

Prince Edward Island

May/June 2021
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POTATO NEWS



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POTATO NEWS

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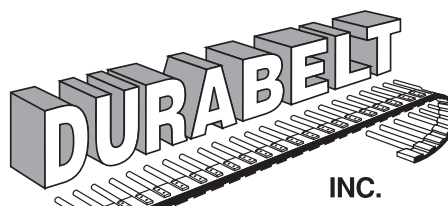
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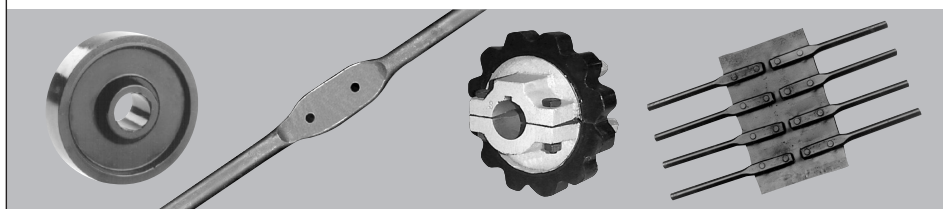
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Cover: There are a lot of moving parts at the end of the field as the planter is loaded with seed and fertilizer. Central PEI. Photo: M.K. Sonier.



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Chairman's Comments

by Wayne Townshend, PEI Potato Board Chairman



At the time of writing it is looking to be an average spring as soils remained cool until the middle of May. A few update comments:

We have received positive news on final decisions from PMRA that allow us to retain several options in our pest control toolbox. Full reports and links to the PMRA website can be found later in this issue.

The regulations for the new Water Act come in to force on June 16. The Board is looking forward to the start of the research project on high capacity well use for agricultural irrigation. In the meantime, the Board continues to work with the Federation of Agriculture and the Province to see that a water strategy for agriculture is developed and put into practice soon. To date, Minister Myers and Minister Thompson have indicated support and we look forward to moving ahead in a positive manner on this file.

Board elections are coming up in July. Please see the notice on page 6 for details on putting your name forward or signing a nomination form for a representative from your district.

On another note, it feels like the public is open to learning more about farming and to hear directly from farmers about the practices on our farms and the changes we've been implementing with respect to environmental sustainability. We commend those who have taken the time to talk to neighbours and friends, on social media, and in the media (whether in interviews, letters to the editor, and so on).

An excellent example of this was the piece written by Bryan Maynard in April. Bryan read lots of letters in the newspapers from those who condemn farmers and have little to no knowledge of current farming practices in PEI or elsewhere. He decided to write a letter to the editor to share his perspective on farming, and his interest in finding ways to make things better. He submitted his letter, but was told he needed to shorten it a great deal before it could

be published. After thinking about that, and all the negative letters that had been given space over time, he chose not to cut down his letter and instead shared it on Facebook, and asked people to share it with their contacts as well.

Board staff and members saw it, and thought it deserved to be published in the newspaper. The only way to do it was to pay to have it placed in the Guardian. The Board shared the post with other farmers, and gave them the opportunity to add their names as supporting Bryan's message if they chose. We were really happy to have so many family farms respond in a very short time that they were willing to have their names published as well. Others missed the tight window we had for people to sign on, and contacted the Board office to say they'd missed reading their emails but would have added their names if they'd seen it in time. We thank Bryan and all the farms that supported this initiative to get more factual information out to Islanders. The feedback was very positive.

It isn't easy to find the energy to engage with those who condemn farmers who are growing crops to feed people.

We even saw the National Farmers Union joining with some activists to run radio ads this spring slamming farmers and using inflammatory words against our farmers and our industry. However, we cannot let them tell our story. We need to talk about what we're doing and why we do it because the survival of our family farms is being threatened, in many cases, by people who have no interest in two way dialogue or recognizing the investments that have been made and are continuing to be made in sustainability. We've seen that Islanders do want to hear from farmers and we need to continue to reach out to them.

Safe planting and best wishes for a good growing season ahead.

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PEI Potato Board News

Seed Potato Certification Regulation Task Teams Will Start Work in June

The CFIA Seed Regulation Review consultation process officially began in the winter of 2021 with an on-line Needs Assessment Survey. 179 responses were received overall with 48 of these identifying as potato growers (seed and non-seed) and potato packers/brokers.

The next phase of the consultation involves a dedicated task team review of specific sections of the regulations. For seed potatoes, task teams have been established to look at sections of the regulations that deal with:

1. Traceability
2. Field Inspection
3. Certification
4. Grading
5. Movement
6. Variety Registration
7. Imports/Exports
8. Testing Standards

The task team members representing stakeholders include individual growers, industry organization staff, CFIA staff, and representatives of companies involved in seed purchasing as well as those involved in the variety development process and seed testing process.

The task teams will begin meeting in June. Anyone from the Island industry who is interested in being involved should contact Mary Kay Sonier at (902) 892-6551.

AgrilInsurance Update

Bev Francis, Insurance Manager, PEI Agricultural Insurance Corporation

The sign up deadline for AgrilInsurance with the Prince Edward Island Agricultural Insurance Corporation (AIC) is May 31st, 2021. To date, 2021 has seen a slight increase in premium rates for most crops, in part due to losses incurred by the dry growing conditions in 2020. AIC paid approximately \$27

million in indemnities to insured potato producers in 2020 under the Potato Production Insurance Plans.

The Government of PEI has approved an increase to the base unit price for potatoes insured in 2021 to \$12.50/cwt. This represents a \$0.50 increase in the base unit price. Program changes for 2021 include the removal of “dead-by-deadlines” for eligibility for quality coverage of lots that fail Post Harvest Virus Tests (PHVT) under the Elite Seed Potato Plan. The requirement for an intensive aphid control program replaces eligibility criteria for quality coverage due to failed PHVT. Due to federal program regulations beginning in 2021, the Unharvested Acreage Benefit can only be offered to producers that have selected a maximum coverage level of 80% for Production Insurance. Finally, AIC has received approval to change the Formula Benchmark methodology used in calculating Probable Yields, whereby the Provincial Benchmark used for the first five years of coverage is the most recent Provincial Benchmark. In the past, the methodology assigned was to use and retain the benchmark assigned the first year a producer grew a specific

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crop or variety. AIC continues to work on program changes and new insurance plans to keep our programs relevant.

The Late Blight Incentive Program has been re-offered for the 2021 crop year with a \$50,000 fund to encourage insured growers to identify and manage infections as early as possible. If late blight is detected, please contact your Agricultural Insurance Officer immediately for details.

Reminder to growers of the requirement to file a Notice of Loss (NOL) with the AIC when insurable perils are identified that could potentially result in a loss of production. NOL's are required under the regulations of the program and are to be filed within five working days from when the loss was noticed to inform the AIC of the potential of an indemnity. The forms can be filled out through Agricultural Insurance Officers and will be available on AIC's webpage for electronic submission.

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.

As announced in the spring of 2020, PEIAIC will continue to offer a 10% discount for all insurance premiums for the 2021 crop year. This support is being funded by the Department of Agriculture and Land and the Government of Prince Edward Island. AIC is also pleased to offer more payment options, including e-transfer (up to \$10,000), or we can be set up as a payable online if you bank with BMO, Scotiabank, CIBC, National Bank, Credit Union, and Royal Bank. For inquiries, contact your Agricultural Insurance Officer, or email AICInsurance@gov.pe.ca. We wish all growers a safe and prosperous crop year!

Prince Edward Island Potato Board Launches Podcast: Spudchat

(Charlottetown, PEI - April 27th, 2021) The Prince Edward Island Potato Board is excited to share with potato farmers and industry partners the launch of a new podcast, Spudchat. This weekly podcast is hosted by Ryan Barrett, Research and Agronomy Specialist, and will feature conversations with a variety of farmers, researchers, agronomists, and industry partners. Spudchat will primarily focus on agronomic topics of importance to potato farmers, including pest and disease management, soil health, improved crop rotations, seed management, precision agriculture, and more.

Wayne Townshend, Chair of the PEI Potato Board, notes that "increasingly, farmers are getting information in a variety of different methods. Podcasts, which can be downloaded and listened to at a convenient time, maybe when in the tractor or the truck, is another way to share

information on innovative technologies and improved practices with our membership."

This podcast is available to stream or download at <https://spudchat.buzzsprout.com/>.

NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

Elections are being held under Section 11 of the Potato Marketing Plan Regulations to fill four vacancies on the PEI Potato Board created by the expiration of terms in office of Craig Wallace, Processing Director for the West District; John Visser, Tablestock Director for the Central District; Billy Cameron, Seed Director for the East District and Wayne Townshend, at-large Seed Director. Craig Wallace, John Visser and Billy Cameron are eligible for re-election this year, however, due to boundary and governance changes, Billy Cameron is eligible to run only as an at-large Seed Director. Having served two consecutive terms already, Wayne Townshend is not eligible to be re-elected this year.

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

1. Be registered with the Potato Board on June 30, 2021;
2. Meet the classification requirements;
3. If interested in a district position, be nominated by ten producers located in the district the person seeks to represent who are registered with the Board on June 30, 2021;
4. If interested in an at-large position, be nominated by ten producers from any part of the province who are registered with the Board on June 30, 2021;
5. Have delivered to the Returning Officer, or have mailed and postmarked no later than the last day of July 2021, a properly completed nomination form; and
6. Indicate a willingness to serve by signing the Nomination Form.

