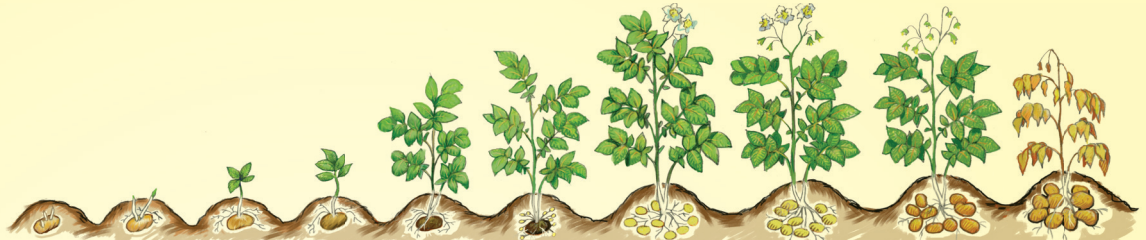
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			Residual control of European corn borer and Colorado potato beetle. Reduced risk product with minimal impact to many important beneficial insects. Short 1-day PHI.		
			Consistent, systemic control of leafhoppers. Short 7-day PHI.		
			Systemic, residual control of sucking and chewing pests, including Colorado potato beetle, European corn borer, armyworms, flea beetles and aphids. Short 7-day PHI.		