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Prince Edward Island

POTATO NEWS

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Cover: Planting under way in West Prince PEI. Photo: Ryan Barrett.

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Chairman's Comments



by John Visser, PEI Potato Board Chairman

Spring tends to be an optimistic time of year, especially for farmers who always have high hopes for the new crop they are putting in the ground.

In 2022 that optimism is tempered by many things: the high cost of inputs, world events such as the war in the Ukraine and ongoing supply chain issues.

Potato trade in North America is moving forward. PEI fresh potatoes are once again moving to the US under recognized risk mitigation measures and are being well received by customers. The resumed trade has helped PEI fresh growers solidify planting plans for this year. US potatoes have started moving into Mexico, beyond the long established 26 km border zone, under similar risk mitigation measures. As it is relatively late in the shipping season and US 2021 crop supplies are extremely tight, the full impact of access into the full Mexican market will be more evident for the 2022 crop.

Processing contracts have been settled across North America and our Processing Coordinator provided a rundown of settlements in his report on Page 12 of this issue. Increases were significant but, at the end of the day, may not reflect the input cost increases all growers are experiencing. Many of the newer varieties have improved yield potential and hopefully this will help the revenue stream on a per acre basis to cover some of these increased costs. We will need Mother Nature's help to make things pencil out this coming season.

The segment of our industry that remains severely impacted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in Ottawa's policies and positions is our seed growers. They are the heart of our industry, and in many cases, are smaller farms that are dedicated to quality seed production. We know that CFIA designed policies early this spring intended to prohibit the ability to ship seed to the rest of Canada.

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In the end, only three farms could meet the extremely high requirements CFIA announced. There was no prior consultation on the specific requirements CFIA developed, and growers had no opportunity to even ask CFIA questions about them for a couple of weeks. Our 2021 crop seed sales were heavily damaged as a result of decisions made in Ottawa since October and to date, there is no path evident to re-establish those markets.

The Potato Board has asked CFIA to consider other measures that would meet the objectives that CFIA has outlined in terms of achieving risk management for seed movement. We feel many seed farms can and do have the ability to meet high restrictions if those restrictions are based on science rather than arbitrary measures. To that end, the Seed Committee of the Board has been working with our Seed Coordinator to develop measures and present them to CFIA for consideration. That work will continue over the summer with hopes of CFIA working with the seed growers in our province.

We appreciate the efforts that CFIA has initiated this spring to collect additional soil samples as part of the investigation of the 2021 detections in two processing fields. The lab has started to process those samples and results will hopefully become available on a steady basis going forward. Local CFIA staff have the knowledge and experience to implement the management plan, and conduct the investigation, and we thank them for their work to get this done.

We also appreciate the ongoing willingness of the provincial government and in particular, our Department of Agriculture and Land, to work with our organization and our growers. The recently announced Soil Building for Seed Potato Producers Program was developed to help seed growers get through this period of uncertainty.

Stay safe and please call the Board office or your director if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

John Visin

PEI Potato Board News

The Way Forward

This committee that is made up of representatives from CFIA/AAFC, PEI Department of Agriculture and Land/PEI Potato Board is overseeing work on the assessment of the Potato Wart Long Term Management Plan. Historical data is being sorted to examine the risk factors associated with various land categories under the plan and what trends can be seen in the background of index fields to help determine documented risk. This information will help inform changes that may be made to the plan going ahead.

Other items being overseen by this committee include:

- review of PEI's pest free status as it pertains to wart. Prior to the implementation of the Ministerial Order in November, 2021, the vast majority of PEI was considered as having pest free status. This was established via intensive surveillance and testing for wart back in 2001-2003, and ongoing surveillance and control via the Long Term Management Plan.
- Additional work on screening of potato varieties for resistance/susceptibility to potato wart;
- Research work

Update on Soil Sample Collection:

CFIA has estimated that approximately 36,600 soil samples from 335 fields must be completed in relation to the detections in 2021/22. CFIA has hired approximately 60 soil samplers, and is also researching the use of automatic soil samplers, which are used in the US and other countries for similar work. Following is a recap of the sampling to date:

- 3,543 samples collected in Fall
 2021
- 11,000 samples collected from April 13 – May 18, 2022

This represents just under 40% of the total samples that must be collected. Crews are continuing to work and in favourable conditions, CFIA estimates approximately 700+ samples can be collected manually each day. Sampling is expected

to continue into June, 2022, then resume as fields are harvested.