Nomination forms are available from the Prince Edward Island Potato Board, or from the PEI Marketing Council Office. Nomination forms containing original signatures must be delivered or postmarked no later than July 31, 2021 to:

Ian McIsaac, Returning Officer
Potato Board Elections
Suite 216 Farm Centre, 420 University Avenue,
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PMRA Final Special Review Decisions

**Summary on these final decisions provided
by David Jones at the Canadian Potato Council**

On March 31, 2021, the PMRA published the Final Special Review Decisions (risk to aquatic invertebrates) for the neonicotinoid insecticides clothianidin and thiamethoxam. In August 2018, the PMRA proposed the discontinuation, over a 3 to 5 year period, of all outdoor food and feed uses of clothianidin and thiamethoxam, including potato seed piece treatment, in-furrow and foliar uses. This special review decision takes into consideration the additional mitigation measures put in place as a result of the pollinator re-evaluation.

Further details on the Final Decision on Clothianidin (Titan/Clutch/Emesto Quantum) SRD2021-03 are available online at:

ENGLISH: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/reports-publications/pesticides-pest-management/decisions-updates/special-registration-decision/2021/clothianidin.html>;

FRENCH: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-canada/services/securite-produits-consommation/rapports-publications/pesticides-lutte-antiparasitaire/decisions-mises-jour/decision-examen-special/2021/clothianidine.html>.

The following points summarize the PMRA Final Special Review Decision for clothianidin use on potatoes:

- Continued registration of the use as a potato seed piece treatment (PSPT);
- Cancellation of the use on potatoes as an in-furrow application;
- Reduction in the maximum number of foliar applications from current 3 to 1 per season (maximum use rate remains unchanged);
- Add risk mitigation measures to the product labels including revised buffer zones for foliar ground and aerial applications to terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

Further details on the Final Decision on Thiamethoxam (Cruiser/Cruiser Maxx Potato Extreme/Actara/Minecto Duo): SRD2021-04 are available online at:

ENGLISH: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/reports-publications/pesticides-pest-management/decisions-updates/special-registration-decision/2021/thiamethoxam.html>;

FRENCH: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante->

[canada/services/securite-produits-consommation/rapports-publications/pesticides-lutte-antiparasitaire/decisions-mises-jour/decision-examen-special/2021/thiamethoxame.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/securite-produits-consommation/rapports-publications/pesticides-lutte-antiparasitaire/decisions-mises-jour/decision-examen-special/2021/thiamethoxame.html)

The following points summarize the PMRA Final Special Review Decision for thiamethoxam use on potatoes:

- Continued registration of the use as a potato seed piece treatment (PSPT);
- Continued registration of the use as an in-furrow application;
- Cancellation of the use on potatoes as a soil drench application (surface band over the seedline);
- Reduction in the maximum number of foliar applications from current 2 to 1 per season (maximum use rate remains unchanged);
- Add risk mitigation measures to the product labels including revised buffer zones for foliar ground and aerial applications to terrestrial habitats and new buffer zones to freshwater habitats.

These decisions relate only to the risk to aquatic invertebrates, and please note that there are several other reviews ongoing that may impact the future use of the neonicotinoid insecticides in potatoes. Those important ongoing reviews and dates are:

- Proposed Special Review Decisions (risk to squash bees) for both clothianidin and thiamethoxam, are scheduled for publication for public consultation in April to June 2021;
- Proposed General Re-evaluation Decisions for both clothianidin and thiamethoxam, are scheduled for publication for public consultation in April to June 2022;
- Final Re-evaluation Decision for imidacloprid (Admire/Alias/Concept), pending publication in April to June 2021.

Product labels must be amended, if required, within 24-months (changed from the proposed 3 to 5 year phase-out) of the date of publication of the Final Decisions.





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PMRA Re-evaluation Decision for lambda-cyhalothrin

On April 29, 2021, the PMRA published the Re-evaluation Decision (RVD2021-04) for lambda-cyhalothrin (Matador/Silencer/Warrior/Voliam Express insecticides). In the June 2017 Proposed Re-evaluation Decision, the PMRA identified risks of concern from dietary exposures resulting in the proposed cancellation of all feed and food uses, including potatoes.

Lambda-cyhalothrin is currently registered in potatoes for the foliar control of potato flea beetle, potato leaf hopper, tarnished plant bug, tuber flea beetle, European corn borer and Colorado potato beetle (maximum 3 or 2 applications by ground or aerial application, respectively).

The PMRA Re-evaluation Decision for lambda-cyhalothrin is to continue the use on potatoes (both ground and aerial) with added risk mitigation measures including:

- A mandatory vegetative filter strip between the treatment area and the edge of a down-gradient water body to reduce runoff to aquatic environments;
- Spray buffer zones to protect non-target aquatic habitats (buffer zones differ by product formulation);
- Environmental hazard statements for bees, beneficial

arthropods (parasitic insects and predatory mites), small wild mammals, and aquatic organisms;

- A 12-hour re-entry interval (REI) for all post-application activities in potatoes;
- Use of closed cab application equipment or use of a respirator for open cab if the total product applied per day exceeds 7.15 kg active ingredient (this quantity would treat approximately 72 ha at the low label rate).

The Re-evaluation Decision for lambda-cyhalothrin is now available on the PMRA website at:

EN: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/reports-publications/pesticides-pest-management/decisions-updates/reevaluation-decision/2021/lambda-cyhalothrin.html>.

FR: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-canada/services/securite-produits-consommation/rapports-publications/pesticides-lutte-antiparasitaire/decisions-mises-jour/decision-reevaluation/2021/lambda-cyhalothrin.html>.

Product labels must be amended within 24-months of the date of publication.

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Processing Contracts 2021

by Scott Howatt, Processing Coordinator

A change to past patterns and beliefs - is this the beginning of a new way of doing business?!

As in most years past, processing potato contract negotiations in 2021 started in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) region of the United States. And, like most years, the PNW settlements set a benchmark for all other potato processing areas across the continent. Unlike in years past, in 2021 growers in the other areas of the continent worked with their processors to come to agreements that did not follow the PNW of the USA.

The negotiation season began with one, two-year contract from 2020 at McCain Foods in Wisconsin. That agreement represents a \$0.50 per hundredweight (cwt) increase to their contract base prices on a weighted basis, valued as approx. 5% up by the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association. This left ten potato grower groups in North America (NA) needing to come to terms for their 2021 crop with their French fry processors.

The economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the North American and global market places were front and center in the discussions between processors and growers across NA. The processors brought a cautious and, some might say, pessimistic view of the near-future to the contract talks, while growers brought a hopeful, optimistic view of the recovery from the pandemic. In some cases, processors showed details of the serious negative impact that the lock downs have had on their sales volumes and how prices have softened during the past year. Grower reps countered with the economic indicators showing that in Q4 of 2021 and in 2022 (when the contracted potatoes will be delivered) the recovery from COVID will be underway. Growers also shared how the 2020 volume cuts they received from the processors placed an economic burden on their farms and they demonstrated in detail how their crop input costs are increasing for 2021. Fertilizer, crop protectants, fuel, repairs and maintenance, insurance, and the cost of manufactured goods have all become more expensive to purchase. As processors claimed their budgets needed a reduction in the cost of potatoes to help secure their market share and their margins, growers argued that their processing contracts needed to be improved for growers to just maintain financial sustainability. This article will try to illustrate for the reader how this year's contract talks resulted in the most diverse range of settlements in recent memory. The settlement values reported within this article have been provided by members of the Potato

Marketing Association of North America. Please note that the agreements in the States are valued in USD, while agreements in Canada are valued in CDN currency.

The Potato Growers of Washington and Lamb Weston were the first ones to the table and despite the growers documenting cost of production increases which warranted a 4% increase to the overall value of their contracts, their largest processor demanded a price reduction. After attempts to resolve differences and find compromise failed, the grower membership voted to reject an offer for a 3% reduction to base prices. After this vote to reject, processor reps visited their growers individually and asked them to sign contracts that were 3% down on a weighted average field run basis. Some base prices had little change while others had more than a 10% reduction depending on the variety and delivery period. Next in line was Idaho, where growers for the same processor narrowly voted to accept the same 3% down offer. Once these contracts were in place, the other fryers of the region (McCain Foods and JR. Simplot) followed with similar offers. With last year's overall volume reductions in the PNW ranging from 12 to 25% (some individual growers received volume cuts as high as 50%) the promise of contract volumes returning to 90-95% of pre-pandemic levels was a major factor in Washington and Idaho. There are articles in other publications on the results of the contract talks in the Pacific Northwest this year and how these results have strained relations between the growers and the Fryers. In 2020, contract growers were asked to carry the burden of the pandemic via volume cuts - imagine your business's sales being cut by 25%. This year, the fryers in the PNW pushed a price cut onto their growers that represents a 7% swing from last year (3% from reduced contract values plus 4% increases in cost of production), a huge hit to family farm businesses.

The rest of the processing grower groups in North America watched these happenings in the PNW in disbelief. For years, we witnessed the processing sector of the Columbia Basin being the benchmark of the North American potato industry in many ways - as leaders in growth via capital investment and acreage, being leaders in productivity via increasing yields and modernization, and being out-front in innovation and in relationships via partnership farms and long term arrangements. Watching the goings-on in the Basin and in Idaho left many other North American processing growers shaking their heads.

Due to agronomic methods to control soil-borne pests and the huge investments in water access and irrigation and

land rental, most processing growers in the Columbia Basin have over \$1,000 USD invested into each of their potato acres before they even enter the fields with their planters in the spring. The option of not growing potatoes is actually a more expensive and a very wasteful option. In the end, the growers in the PNW had few options but to sign the contracts that were delivered to them.

Following the contracts in Washington and Idaho, growers “next door” in Malheur County, Oregon accepted a 2.75% reduction to their contract prices. Meanwhile, processing growers across Canada fortified their negotiation positions with cost of production information and storage holdings data. We then saw a return to “old-style negotiations” with parties on both sides of the tables across NA seeming to wait and see “who will blink first”. The first sign of the possibility that the rest of North America would not be following the reductions of the PNW was when the JR Simplot growers of North Dakota were offered a “roll-over” of their 2020 contracts along with volume increases back to 2019 levels. This extension of the 2020 contract terms into 2021 came as all agriculture was watching strong increases in corn and soybean pricing for 2021 and as serious concerns were being raised on the drought conditions in Manitoba and the Midwest.

With processing contracts finished in Wisconsin and all other States west of the Mississippi River, focus shifted to talks in Canada. The Potato Growers of Alberta (PGA) found themselves in a unique position with a strong increase offered last year by one of their fryers on the condition that this spring the PGA would get the other two fryers to agree to the same increase. Alberta growers were unified in their desire to achieve a major portion of that conditional offer to increase contract value; however, they would need to convince all three companies of the need for a significant price increase in Alberta.

While PGA was talking with their fryers, PEI growers were in the last days of legislated contract mediation with Cavendish Farms and the growers of Manitoba, Keystone Potato Producers Association (KPPA) were busy meeting separately with representatives of both McCain Foods and JR Simplot. The first sign of settlement came when the growers of Manitoba voted to accept contract increases for 2021 worth approximately 2.5% with both processors. Together with an increase in contract volume, this became the best settlement-to-date of 2021. In the next few days, with an arbitration deadline looming, the processing growers of PEI and the officials of Cavendish Farms found a compromise with assistance from their mediator and agreed to an increase of 1.425% for 2021 with the same volume in 2021 as 2020 (footnote: PEI growers had one of

the lowest volume cuts in NA last year).

Within days of these settlements, PGA advised that their 2021 talks had concluded and the three companies had agreed to increase their pre-season contracts by 2.5-2.7% depending on delivery periods. That same day, New Brunswick growers voted to accept a deal worth approx. 2.5%. By the end of the week, Maine growers represented by the Agricultural Bargaining Council had a deal with McCain Foods for an increase valued at approx. 1.9%. Each one of these last settlements came with increases to contracted volume compared to 2020. These volume increases allowed growers across Canada and Maine to finalize their crop financing based on similar volumes as 2019.

So how did this happen? How did grower organizations outside of the PNW turn the tide of negative contracts being delivered by the multi-national processors in Washington and Idaho? There is no simple answer to this query. The main reason, as always in the potato business, is Supply. There is one hard fact that the large multi-nationals would rather their growers forget... a French fry processing plant is designed and built to do only one job, turn processing potatoes into a variety of quality, frozen potato products, period. Without an ample supply of potatoes these plants either run inefficiently or not at all. Potato farmers across North America (except in the Basin and in Idaho where they fumigate cropland the previous fall to grow said potatoes) can take their ground and grow other crops. NOW, few potato farmers ever want to do that. Most farm families are very appreciative of their processing customers and their investment in modern facilities and these families are very loyal to their processors and they want these relationships to last for generations. HOWEVER, family farm businesses must be sustainable and they need to be profitable to be sustainable and agreeing to lower-valued contracts when the cost of growing a crop is already known to be greater, well that is not sustainable.

The story of the 2021 contract negotiations in North America is not over. For years, I have watched relationships ebb and flow between growers and processing executives, and I see a big challenge ahead for the processors of the PNW to “mend fences” with their potato suppliers. From my vantage point, a lot of great work from years of relationship-building has been put aside by a focus on bottom lines and reports to shareholders and Boards of Directors. Family owned and operated processing companies showed they understand the need to keep their growers profitable and they showed what it truly means to be in a relationship of working together with their growers. Perhaps the restaurateurs and food distributors of North America want to be part of that truly-sustainable system.

PQI Celebrates 25 Years!

by Mary Kay Sonier and Ellen Kouwenberg

From 1992-1995, changes to seed potato regulations in Canada were on the table, and for the body then responsible for seed potato inspection - Agriculture Canada Food Production and Inspection Branch - cost recovery and cost cutting was the order of the day. Agriculture Canada seed potato testing labs located across the country were victims of this cost cutting exercise and by April 1996, labs in Vancouver, Winnipeg, La Pocatière, Fredericton and Charlottetown were closed, the new Centre for Animal and Plant Health was built in Charlottetown and routine potato testing had been moved to a handful of private labs accredited by Agriculture Canada.

The Potato Quality Institute (PQI) is one of those labs. Ivan Noonan, then General Manager of the PEI Potato Board, Rory Francis, then PEI Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and John MacQuarrie Deputy Minister were the driving force in ensuring that PEI had a local testing lab to support the industry and that costs be kept reasonable for growers.

Ellen Larsen Kouwenberg was hired as a consultant to prepare the feasibility study for the industry to determine the viability of an industry owned lab, and upon its acceptance by industry, worked alongside Ivan Noonan, to locate a building, eventually settling on the location in the West Royalty Industrial Park. With three months to be ready, a laboratory on the second floor was built, equipment purchased and installed, supplies purchased, Quality Assurance programs developed and staff trained and certified by CFIA.

Within the first year, an application was made to fund research into non-mandatory post harvest virus testing methods. Greenhouse facilities were rented at the Charlottetown Research Station and at the Forestry location on Upton Road. This testing eventually became mandatory, and a busy time followed for Ellen and her staff as the three other private laboratories on PEI eventually closed their doors landing 100% of the Island's testing needs on the doorstep of PQI.

In those early years, demand was high for regulatory testing. As well as BRR testing, a number of smaller greenhouse operations around the Island required annual audit testing of their nuclear stock, there were export testing needs, clonal selection was still a process being used for early generation seed that also required lab testing and the greenhouse and laboratory post harvest virus test process was in development. Over the years, regulations, protocols and markets changed the way PQI operated but the goal of



meeting industry needs for testing has not changed.

When Ellen left after 8 years to begin a family, Pat Quilty stepped out of the role of Lab Manager into the position of Operations Manager. PQI has been fortunate to have many loyal and long serving staff who look after the day to day tasks. Gordon Wheatley, Warehouse Supervisor, has been with PQI since the beginning, Pat Quilty, Operations Manager, and Marilyn Johnston, Office Administrator, have been with PQI for over 20 years and lab technicians Laurene Clow and Tracy Singleton have been at PQI for over 15 years. PQI has also been a site to train young lab professionals. They have worked through SKILLS PEI and other federal and provincial government training programs to provide valuable work experience for new graduates.

As time progresses, testing methods and protocols evolve. In 2011, PQI received support from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land as well as funds from the Potato Board /PQI for expansion of their lab facilities and to purchase new equipment to expand into PCR testing. This has made their service to the industry more responsive and in keeping with industry standards. More recently they have expanded into *Verticillium* and nematode soil testing as interest in soil health and controlling these silent yield robbers has expanded.

PQI heads into the next 25 year in a strong position to continue meeting industry needs!

Continued PVY Transmission & Management Research

by Mary Kay Sonier, Seed Coordinator

Use of mineral oil in seed potato spray programs has been strongly encouraged in Atlantic Canada since the late 1990's when the industry was facing high aphid populations and increasing spread of both PVY and PLRV. During this time period, adoption of in-furrow insecticide use and early topkill for seed fields resulted in a dramatic drop in PLRV infection. The focus on late season spread of virus (which was key for PLRV control) meant that initially oils and insecticides were being applied from mid-July onwards. As a result, while PLRV infection (spread by late season vectors) was brought under control, PVY proved to be more of a challenge.

Research in New Brunswick by Tyler MacKenzie and Mathuresh Singh of the Agricultural Certification Services lab of Potatoes New Brunswick, and Xianzhou Nie of the AAFC Potato Research Centre in Fredericton, from 2010 to 2015 greatly improved our understanding of the timing of PVY spread in the Atlantic region. Their observations demonstrated that PVY spread was taking place as early as late June to mid July - when plants were young and growing rapidly and were very susceptible to virus infection. Their research at that time also showed that early and regular oil applications, both alone and combined with insecticide sprays, reduced virus transmission significantly compared to no sprays or insecticide sprays alone. (Figure 1). This



Severe mosaic symptoms in the Goldrush variety. Photo: M.K. Sonier.

information has resulted in changes in recommended production practices and many growers now start their spray program shortly after plant emergence and maintain a regular oil and insecticide spray program throughout the season. However, while seed quality in terms of virus content has improved over the years, we still see variations in PVY levels from year to year.