PEI Lands Protection Act Changes

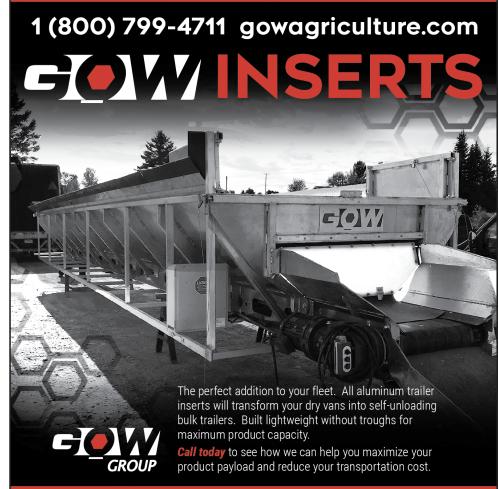
Amendments to the Lands Protection Act that were tabled and passed in the Fall 2021 Legislative Sitting came into force on April 1, 2022.

The amendments made during the Fall Sitting could not be brought into force until the Regulations under the Act were updated to reflect the changes. All four Regulations pertaining to exemptions, land identification, shore frontage, and forms have now been updated.

The changes include the following:

 Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission (IRAC) being given the ability to consider a group of companies to be one company if there is direct or indirect influence which could result in control of the companies. The wording that applies to this is found in Sections 9.1(1) and 9.1(2).

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- Enhanced powers for IRAC to conduct investigations and order production of corporate records, with enhanced penalty provisions;
- A new provision which requires any company holding more than 400 acres doing a reorganization which results in a change of share ownership of more than 5% to obtain approval; and
- For anyone who is over their personal limit as a result of the changes, there is a 7 year grace period, with 50% of the over-limit to be disposed of within 5 years.

Agriculture and Land Minister Bloyce Thompson said, "These changes will further cement our commitment to modernizing and strengthening the PEI Lands Protection Act, as recommended by the Land Matters Advisory Committee. We know that this is the first step in a positive direction, and we look forward to continuing our work in protecting one of our most important resources: the land."

Updated application and declaration forms that are required by the Lands Protection Act will be available through the IRAC website.

Fresh Movement 2021-2022

After a couple of consecutive years of extended dry periods lowering potential yields, 2021 brought more

suitable growing conditions for the crop. Aside from rainfall challenges in the fall, Island growers harvested one of the best crops on record. There were opportunities in the marketplace, and our industry was prepared to fill those needs.

We started the year with strong movement. Canadian shipments were slightly below the norm, US movement was up 35% above the 3-year average (all figures shown compared to the 3-year average), export movement was virtually flat, and overall movement was up 11% year-to-date. Although we had a record-breaking yield, we had substantial movement to support it. Then, the "train came off the tracks" with the closure of the US border in late November.

Canadian and Export movement was strong in the absence of US movement, but certainly not enough to offset the large hole in the market caused by the border closure. From



Early planting underway in eastern PEI. Photo: Lucas MacCormack.

November 23 to February 8th, our overall movement was down 35%. Puerto Rico movement was able to resume on February 8th, but by April 1st, US movement was down 92% from the time of the Border Closure (with the Puerto Rico movement included). Through efforts with Canadian Food Banks and support from AAFC, we moved volume to people in need and rescued some potatoes from destruction. We also worked to move potatoes to non-traditional Western

> Canadian markets. Despite the extra efforts and increased Canadian Sales, we were down 32% from our threeyear average between November 22 and April 1st.

The border opened on April 1. Since then, shipments to that market have been up 20% over a regular year to the US. Overall shipments are up 16% from April 1 until May Although US movement is happening, and we are shipping to traditional markets, the absence of the US market in the winter decimated many opportunities for the 2021 crop. Year-to-date, we are up 6% in Canadian markets, 23% in Export markets, but down 41% in US Markets. Overall shipments are down 12% year to date, in a year where the starting pile was one of the biggest in PEI production history - all due to the US Border Closure.







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Industry Awards

Joanne Driscoll Receives 2022 PEIIA Recognition Award

April 11, 2022 - Charlottetown - The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists annually presents an award to an individual whose achievements and service to agriculture in province has been outstanding. This year, the PEIIA was pleased to present its Recognition Award to Joanne Driscoll.

Joanne graduated from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, continuing on to MacDonald College to complete her education in 1987. Shortly thereafter, Joanne was hired by the PEI Horticultural Association as a crop scout. She gained tremendous experience and knowledge about the agronomy of horticultural crops and formed excellent, life-long working relationships with producers. Eventually, Joanne assumed the role of Executive Director of the association and has led initiatives for research and agronomy; has addressed industry issues facing horticultural producers and has improved the overall productivity and profitability of the sector. Joanne is a champion for PEI horticultural producers in many venues across Canada.

Joanne is also a key support for all Island producers who follow CanadaGAP food safety protocols and has sat on the technical advisory committee of CanadaGAP for years. Her intimate understanding of production and packing practices on farm benefits this committee, and she understands what the impacts to farm operations are. Joanne is also an important leader in the Canadian Horticultural Council (now the Fruit & Vegetable Growers of Canada), sitting on a



Joanne Driscoll (center) receives the 2022 PEIIA Recognition Award from horticultural crop grower Gerald Dykerman (right) and PEI Department of Agriculture & Land horticultural crop specialist Lorraine MacKinnon, P.Ag. number of working groups, representing growers' interests and mentoring board members.

In her role at the PEIHA, Joanne has hired many young people and has mentored them in the agriculture industry. She sets an example of dedication, passion and integrity.

Numerous growers and industry members will say that the PEI Horticulture industry could not survive without Joanne. She is a driving force for changes in production and labour practices, and she guides producers through the complicated regulatory environments in which they do business.

Joanne's level of knowledge, dedication and patience are endless. She has spent decades passionately working to improve productivity and profitability for countless farmers on PEI. She always puts other peoples' needs ahead of her own, and her humble spirit makes her a trusted mentor and friend to many in PEI and off-island.

Greg Donald named 2022 PEIIA Outstanding Agrologist

April 11, 2022 - Charlottetown The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists was pleased to present Greg Donald, P.Ag., with the 2022 Outstanding Agrologist award at our Annual General Meeting on Thursday, April 7th in Summerside.

Greg demonstrates his unwavering commitment to Prince Edward Island agriculture not only through his tireless efforts through his role as General Manager of the Prince Edward Island Potato Board, but also through his volunteer efforts in his local community.

Greg was born in Southern Ontario to a family with Island roots which moved back to the Island when he was young. From a young age, he was always interested in agriculture, including working on the neighbor's farm. He attended the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture (then NSAC), graduating with a degree majoring in plant protection.

Greg has been General Manager of the PEI Potato Board since 2009, after previous positions in the agriculture industry with both McCain Foods and Cavendish Agri-Services. Since joining the Board, Greg has exemplified professionalism and strategic thinking. Not only has he shown unwavering support for the potato growers that he works for collectively, he also has worked to build bridges with environmental advocates through his involvement with the Kensington North Watershed Association. Greg would accurately describe himself as an environmentalist, championing initiatives like 4R Nutrient Stewardship or the PEI Agri-Watershed Partnership that seek to combine environmental sustainability with short and long term profitability for Island farms.