There are three main factors that affect the spread of PVY within potato fields – some that grower practices can impact, and some that are a function of the environment:

- A. Presence of Disease Inoculum:** if no disease is present, there is no disease to spread. However, in our current environment, there is always some level of PVY inoculum in both seed and non-seed potato fields. In the Atlantic region, where seed potato and commercial potato fields are often in close proximity, provincial industries have tried to maintain a good environment for seed production by placing a cap on virus levels in seed that may be planted for both commercial and seed recertification purposes, working to keep the overall disease inoculum low. Seed growers can further limit in-field inoculum by planting seed with the lowest Post Harvest Virus Test reading available to them and early roguing to remove any virus plants that may be in the planted seed.
- B. Presence of Vectors that Spread the Disease:** Unlike Potato Leafroll virus, which can be spread by a limited number of aphid species vectors, there are a great number of species of aphids that are able to spread PVY. Many of these species are not colonizers of potatoes, but move through potato fields, probing and infecting plants while they search for suitable hosts. The abundance of aphid vectors is variable from year to year and very dependent on the climate and local weather conditions. Although the number of aphid vectors is not controllable, monitoring their abundance and timing seed planting and spraying activities around them are under a grower's control.
- C. Host Crop:** The susceptibility of the potato plant can be affected by a variety of factors including management practices employed by the producer:
 - Variety selection (natural varietal resistance to virus infection);
 - Stage of growth (development of mature plant resistance later in the season);
 - Delayed planting (to avoid early aphid flushes);

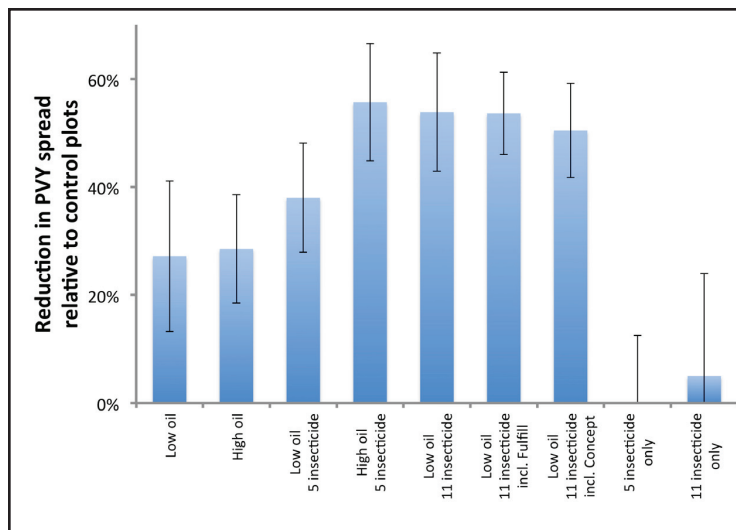


Figure 1: Effectiveness of various foliar spraying treatments on reduction of PVY spread. Bars are averages of trials in two different years, and indicate reduction of PVY spread from the level measured in control (unsprayed) plots. Most effective treatments were combined mineral oil & insecticide spray, followed by mineral oil spray alone, and insecticide spray alone had no effect on PVY spread reduction. PVY spread in control plots in each year averaged 11% (2014) and 22% (2015). Data from: MacKenzie, Tyler DB, Jacques Lavoie, Xianzhou Nie, and Mathuresh Singh. American Journal of Potato Research 94, no. 1 (2017): 70-80 .

- Reducing the time between emergence and the first application of oil and insecticide to reduce the time plants are unprotected; and
- Following a regular spray program combining insecticides and mineral oil.

MacKenzie, Singh and Nie have continued research in this area due to recent concerns that one of the common insecticides used in New Brunswick as part of a virus control program (lambda cyhalothrin – trade names Silencer® and Matador®) was under review by PMRA. Although the recently released review decision does allow continued use of this product on potatoes in Canada, one of the objectives of this pro-active research project, to identify effective alternatives less likely to be banned or cause development of resistance in target insects, remains relevant for successful Integrated Pest Management programs. Research was carried out during the 2018, 2019 and 2020 growing seasons in large plot trials at the AAFC Potato Research Centre in Fredericton. Plots included infected plants to provide a standard 1.4% PVY inoculum level that included three strains of PVY – PVY^O, PVY^{N:O} and PVY^{NTN}.

This study confirmed the research group's previous findings that a regular program of combined mineral oil and insecticide sprays is superior for reducing PVY spread than insecticide or oil alone. They also showed evidence of enhanced retention of pyrethroid insecticide in the potato foliage for many days when simultaneously sprayed with mineral oil.

As an alternative to Silencer®, the pyrethroid deltamethrin (Decis®) when sprayed in combination with mineral oil showed similar effectiveness and cost. This finding was consistent over the three years.

These studies also addressed the recent rapid spread of new PVY strains. There is evidence that these new strains spread faster than the traditional PVY^O, and have recently come to dominate potato crops locally. This study confirms

that PVY^{NTN} spread approximately 6 times, and PVY^{N:O} 4 times, more effectively than PVY^O under field conditions in our region.

The results of these recent field trials are currently being prepared for publication later in 2021.

Key Messages for Minimizing PVY Spread

- **Plant CFIA certified seed with the lowest PVY level available.**
- **Weekly application of at least 2 L per acre of mineral oil from soon after emergence until shortly before top kill, combined with use of effective insecticides has been proven to result in the lowest rate of PVY spread.**
- **Consider delaying planting if possible to avoid early season aphid populations, as well as decreasing the interval between plant emergence and first spraying.**
- **Early roguing, even in plots planted with seed having a zero virus PHT result, is important to reduce the risk of in-field virus spread.**
- **Isolate seed fields from non-seed fields where possible.**
- **Use of border crops around high generation seed plots.**

PEI Institute of Agrologists Awards

(Charlottetown, PE - April 12, 2021) The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists held a well-attended Annual General Meeting at the Rodd Royalty Inn on April 7th. Among the highlights of this hybrid virtual/in-person meeting that observed all COVID-19 guidelines was the presentation of three awards to deserving PEIIA members for their contributions to the agriculture industry as well as to the Institute of Agrologists.

Recognized with the PEIIA Outstanding Agrologist Award was Mette Ching, P.Ag. of Cornwall. The Outstanding Agrologist Award is presented to a member of the Institute for outstanding service in the previous 5-10 years of membership in the PEIIA. Mette is a most worthy recipient of this honour in no small part for her many years of service at Registrar of the PEIIA, as well as previously serving as President of the PEIIA Council. During her time as Registrar and participating on PEIIA Council, Mette was instrumental in promoting and growing membership in the Institute.

Mette has previously worked with the PEI Department of Agriculture, was part of the ownership and management team with Black Pond Farms near Souris, continues to sell real estate, and served as the first female President of the PEI Federation of Agriculture. Mette continues to serve on the PEIIA membership committee and has been a wonderful mentor and colleague for a generation of fellow agrologists.

Two PEIIA members were also presented with Recognition Awards for their contributions to Prince Edward Island agriculture.

Brenda Simmons, P.Ag. of Point Prim was recognized for her substantial contributions to the Prince Edward Island potato industry. While Brenda has previously worked for the PEI Horticultural Association, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and the PEI BioAlliance, she has been an indispensable part of the management team at the PEI Potato Board for more than two decades. In his nomination letter, Steve Watts, P.Ag. remarks: "Brenda is well known by colleagues across all regions of the Canadian and North American potato business. She has stepped up to the plate to defend and promote PEI Potatoes in areas such as the potato wart crisis, the establishment of United Potato Growers of Canada, coordination of national research and risk management programs and minor use pesticide registration programs, to name just a few."

Brenda also owns and operates a fruit farm in Point Prim and has been a passionate supporter of high school sports for many years. While she often avoids the spotlight, Brenda's devotion to the success of Island agriculture has

earned the respect and admiration of both PEI potato growers and her colleagues in the industry.

Also presented with a Recognition Award was Evan MacDonald, AIT of North Milton. Evan works as a Senior Precision Agronomist with Croptimistic Technology Inc. Evan combines his background in mapping and GIS with a passion for agronomy to help farmers identify variability in their fields and address it using precision agriculture tools. In presenting this award, Barry Thompson P.Ag. remarked that "I've had the pleasure of working with Evan both with the PEI Department of Agriculture and with Cavendish Agri-Services, and his passion for precision agriculture and working with farmers to find solutions is infectious. Evan has already accomplished so much but has a bright future in the PEI agriculture industry."

In addition to his role with Croptimistic, Evan has also begun work on a Ph.D. at UPEI under the supervision of Dr. Aitazaz Farooque, where his focus will be on the use of remote sensing technologies and zone mapping for variable rate seeding of potatoes. Evan lives in North Milton with his wife and two young daughters.

The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists is the professional organization that represents and certifies those providing advice to the agriculture, agri-food and natural resources sectors. Members include Professional Agrologists (P.Ag.), Technical Agrologists (T.Ag.), and Agrologists in Training (AIT). For more information on the PEIIA, visit our website at www.peiia.ca.



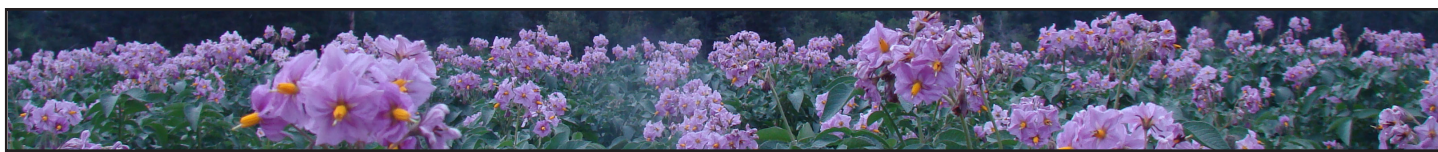
Evan MacDonald (left) accepts the AIT Recognition Award from Liz Maynard, P.Ag., Chair of the Awards Committee (center) and Barry Thompson, P.Ag. Photos: Ryan Barrett.



Mette Ching (center) receives the PEIIA Outstanding Agrologist Award presented by Leaming Murphy, P.Ag. (left) and Liz Maynard, P.Ag. (right).



Brenda Simmons (center) receives a PEIIA Recognition Award presented by Steve Watts, P.Ag. (left) and Liz Maynard, P.Ag. (right).