Greg has also being involved at the ground floor of the establishment of Farm & Food Care PEI, continuing to serve as director of this cross-sectoral organization tasked with building public trust in Island agriculture. He has also held board or advisory positions with the Canadian Potato Council, United Potato Growers of Canada, and the World Potato Congress.

In 2015, Greg was named a Nuffield Scholar. Under this program, Greg travelled to Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom to experience first-hand the potato industry in Western Europe and to identify opportunities to take home innovative ideas to benefit PEI potato farms. Connections Greg established during those travels continue to pay dividends for the entire potato industry on the Island. Consequently, he has supported another PEI Potato Board employee, Mark Phillips, to be named a Nuffield Scholar for 2022.

Through the recent potato wart crisis, Greg has been steadfast in supporting farmers and working with all levels of government, putting in very long and stressful hours aimed at regaining access to markets for PEI potato growers. He is skilled not only in the language of diplomacy but also in holding feet to the fire to ensure that our industry is made a priority. His leadership during this challenging time has been first rate.

Notwithstanding all of his professional accomplishments, Greg is a great husband to his wife Becky and father to Abby and Jack. He enjoys time with his family, including time with their horses and dogs and days on the boat in the summer. Greg is also simply a great person to work for. He takes genuine interest in his employees and is a very supportive and empathetic manager. He prioritizes the physical and mental health of his colleagues and celebrates their efforts in his communications with potato growers.



Greg Donald, P.Ag. (right) receives the 2022 Outstanding Agrologist Award from PEIIA Vice-Chair Ryan Barrett, P.Ag.

2022 Farm & Food Care PEI Food & Farming Champion

April 28th, 2022 - Farm & Food Care is very proud to announce 2022 Food & Farming Champion is Ryan Barrett of Kensington, Prince Edward Island.

Ryan has demonstrated this through his role with the PEI Potato Board where he is the Research and Agronomy Specialist. Ryan successfully communicates how new research, technology and sustainability methods are ensuring a future for agriculture. Ryan's audiences include a large following on Twitter where he shares informational data. Ryan also educates and informs consumers about other prominent agricultural industries on Prince Edward Island including dairy and beef farming.

Ryan is passionate about sustainability projects including the "Living Labs" project where scientists work directly with farmers and strive to improve soil health, research new crop varieties and crop rotations. Ryan is also founder of the PEI Farm Tour. This is a project of Farm & Food Care which includes free public farm tours and informational signage identifying which crops are growing in PEI fields. This project helps consumers understand food and farming on Prince Edward Island.

Ryan's passion for food and farming on Prince Edward Island is very evident among Islanders and is very deserving of this award. Congratulations!

The Food & Farming Champion award is presented to an individual, organization or business who has taken the initiative to engage with consumers in a conversation about food and farming in PEI. 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.



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PEI Potatoes Feed Those in Need in 2022

by Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

It goes without saying that we are coming through a very difficult time in PEI. With so many surplus potatoes in PEI without homes, every avenue was exhausted to find markets. One large point of that effort was ensuring that as many potatoes as possible were used for food.

There are hundreds of food bank outlets in cities, towns and villages across Canada with hungry people needing fresh, healthy food. The task of moving potatoes to food banks across the country was enormous. However, with the help of two main Canadian operations (Second Harvest and Food Banks Canada) we were able to take on the task. A sum of money was provided by the federal government to buy the potatoes and include the freight and it wasn't long before loads were moving. The first loads went in January 2022, and for some packing sheds, it was some of the first loads that they shipped since the day our government closed the border. It was a welcomed sight.

To date, we have shipped over 200 tractor-trailer loads, and counting. We have moved potatoes to all 10 provinces and 3 territories. Northern communities, cities, and towns across Canada have been receiving PEI Potatoes and are

very excited to be doing so. This is all despite the cost and challenge of freight. To date we have moved over 10 million lbs of potatoes of all varieties, and consumer-pack sizes shipped to food banks across Canada.

The story was picked up in dozens of news articles across the country and of interactions with Food Bank. Canadians. Many



resulted in thousands A load of PEI potatoes arrives at a

people knew about our crisis, sympathized with our industry, and had very kind words to express their thanks to be receiving the loads. In fact, there were some private citizens and organizations who were inspired to purchase a load to donate after reading more about our disaster, including a gentleman from Montreal and a Rotary group in



Ontario. We even had local farms open up their doors to welcome Islanders to fill their boots, and take all the potatoes they could carry.

We cannot overlook the load sent to Puerto Rico, which was a donation in conjunction with the Province of PEI, to say thank you to the Puerto Rican citizens for their support in trying to open that market. We shipped a container load to San Juan at the beginning of April. We received a thank you letter from the Banco de Alimentaires de Puerto Rico, which was a heartwarming gesture. A load to Feeding America in Boston is scheduled this spring, which will accomplish the same goal — to thank citizens of Massachusetts for their assistance.

The messages of support and thanks from people across the country and in our major markets is a testament to their gratitude to helping their organizations to accomplish their mission, which is to feed hungry people. It is the

very same job we have as farmers – we feed hungry people. We have a very generous industry, and as I learned this year, there can be upwards of a million lbs of potatoes donated to food banks in a given year. This was an exceptional year



Vehicles pull up to the food bank loading docks in North Bay as members of the North Bay — Nippissing Rotary Club help give out PEI Potatoes. Photo: Chris Dawson, Baytoday.

for that. Thank you to Food Banks Canada, Second Harvest, AAFC, and the Province of PEI for helping to make this project a success.

We fed millions of hungry people. If there is one silver lining to our crisis, this is it.





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PEI Potatoes available at the Food Bank in Puerto Rico (left). Letter of thanks received from Puerto Rico (right). Photos: Banco de Alimentaires.

Processing Contract Settlements in North America

by Scott Howatt, Processing Coordinator

Last year in May, my article on processing contract settlements outlined how contract negotiations outside of the Pacific Northwest (PNW) region of North America took a different direction and ended with better results than what happened in the three benchmark atates of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The article described how, despite grower reps showing their PNW fryers that growers' costs of production warranted a 4% increase in their contract values, the multi-national companies located in the PNW pushed through with 3% decreases on their annual agreements.

The article ended with the following paragraph, "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."

The "hangover" from the results of 2021 talks in the PNW did carry into the 2022 season, and as I reported to you in January, "The short supply (of processing quality potatoes) set the table for the largest, pre-season processing contract settlements ever reported out of the PNW. In early October, the Potato Growers of Washington (PGW) announced agreements with their fry customers of 20% increases over the 2021 contracts; all on base prices." Columbia Basin growers made a defined effort to get their contract settlements completed before soil fumigation, sending a clear message to their fryers that the overall supply of quality potatoes in the PNW would be at risk if growers were not provided with contracts which cover their costs of production AND provide sustainable margins.

The next settlements in North America (NA) required more time to pass with Alberta growers reporting in January they had made progress with two of their customers and had ratified agreements for 20% increases to their 2022 pre-season contracts. Meanwhile, growers in Idaho and Oregon were going back n forth with their fry customers on the terms for their 2022 contracts. In March, those growers reported agreements with two customers valued as 20% increases, while their third fryer was "going to the fields" with an 18% "up after" offer. With some inquiries, it was disclosed that this third company may have already been paying more than the competition and the aforementioned numbers would bring parity to Idaho/Oregon contract values. Time will tell...

In Manitoba and the US Midwest, potato growers were closely watching the economic factors which were driving their projected production costs for 2022 to new, record highs. As the month of March rolled by, the war in Ukraine, continued bottle-necks within the transportation and logistics systems of the world, and record-setting inflation were changing just about every line item in growers' budgets. Fertilizer, fuel and labour costs are leading the increases and overall cost increases are greater than 20% UP, year-over-year, in every NA potato growing area.