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Made to Enjoy Campaign

by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

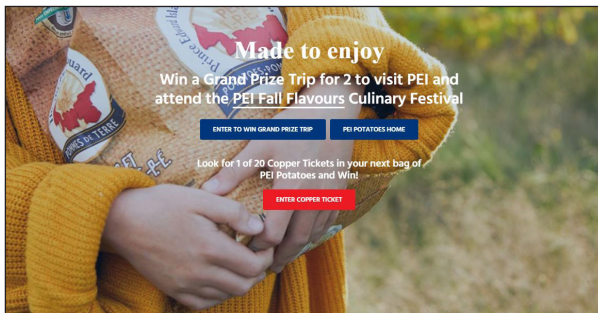
This winter, PEI Potatoes executed a “Made to Enjoy” multi-media promotional campaign that not only included TV and online media, but also an in-case retail “Copper Ticket” component aimed at the end consumer. The idea was drawn from the Willy Wonka-style golden ticket with automatic prize pack winners, and a chance to win a grand prize! We wanted the idea to be simple, easy to execute and low cost, but also, offer something of interest in the potato category and capitalize on the growth and increased use of potatoes during COVID.

The promotional details are below.

Prizes:

Twenty (20) tickets were randomly inserted into PEI Potato bags, and winners won a great Culinary Prize pack valued at \$250, including a Meyer pot, sponsored by Meyer Canada.

Anyone could enter the grand prize, which was a Trip for 2 to PEI (*when travel is approved again) via the site: www.madetoenjoy.ca, with the Grand Prize sponsored by Tourism PEI. People were driven to the site by the online media campaign. The microsite main page is below:



Target Markets:

Ontario/Atlantic Canada for online.
PEI Only for TV

Dates:

January 18 – March 15/21

Media plan details:

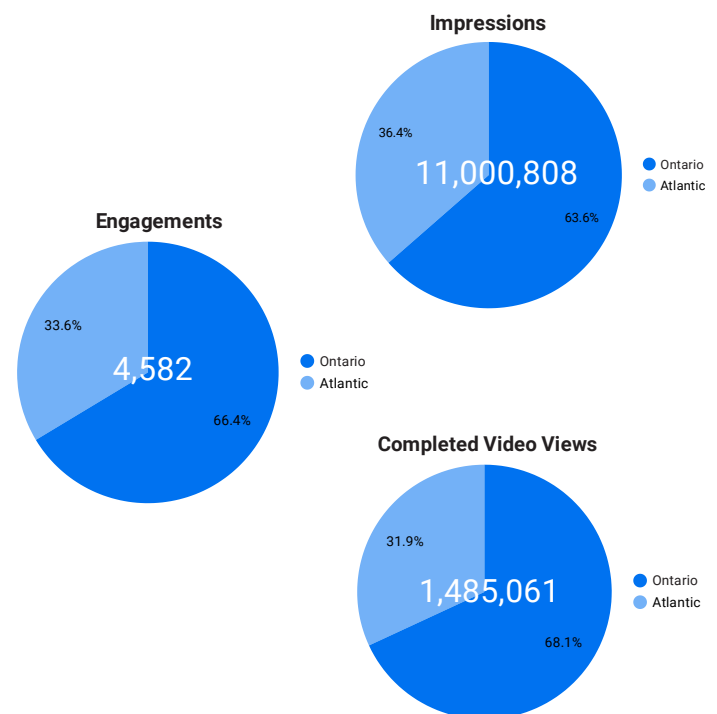
See Chart Below

The results:

We were very pleased with the results. Some of the highlights are below:

- We had over 11 million online impressions and 700,000 TV impressions
- Total 11.7 million total impressions in the 8 week campaign!
- 1.4 million completed video views of the Made to Enjoy TV spot
- 93,000 website visits to the promo site: www.madetoenjoy.ca
- We had 58,000 contest entries and 5,924 names added to the database
- We had 4,582 social engagements on our social media pages in the forms of likes, comments, shares

The following is a breakdown by target market of the campaign results:



The promotional website that was created for the contest www.madetoenjoy.ca saw some excellent traffic. Viewers were directed through online ads to enter the contest. While the media only ran in Ontario – Eastern Canada, there were visits

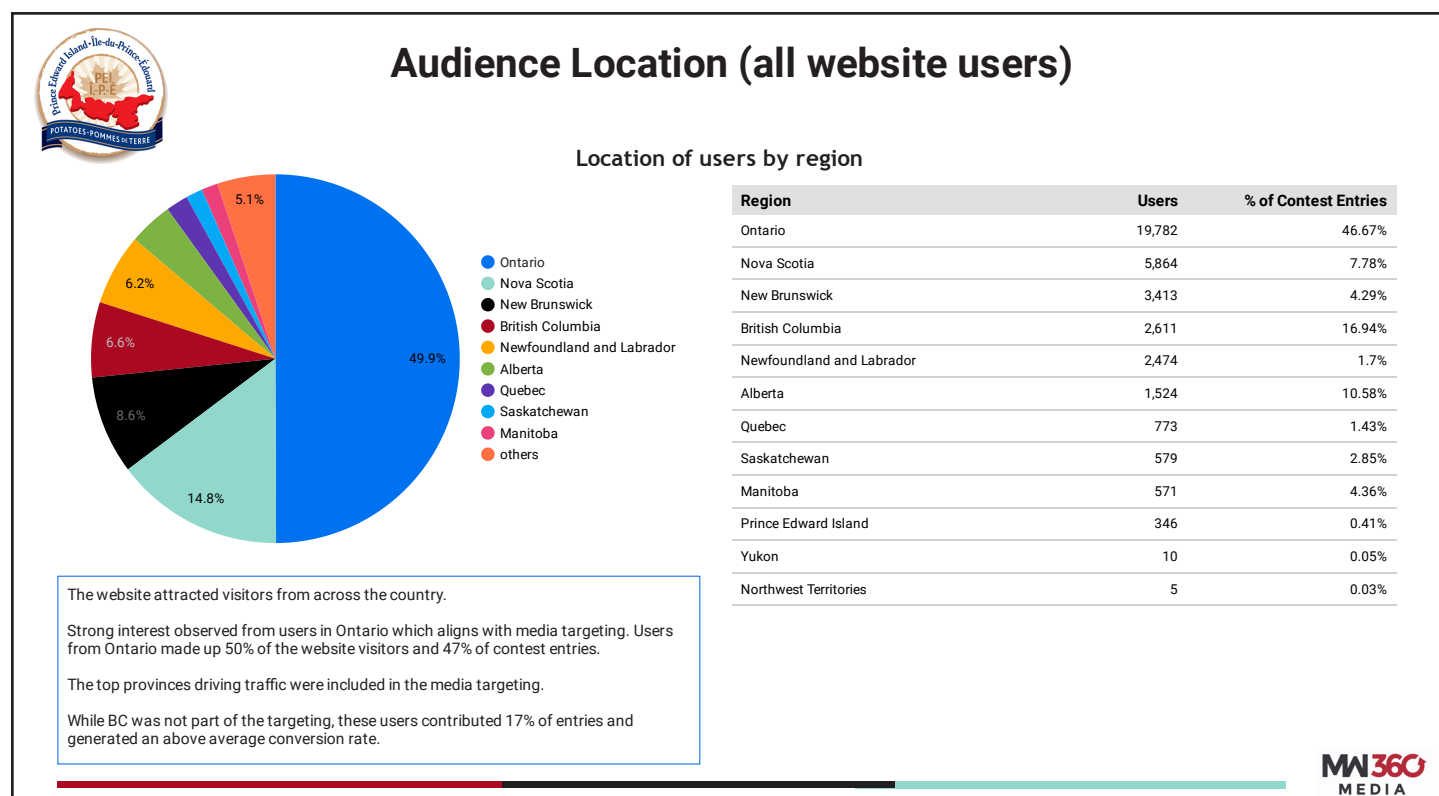
Market/Channel	Details	Weight Levels	28	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	1	8	15	22
NB, NL, NS, ON															
Online - NB/NL/NS	Programmatic - Display & Video	3.4 million impressions													
	Programmatic - Mobile Location Targeting - Grocery Store Visitors														
	CBC.ca - Standard Display & Mobile														
	YouTube Pre-Roll														
	Facebook & Instagram - Newsfeed Ads, Video, Lead Generation, Remarketing														
Online - Ontario	Programmatic - Display & Video	5 million impressions													
	Programmatic - Mobile Location Targeting - Grocery Store Visitors														
	YouTube Pre-Roll														
	Facebook & Instagram - Newsfeed Ads, Video, Lead Generation, Remarketing														

To learn more about our complete portfolio for potatoes,
visit gowithwhatworks.ca or call H  l  ne Levesque,
UPL Atlantic Canada and Quebec, at (506) 850-6546.

from all across the country. In fact, BC had 17% of the contest entries. We did get pick-up from a few contest sites, but we also sent the contest out through our own database, we promoted on our social media channels, and we did get some free pick-up from bloggers to use for their own content. All around, we were pleased with the results.

Further, the promo site did drive people back to our own PEI Potatoes site www.peipotato.com to search for recipes, or other information. Our PEI Potatoes site saw 10x the traffic, going from 200-300 visitors per day to 2,000-3,000 visitors per day, which is excellent.

The campaign contributed to an increased brand awareness of PEI Potatoes, and a unique interaction with our consumers, through multiple touchpoints to connect and engage with them. This is our fourth consecutive year of a media campaign, but the first time to include a retail promotion. I think the combination works really well together and provides for some great results, and we will be considering another promotional element for our 2021-22 marketing plan.



Optimism for International Potato Events as Planning Proceeds for LIVE Venues as We Move from 2021 into 2022

(information obtained from the World Potato Congress Board)

Planned Event	Location	Date	Live/Virtual/ Hybrid
Europatat Congress	Brussels	June 3-7, 2021	Virtual
Potato Expo China	China	July 30-31, 2021	Live
Potato Poland	Lebork	August 20-22, 2021	Live
Potato Europe	Lelystad, Netherlands	Sept 1-2, 2021	Live
Fruit Attraction	Madrid	October 5-7, 2021	Live
British Potato 21	Harrogate	Nov 24-25, 2021	Live
Interpom Primeurs	Kortrijk	Nov 28-30, 2021	Live
NIAB/CUPGRA Conf	Cambridge UK	Dec 2021 - TBC	Live
NPC Potato Expo	USA	Jan 5-6, 2022	Live
SACAPP Seed Conf	Scotland	Jan 2022 - TBC	Live
Fruit Logistica	Berlin	Feb 9-11, 2022	Live

Canadian Holdings as of May 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>
PEI	9,403	8,160	8,768	7,662	-12.6%
New Brunswick	5,625	4,417	4,778	3,138	-34.3%
Nova Scotia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Maritimes	15,028	12,577	13,546	10,800	-20.3%
Quebec	3,087	2,767	2,898	2,823	-2.6%
Ontario	1,564	1,060	1,324	1,710	29.2%
Total Eastern Canada (inc. Maritimes)	19,679	16,404	17,768	15,333	-13.7%
Manitoba	7,646	4,965	5,997	7,252	20.9%
Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	N/A
Alberta	6,922	6,944	7,480	4,699	-37.2%
British Columbia	65	191	134	202	50.7%
Total Western Canada	14,633	12,100	13,611	12,153	-10.7%
CANADA TOTAL	34,312	28,504	31,379	27,486	-12.4%

Prince Edward Island Disposition as of April 30, 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	2,072,645	2,095,949	2,239,684	2,303,448	2.8%
U.S. Shipments	2,359,360	1,800,425	2,066,413	2,215,921	7.2%
Export Shipments	565,970	632,768	645,462	429,538	-33.5%
Total Fresh	4,997,975	4,529,142	4,951,559	4,948,907	-0.1%
Processing / Local Use	8,269,358	7,904,777	8,377,914	6,893,358	-17.7%
Seed for Next Crop	0	0	0	0	
Cullage	1,792,751	2,006,494	2,204,939	1,495,606	-32.2%
Total Disposition as of April 30	15,060,084	14,440,413	15,534,411	13,337,871	-14.1%
Holdings at May 1	9,402,916	8,159,587	8,767,589	7,662,129	-12.6%

Projected Utilization as of May 1, 2021 (cwt)

Fresh	1,559,276	1,114,412	1,741,378	784,808	-54.9%
Processing	6,180,002	5,313,267	5,385,080	5,291,478	-1.7%
Seed	1,663,638	1,731,908	1,641,131	1,585,843	-3.4%

AAFC collaborates with Local Government

Potatoes for the North

It doesn't take a worldwide pandemic to put focus on food security in northern Canada. Northerners have always worked to adapt and develop their own sustainable food systems, even in the face of unique challenges such as short growing seasons and long, easily disrupted supply chains.

The Government of Canada is working with partners, including territorial governments, to address the unique needs of Northerners through various programs such as Nutrition North Canada and the Local Food Infrastructure Fund, which provides up to \$75 million to help vulnerable Canadians get access to safe and nutritious foods. Additionally, a group of 10 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) researchers across Canada are collaborating with Government of Yukon researchers in Whitehorse and a local farmer in Happy Valley – Goose Bay, Labrador, to find ways to increase crop production in northern communities. They recently started a three-year project to study how temperate-climate season extension technologies, such as bioplastics and low tunnels, can increase vegetable production and help increase food security in Northern communities.

“Bioplastics”, or “plasticulture”, as part of a group of season-extension technologies, are not new concepts for farmers. However, they haven't been widely studied for use in northern climates, such as the Yukon and Newfoundland & Labrador,” says AAFC Cold Climate Eco-physiologist Dr. Julia Wheeler. She continues, “What we hope to find is, by using bioplastic and other season-extension technology, northern Canadian farmers can extend their growing season and improve the yield, shelf-life, and nutritional quality of their vegetables.”

Dr. Wheeler and her team are installing reusable, half-metre high plastic tunnels, which she refers to as “miniature greenhouses”, over each vegetable row. They are designed to warm the air temperature around the plants to promote growth. The team is also exploring various types of biodegradable bioplastic mulches. These very thin layers of bioplastics are laid directly over the soil at the beginning of the season, and trap heat in the soil, promoting earlier growth. The bioplastic mulch then breaks down into the soil over time. Bioplastic mulches are an alternative to non-degradable agricultural plastics that require bulk disposal,

and can offer an opportunity to reduce plastic loading to the environment. Dr. Wheeler is interested in observing how these bioplastics break down in soil in northern climates as they have not been widely tested in this environment.

The researchers are also using these products to see how they affect the yield and quality of common locally grown crops like potatoes, carrots, and rutabagas, in addition to green beans, which are warm-climate crops that represent more of a novel test case for the region.

Government of Yukon researchers Randy Lamb and Brad Martin, in Whitehorse, and Des Sellars of Nature's Best Farm in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL, are collaborating to provide their



An experimental site in Labrador showing low tunnels and bioplastic used to extend the growing season. Photo: AAFC.

expertise in this research.

AAFC pathologists Dr. Linda Jewell (St. John's, NL) and Dr. Rick Peters (Charlottetown, PEI) are monitoring any emerging disease threats to vegetables in northern climates and landscapes during the growing season or post harvest where diseases and bruising can cause spoilage in storage.

Dr. Peters is also particularly involved in the potato end of this project. Potatoes are well known worldwide as a versatile and efficient food crop. According to the International Potato Centre (CIP) website:

“Potatoes can grow from sea level up to 4,700 meters above sea level; from southern Chile to Greenland.

Since the early 1960s, the growth in potato production area has rapidly overtaken all other food crops in developing countries. It is a fundamental element in the food security for millions of people across South America, Africa, and Asia, including Central Asia.”

Potatoes are a natural fit for a role in increasing food security in northern Canada and seed potatoes from PEI have gone to Labrador in limited quantities in previous years. As a first step in this recent project, Dr. Peters is evaluating different varieties under the long day but short frost-free period in northern regions. COVID-19 derailed plans for the 2020 season but Dr. Peters already has seed of 20 different varieties lined up for 2021. The focus is on high yielding, early to mid season maturing varieties such as Caribe, Eramosa and Goldrush, and also includes a few specialty varieties such as reds and fingerlings. As mentioned above, a key part of the research Jewell and Peters will be conducting on potatoes will be evaluating the bruise susceptibility of these varieties after harvest as some northern soils can be rocky causing damage during harvest which decreases storability due to pathogen invasion. They will also be evaluating what types of pathogen strains are present on these tubers at harvest to get an idea of what tuber diseases are of importance in the various regions.

The research team intends to continue working with northern communities even when this project finishes in 2022. They will share expertise from their research and engage in discussions to co-develop new studies with northern communities to build a flourishing path for farmers in the future.

“Any edge that we can provide to these farmers puts more locally sourced food into northern Canadian communities,” says Dr. Wheeler.

Further information on this project is available by contacting aafc.mediarelations-relationsmedias.aac@canada.ca.

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- Also available in liquid to fit your operation

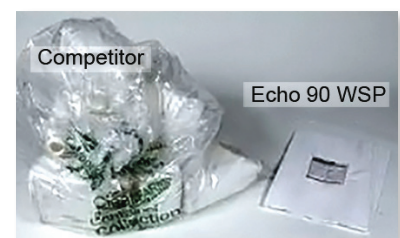
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On Your Behalf: What CHC is doing for you

Dear CHC Members,

We hope your 2021 is going well so far, and that you and your families are staying safe. Our staff team in Ottawa has been keeping very busy on several fronts, so we wanted to share some updates, specifically from a government relations perspective. Here are some of the highlights:

CHC submits industry priorities to Finance Canada during its Pre-Budget 2021 consultations

As part of the federal government's Building Back Better plan, CHC submitted a list of proposals to be considered for Budget 2021. The submission included asks to strengthen BRM programs, improve service standards under the temporary foreign worker program, and budgetary increases to the Pest Management Centre. It also specifically highlighted financial protection for produce sellers and farmers through the establishment of a deemed trust, which has been a big focus for CHC and its members.

Greenhouse Vegetable Working Group also submitted a Pre-Budget 2021 proposal

The proposed Greenhouse Growth Strategy included specific recommendations to ensure solvency in the industry, increase production capacity, and maintain market resiliency. The submission focused on several key asks developed previously within the Greenhouse Vegetable Growth Strategy (summer, 2020), that also align with the federal government's Fall Economic Statement and Build Back Better Canada plan to boost economic growth, create new jobs and reduce GHG emissions and set a course for a resilient, green recovery.

CHC lobbying to establish a financial protection mechanism

In addition to the written submission provided to Finance Canada, CHC and CPMA have pushed MPs and government officials to include a financial protection mechanism for farmers and produce sellers to be included in the next Budget Implementation Act. We have met with representatives from all federal parties, and shared the concerns of the industry that without such a mechanism

in place, Canadian growers are left exposed and subject to considerable financial loss. We were encouraged to receive support from all parties, as well the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, which also tabled a report that acknowledged the need to establish a deemed trust for produce sellers.

Crop Protection Advocacy Days

Despite not being able to meet with MPs in person, CHC organized advocacy days around crop protection, where staff and members met with Parliamentarians to discuss important issues to the sector. The main priorities raised during these meetings include the need to improve regulation and re-evaluation of crop protection products, and the need to provide sufficient budgetary resources to the Pest Management Centre to support new uses of products and pest management strategies.