With the passing of March, there became an uneasiness at the negotiation tables. Fry Executives wanted growers in the middle of the continent and in the Atlantic northeast (ANE) to recognize that their settlements in 2021 had been more favourable, compared to the down settlements from the PNW. I would suggest to you, that some of the executives believed that reasonable 2022 agreements, from the Dakotas east, would reflect that their 2021 settlements were as much as 5% better than those in the PNW and that this would be factored off from the 20% achieved earlier in the West. This style of reasoning, in past years where most costing parameters were "normal", could typically make some sense during contract talks. However, this year, as costs and inflation continued to rise on a weekly basis, grower reps made it clear to their customers that any plans for lower-than-Basin settlements would be unachievable.

After more work by both sides, the annual contracts agreed to in Alberta report as better than 20% with all three companies located in the Wild Rose province. Keystone Potato Producers in Manitoba report a value measuring greater than 20%, North Dakota growers finished UP 20%, and the ABC growers in Maine reported a settlement worth

more than 20% over their 2021 contracts, as well.

In PEI, after two days of mediation on March 30 and 31, and with a number of virtual mediation sessions up to and during the Easter weekend, the processing growers of PEI voted on April 18 to accept a contract increase valued at just over 21% using the same measurement benchmark as Manitoba and Maine. On May 9, New Brunswick growers rejected another offer from McCain Foods, and at the time of print, growers in NB and Quebec still do not have contract settlements.

Very similar to all North American agreements for 2022, the contract increase in PEI is "monies on the Base" with very few changes in contract language. The suite of 2022 North American settlements for pre-season contracts marks

the largest, annual improvement to processing contracts; record-setting settlements by any measure. That said, processing growers across the continent are faced with the daunting task of "making ends meet" with diesel fuel continuing to sky-rocket to price levels never imagined. Without question, this will be the most expensive crop of potatoes ever grown in North America, under the pressures of an American economy straining from the inflationary pressures of these times. All North American potato growers would be well advised to grow the fewest acres of potatoes their production history tells them that they can get away with to fill their contracts; that is the one sure way to reduce production costs and give your farm the best chance to be profitable in these unprecedented times.

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Canadian Potato Storage Holdings (All Sectors) by Province

May 9, 2022 (000 cwt)

Province	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	3-yr.	2021-22
				Average	
Prince Edward Island	8,160	8,768	7,611	8,180	11,436
New Brunswick	4,417	4,778	3,138	4,111	5,126
Quebec	2,767	2,898	2,823	2,829	4,464
Ontario	1,060	1,324	1,710	1,365	2,370
Eastern Canada	16,403	17,768	15,282	16,484	23,396
Manitoba	4,965	5,997	7,252	6,071	6,338
Alberta	6,944	7,480	4,699	6,374	4,496
British Columbia	191	134	202	176	108
Western Canada	12,100	13,611	12,153	12,621	10,942
Total Canada	28,503	31,379	27,435	29,105	34,338

2022 Summer Promotions

by Mark Phillips, Marketing Specialist

As the weather warms up and our farmers begin to work the ground, there are sure signs that summer is around the corner. With the US border closure and the COVID-19 pandemic making this winter extra stressful, everyone is looking towards a restorative summer with some semblance of "normal."

Although we had a challenging year in the industry, we want to keep supporting community events and sponsorships as we have in past years. Locally, Islanders have been very supportive of our industry during our time of need.

Burger Love is back during the month of May this year, and restaurants are featuring a potato pairing with each entry. Burger Love organizers wanted to show support for PEI Potatoes after the difficult shipping season, and we thank them for their efforts. It's the 12th Burger Love season. Entries are slightly down from previous years, likely due to timing and COVID-19, but it makes it possible to try them all!