Update on SFCR labelling requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables

CHC and several industry partners submitted a letter to Ministers Bibeau and Hajdu, as well as CFIA President Mithani seeking SFCR labelling amendments for fresh fruits and vegetables. Representatives from CFIA have acknowledged receipt of the requested amendments, and CHC is now awaiting further updates.

Other letters CHC has sent to Federal Cabinet Ministers

In addition to the joint letter regarding SFCR labelling requirements, our team has also engaged with other federal Ministers of a variety of issues. In January, letters went out to Transport Minister Alghabra (and previously Minister Garneau before being shuffled) to ensure seasonal workers entering Canada would be exempt from new travel restrictions. This advocacy was important to secure these workers, and allow them to complete their 14-day quarantine in on-farm housing facilities. CHC has also written to the Prime Minister and health officials urging the prioritization of fruit and vegetable growers during the distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations. Members are encouraged to continue following-up with their provincial governments on this issue.

CHC submission as a part of the consultation on Treasury Board Regulatory Modernization

CHC and industry partners presented submissions to the Treasury Board's consultation on the government's regulatory modernization efforts.

Ongoing work with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

CHC remains focussed on working with members of the committee as part of its ongoing study on increasing processing capacity in Canada.

CHC joins the Agriculture Carbon Alliance

In February, the CHC joined other industry partners in the newly formed Agriculture Carbon Alliance (ACA). The alliance brings together leaders in Canada's agriculture sector who are interested in working with political leaders to acknowledge and build on the work of farmers and producers to foster a greener Canada by continuing to explore opportunities where environmental policies and programs can spur further investment into innovations and best sustainable practices.

Announcement of the Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council

Federal Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau announced the formation of the Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council, which is mandated to increase Canadians' access to food, support sustainable production, as well as the economic viability of the industry. Members of the Council will provide strategic advice to the Minister in the development of Canadian food policy, and how best to support the industry moving forward.

Good news for Canadian producers with USITC blueberry decision

On February 11, a decision was made by the United States International Trade Commission (USITC), which concluded that increased imports of fresh, chilled, or frozen blueberries do not seriously injure U.S. domestic industry. This is a big win for Canadian blueberry growers. Other investigations into imports of strawberries, peppers, cucumbers, and squash are still ongoing, but CHC is hopeful that the decision in the blueberry case is a sign of good things to come.

Productive meeting with the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

CHC staff were joined by industry partners during a roundtable with Minister Carla Qualtrough focussing on the government's review of housing regulations. The discussion was led by Beth Connery, Chair of CHC's Labour Working Group, and focussed on the need for these regulations to be outcomes-based and not overly prescriptive. The Minister was receptive to this message, and has committed to a follow-up meeting and continuing to work collaboratively with industry on the issue moving forward.



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Other public consultations:

CHC provided submissions to additional federal consultations.

The first was through Environment and Climate Change Canada regarding the Creation of a Canada Water Agency. In this submission, CHC highlighted two major priorities where freshwater resources must be addressed to better support the fresh fruit and vegetable sector. This included a national surface water monitoring program, which would monitor targeted pesticide residues for use by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), as well as a greater focus on irrigation and water security.

CHC also submitted remarks to CFIA's consultation on Framing Competitiveness and Innovation for Success. The submission highlighted the desire to reduce regulatory and administrative burdens to farmers, as well as the need to recognize and support the fresh fruit and vegetable sector throughout the regulatory cycle.

Update on Spring Lobbying Event

CHC and CPMA will once again be holding their spring lobby event, Farm to Plate, which is scheduled to take place May 31 – June 1. This year's event may look a little bit different than years before, but we are hopeful to replicate the very successful virtual Fall Harvest that took place last year. Planning is already underway, and more details about the event will be shared with members over the coming weeks. So keep an eye out for further information, and please contact CHC staff if you have any questions related to Farm to Plate.

More information on all these topics as well as copies of submissions and reports are available online at the Canadian Horticultural Council website at www.hortcouncil.ca or by calling the CHC office at (613) 226-4880.

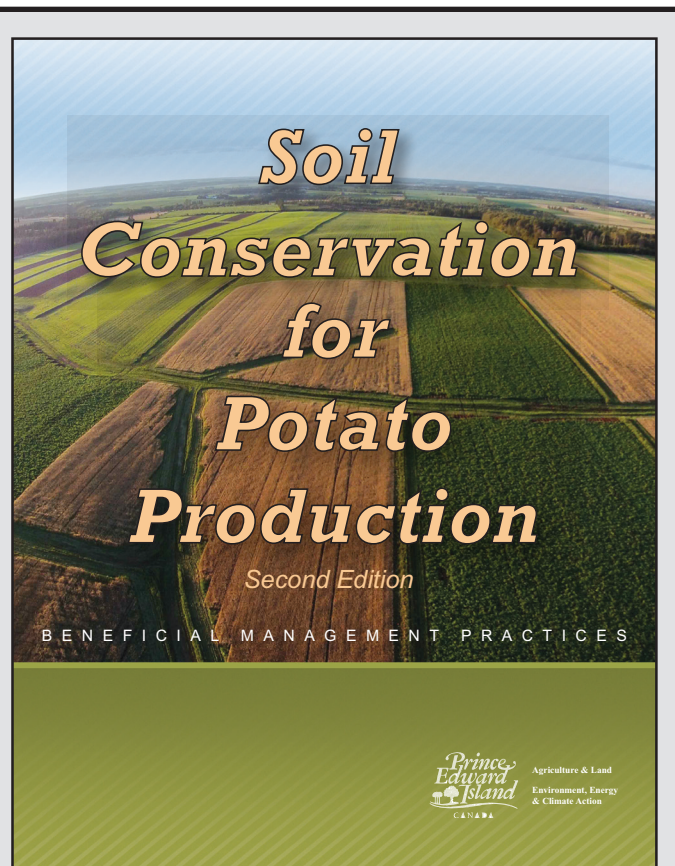


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The Prince Edward Island AgriWatershed Partnership has recently published the **Soil Conservation for Potato Production, Beneficial Management Practices - Second Edition**. This publication is an update of a booklet produced by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry in 1999. The Potato Board has mailed a copy to all potato producers on the Island.

The booklet is intended to serve as a practical guide for row crop producers in implementing various measures to protect their soil resource, improve soil health and minimize runoff.

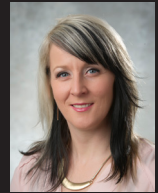
Funding for the publication was provided by the Government of Prince Edward Island through the PEI AgriWatershed Partnership Project and was done in cooperation with the following partnership agencies:



An Update From the:

PEI Department of Agriculture and Land

by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator



By the time you read this, planting season will be well underway. I wish everyone safe planting with favourable weather to get the 2021 crop off to the best possible start.

Changes to the Aphid Alert Program for 2021:

For the upcoming season, some changes will be made to the PEIDAL Aphid Alert program. For those unfamiliar with this program, it is a collaborative effort between the PEI Potato Board, the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land, and participating growers. Aphid traps are set in fields in late June, and weekly collections are analyzed at the PEI Analytical Lab. Field-specific reports are sent to the participating growers, and a summary is provided to the industry as a whole via my weekly pest update email.

In recent years, there have been changes in both aphid species dynamics as well as grower practices. Diligent producers are applying an insecticide at planting, and starting applications of mineral oils shortly after emergence. Regular oil applications, supplemented with aphicides throughout the season, combined with planting seed within the provincial virus test cap and early roguing has translated into high pass rates with post-harvest virus testing.

During the 1990's, hundreds of Green Peach Aphids (GPA) were being trapped annually. However, in more recent years only one or two have been trapped per season, and sometimes none at all. We have continued to report on GPA, Buckthorn, Potato, and Bird Cherry Oat aphids in our weekly reports, however, the numbers of these species are magnitudes lower than what has become a greater concern

– aphids that fall into the category we call “other aphids”. While not all aphids in this category colonize on potatoes, they are flying earlier in the season, they are able to spread PVY when moving through potato fields and high numbers make them important vectors of PVY.

This year, Aphid Alert will be reporting on Total Aphid numbers only. Additionally, aphid traps will be more evenly distributed across PEI – covering areas we were not previously trapping, such as Souris and Crapaud. The information provided by this program is important for Integrated Pest Management, for comparison against post-harvest virus test results, and for tracking aphid populations over time and over regions of PEI.

Other Summer Activities:

- Potato Pest Update – If you're not receiving this weekly update and would like to, please call (902-314-1607) or email lormackinnon@gov.pe.ca and I will add you to my distribution list.
- The Plant Diagnostic Lab will reopen on May 31st.
- The 2021 Potato Crop Scouting Clinic - Mark Tuesday, June 22 on your calendar for this virtual event. For more info, email lormackinnon@gov.pe.ca.
- Bi-weekly Potato Fieldworkers Meetings will resume in a virtual format at 7:30am, Tuesday July 6th. Hopefully we can resume in-person meetings later in the season.
- We will also be continuing with Colorado Potato Beetle (CPB) Resistance Monitoring in 2021 – Once again, I will be collecting samples of CPB to be screened by AAFC for insecticide resistance. Get in touch if you see some CPB!



**Thinking of growing your own food?
Go for it!**

Please just keep in mind that vegetables in your garden can be a source of disease for commercial potato crops in your neighbourhood.

Select **late blight resistant varieties** of potatoes and tomatoes.

Info on preventing and managing late blight in your garden:
<https://tinyurl.com/yabrm4d9>

And remember...there will be lots of fresh, local potatoes available at PEI's roadside stands in July!



Industry Updates

Emergency Registration of Capture 240EC (Reg. No. 31396) for control of wireworms in potatoes in Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and Alberta

The application to register Capture 240EC for the emergency control of a seriously detrimental infestation by wireworms in potatoes has been granted pursuant to section 18 of the Pest Control Product Regulations. The registration is granted for a validity period beginning April 7, 2021, and ending September 30, 2021, subject to the following conditions:

- Label changes must be made according to the annotated emergency use label.
- Potential residues of bifenthrin will be covered by the existing MRL of 0.05 ppm as listed on the PMRA's MRL webpage for MRLs regulated under the Pest Control Products Act.

Food and Farming Champion Award PEI 2021

The annual "Food & Farming Champion" award is presented to an individual, organization or business who has taken the initiative to engage with consumers in a conversation about food and farming in PEI. These champion(s) are passionate about food and agriculture and proud of the agricultural industry – they use their skills to share their stories and provide consumers with accurate information about agriculture and food production.

The recipients of the 2021 Food & Farming Champion Award are co-founders "Ag in the Field", Carleigh MacLeod and Jillian Ferguson.

Both Carleigh and Jillian have demonstrated they are true champions of agriculture on PEI. As co-founders of "Ag in the Field" established in 2018, their mission is communicating to the general public about food and farming practices on PEI. It doesn't matter how big or small the information is, they are present and out there. They are also, full-time University students who are career driven and very involved in their community too (Kensington and Kinkora). Carleigh and Jillian did not grow up on farms but are knowledgeable and resourceful when it comes to talking about agriculture. This is mostly thanks to mentors in the school system sharing their knowledge and supporting them as they went along. "Ag in the Field" share stories on social media and volunteer time at agricultural events. They take every opportunity to engage with consumers about where their food comes from. They are passionate and the

industry as a whole is very lucky to have them. They are very deserving of this award.

Congratulations!

To find more information about "Ag in the Field" visit <https://www.farmfoodcarepei.org/aginthefield/>



Introducing the 2021 Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture

Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture (IWCA) is a recognition program designed to honour, highlight and celebrate the work women are doing across Canada's agriculture industry.

Following a successful launch in 2020, readers once again nominated Canadian women working in all aspects of agriculture, from farming and research to animal health, sales and marketing. We are excited to present the seven women chosen as the 2021 Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture. Please join us in congratulating:

- Andrea McKenna, farmer and manager, East Prince Agri-Environment Association, P.E.I.
- Leona Staples, president, The Jungle Farm Ltd., Alberta
- Tina Widowski, professor, Egg Farmers of Canada Research Chair, Ontario
- Noura Ziadi, research scientist, AAFC-Quebec Research and Development Centre, Quebec

- Crystal Mackay, founder/CEO of Loft32 and Utensil, Ontario
- Simone Demers Collins, professional home economist, SDC Consulting, Alberta
- Ellen Sparry, general manager, C&M Seeds, Ontario

These seven women will share their stories, wisdom and insight in the IWCA podcast series on AgAnnex Talks, a podcast channel presented by Top Crop Manager, Potatoes in Canada, Canadian Poultry, Fruit & Vegetable, Drainage Contractor and Manure Manager magazines. The first episode will air on June 14, and new episodes will follow biweekly after that. Subscribe today wherever you listen to podcasts.

This year's IWCA program will culminate with a virtual event in October, bringing together women from across the industry to share in their experiences, offer guidance and advice in an interactive setting. Stay tuned to agwomen.ca for more details!

The team behind IWCA wishes to extend a sincere thank you to our audiences for participating in the program, and to our sponsors for their support.

The following was posted on the East Prince Agri-Environment Facebook Page: Congratulations to Andrea McKenna on being named one of the Most Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture!

Andrea played a key role in the establishment of EPAA and continues to lead many successful initiatives for our group. She is a powerful voice for farm families and a strong advocate for agricultural research and education.



Andrea McKenna at her home office. Photo: East Prince Agri-Environment Association.

Thank you Andrea for all your contributions to the agriculture industry on PEI. She is a true influential leader in Canadian AG, this is very well deserved.

IFPS Joins Forces Internationally to Improve the Fruit And Vegetables Supply Chain by Data Standardization



April 12, 2021 - IFPS, the International Federation for Produce Standards, representing produce associations from around the globe, wants to improve the supply chain efficiency of the fresh produce industry through developing, implementing and managing harmonised international data standards. "Sustainability and food safety are focus areas of our organization in standardizing the increasing data driven demands", said Rebecca Lee, IFPS Chair.

To mark the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, IFPS is exploring how to ensure that fruits and vegetables are well represented throughout the discussions leading up to and during the UN Global Food Systems Summit, to be held in September or October. "We seek collaboration with like-minded organizations to amplify the effect of any initiatives the IFPS member organizations and our respective members undertake as part of efforts around the International Year", Rebecca Lee noted.

Initially, and on a continuous basis, improving the increasingly data driven supply chain of fruits and vegetables includes the globalization of multiple Price Look Up (PLU) schemes into one global list for which we assign new numbers and generally manage to support Point-of-Sale accuracy in many countries around the globe. Every grower/packer who ships to North America, New Zealand, Australia and various points in Europe will use these numbers as product identification on loose produce.

In the realm of food safety particularly, IFPS members have become increasingly concerned about the impact on farmers of the requirements included in the latest revision of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). As the global industry organization for produce standards, and reflecting our concern with ensuring that the movement of global supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables is enabled, not

stymied, IFPS seeks consideration of the challenges these recent changes have created and ask for a seat at the table for primary agriculture.

Rebecca Lee: “In our vision a sustainable future is one where people are eating more fruits and vegetables. The fresh produce sector ensures the accessibility of healthy and sustainable food all over the world. It has relatively low environmental impact and contains high nutritional value for a healthy world. Based upon the experiences last year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fresh products were lost due to businesses shutting down and slowing transportation systems. It is therefore critically important to improve the global food system both in support of farmers and the fruit and vegetable supply chain, and to support food security through a consistent and dependable global supply chain. We all need to recognize the importance of local, national and global food supplies and food security in the face of the challenges of the past year.”

International standardization of product data is foundational in securing a safe, healthy and sustainable future for fruits and vegetables this year and as we move beyond the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables.

IFPS efforts to ensure that the right product arrives at the right place at the right time by global product identification, includes both standard setting in cooperation with global standards bodies and establishment and management of the global IFPS Price Look Up (PLU) codes for fresh produce sold to consumers loose/in bulk. The process of international standardization in the field of sustainability is only at the beginning of its development and therefore requires our continued attention.

More information about IFPS, the members and the Board of Directors is available at: <https://www.ifpsglobal.com/Home/About-IFPS>.

If you have more questions, please contact: Rebecca Lee, Chair, International Federation of Produce Standards, Executive Director, Canadian Horticultural Council, Mobile: (+ 1) 613-296-8383, Rlee@hortcouncil.ca

Release of Land Regulated for Potato Cyst Nematode

Alberta, Canada - In 2007, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) regulated a field in northern Alberta as “suspect” for Potato Cyst Nematode (Golden Nematode). The field has remained out of potato production since that time. In 2020-2021, the CFIA completed the final assessment (testing and analysis) of the field, in accordance with the confirmatory policy contained in Appendix 5 of the Canada and United States Guidelines on surveillance and phytosanitary actions for the Potato Cyst Nematodes

Upcoming Events & Deadlines

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.

June 2021

- | | |
|---------|---|
| June 22 | United Potato Growers Transition Conference, Virtual. |
| June 22 | PEI Potato Scouting Clinic. Details TBA. |
| June 23 | Monthly Potato Board Meeting. |
| June 30 | CFIA Seed Potato Crop Inspection Application Deadline. |
| June 30 | Potato Acreage Registration Deadline. |

July 2021

- | | |
|---------|---|
| July 6 | PEI Potato Fieldworkers Meeting. Virtual format. |
| July 15 | Monthly Potato Board Meeting. |
| July 31 | Deadline to Apply for a 2021-2022 PEI Dealer and Exporter License. |
| July 31 | Deadline for Nominations for Open PEI Potato Board Director Positions. |

Globodera rostochiensis and *Globodera palada* (May 2014).

Effective February 25, 2021, regulatory controls have been removed from the previously suspect field. In accordance with the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures 4 (Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas), the province of Alberta is considered to be free of Potato Cyst Nematode.

The CFIA maintains national surveillance for PCN and will continue to monitor for its presence in Canada.



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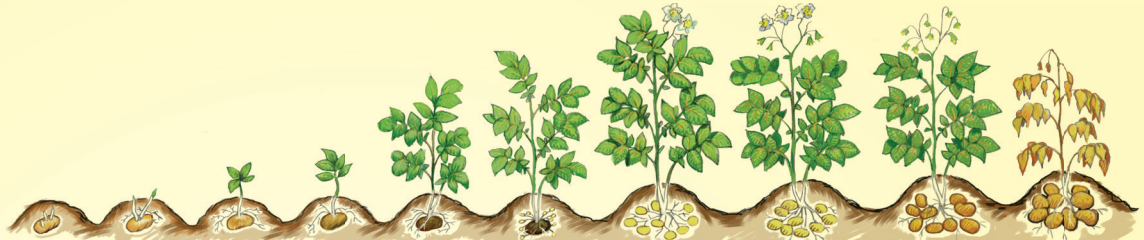
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			Reliable aphid control, unique anti-feeding action and very little impact to honey bees and many other beneficial insects. Short 7-day PHI.		
			Residual control of European corn borer and Colorado potato beetle. Reduced risk product with minimal 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.		

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