We are continuing our sponsorship with Harmony House, specifically as the title sponsor of 'Inside American Pie.' We had worked with Patrick Ledwell and Mark Haines on the Island Summer Review for years, but we thought we would shake things up with a new show last year, and we are continuing to build upon that. The heartfelt messages from the owners of the Harmony House hit home with audience members, and they do a great job of promoting PEI Potatoes.

Many people know the song 'American Pie' was written by Don McLean to commemorate the plane crash that killed Buddy Holly, Richie Valens and The Big Bopper. What is less known is that the song is packed with references to other fascinating events in history. The show features Mike Ross and a group of homegrown talent including Alicia Toner, Brielle Ansems, Greg Gale, and Kirk White, as they dive deep into the mysteries of this #1 hit – What happened that tragic night in 1959? How do The Beatles, Bob Dylan, and Janis Joplin all fit in? Check out the show to find out!

We will continue our sponsorship of the Indian River Festival, now titled the "Under the Spire Festival", located



in the historic and beautiful St. Mary's Church. Last year we sponsored an evening with Rose Cousins, and this year we are supporting David Myles as he takes the stage on July 24th. David Myles hails from Fredericton, New Brunswick and has a unique brand of roots music some have dubbed "folk Jazz." As an independent artist who self-releases his albums, Myles has gained an increasingly large audience through an active touring schedule and cross-genre collaborations. His unlikely single with Maritime rap artist Classified became the biggest selling rap single in Canadian music history and won him a Juno award. In addition to music, Myles has hosted radio shows, a YouTube channel, and has authored a children's book. With over 15 albums and countless awards, David will put on a great show. St. Mary's Church is a world-class venue, and if you are a fan of David Myles, there is no better venue to see him.

We are continuing our sponsorship of the Ocean 100 & Hot 105.5 Farm Crew. Every week all summer long, the Farm Crew will be visiting a PEI farm and leaving behind some treats from the Farm Crew sponsors. With this promotion,

we have radio ads broadcast throughout the summer. In the past, we've used the platform to share the story of our multigenerational farms, thank essential workers, and talk about some of the sustainable farming practices we are using. This year we will want to take the opportunity to thank Islanders for their support through the US Border Closure. If you are interested in taking part, please reach out.

As covered in a previous issue of the magazine, we are excited to be the title sponsor of Tell Tale Harbour, featuring none other than Alan Doyle as part of the Charlottetown Festival. The publicity surrounding the event has been great. You can find potatoes sold in our Tell Tale Harbour potato bags in select stores throughout Eastern Canada, promoting our partnering contest for fans to win a trip to PEI and catch the show this summer. Contest entries have surpassed 55,000. Ticket sales for Tell Tale Harbour are the fastest-selling in Charlottetown Festival History! Get your tickets now before it is too late!

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Living Labs- Cover Crop Series

Full-Season Soil Building Crops in Rotation

by Morgan McNeil, Junior Agronomist, PEI Potato Board

Within the Atlantic Living Labs Initiative, the PEI Potato Board is leading a project examining full-season soil-building rotation crops the year before planting potatoes. Building and maintaining soil organic matter is critical to support long-term soil health for successful crop production practices to occur. Rotating different types of crops; particularly those compatible with potatoes, can to help keep pathogen pressure down and support healthy soil microbial communities. In the spring of 2020, there were nine new trials set-up, including four in the East Prince area covering the Dunk River Watershed, three in the Souris and Area Watershed and two in the Kensington North Watershed Association.

There was a variety of different crops planted in the spring of 2020 (alone or in mixtures), including oilseed radish, sorghum sudangrass, buckwheat, Caliente mustard/ arugula, forage pearl millet, and a diverse multi-species mixture. The spring seeded cover crops were each compared to a check crop, either barley, ryegrass or an under-seeded hay mixture; the latter planted the year before trial initiation. Two of the trials were delayed going into potatoes until the spring of 2022, so their potato yield and quality attributes will be excluded from this report.

Soil sampling was done in the spring of 2020, fall of 2020, and spring of 2021 for soil chemical analysis ahead of seasonal primary tillage. Sampling was done in the spring of 2020 and 2021 for the soil health package, root lesion nematodes (RLN) and Verticillium dahliae (Vd) levels. Soil compaction testing was also done both springs ahead of tillage with a field penetrometer to 3 depths in the soil profile. Soil building treatment crops were seeded between the first week of June and the first week of July 2020 depending on the crop to be grown. Potatoes were planted in the trial fields during the spring of 2021, and yield samples were harvested in the fall of 2021 for grading.

Across both years and seasons of analysis, the majority of the trials had soil organic matter (SOM) levels between 2.0-2.5% (average 2.3%). The soil health indicators (active carbon, soil respiration, aggregate stability and biological nitrogen availability) were generally rated as low. Observing more noticeable improvements in soil health will likely take a longer period of time. We did not observe any trends

regarding soil organic matter improvement associated with a particular crop; however, the nature of sampling and the short time frame of the study may explain this.

The average root lesion nematode levels increased from the spring of 2020 to the spring of 2021 by 33%; perhaps related to residues from previous crops in rotation or the most recent crops grown being hosts for nematodes. Four of the trials showed higher RLN levels in the soil-building rotation crops compared to the check crops; three of them had lower levels in the soil-building crops compared to the check crops and the remaining two trials had neutral effects based on multiple treatment crops being compared. Verticillium dahliae levels drastically decreased from the spring of 2020 to the spring of 2021 by 79% across all treatments, indicating that few if any of the crops in the study are preferred hosts for Vd. The average soil compaction levels across trials in the spring of 2021 were similar between the soil-building rotation crops and check crops.

Most of the trials did not show significant differences between treatment and check crop for potato yield and quality attributes. One trial that stood out was where a mixture of sorghum sudangrass, forage pearl millet and oilseed radish showed significantly higher marketable yield and crop value than the ryegrass check crop. Another field showed significantly higher potato tuber specific gravity from having either radish or sorghum sudangrass crops in rotation compared to ryegrass. Nonetheless, most trials did not demonstrate statistically different yield or quality between the treatment crop or mixture and the check crop.

Once the third year of this project data is collected in 2022, it will be possible to assess the results for any trends over the full project timeframe.

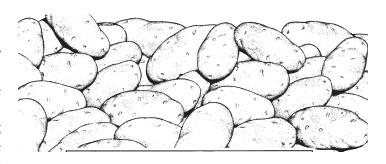






Figure 1a,b: Left: Sorghum sudangrass/Pearl Millet/Oilseed Radish (SSPMOR) mixture photographed July 17, 2020. Right: Caliente mustard and 2-year forage Multi-Species mixture photographed August 4, 2020.





Figure 2a,b: Left: a) Caliente mustard/arugula mixture, and Right: b) Ikarus radish. Both photos were taken July 22, 2020 side by side in the same trial.





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Figure 3a,b: Left: Sorghum sudagrass and barley treatments, and b) Centennial brown mustard grown for seed before harvest. Both photos were taken in the same trial on August 12, 2020.

Living Labs - Cover Crop Series

Fall Seeded Cover Crops Before Planting Potatoes

by Morgan McNeil, Junior Agronomist, PEI Potato Board

Within the Atlantic Living Labs Initiative, the PEI Potato Board is leading a project looking at fall seeded cover crops after primary tillage compared to a bare check strip the year before planting potatoes. Previous research has shown many benefits to planting fall cover crops such as supplying living biomass (both above and below ground) to support healthy soil microbial communities, holding onto nutrients better, reducing soil erosion and reducing nitrate leaching leading into the winter. In 2020, there were 8 new trials set up in this BMP, including three in the Souris and Area Watershed, three in the East Prince area covering the Dunk River Watershed, and the remaining two in the Kensington North Watershed region. The most recent previous crops in rotation were ryegrass, red clover hay mixtures, and a Multi-Species mixture (10 species) in one of the trials.

Soil sampling was conducted in September ahead of fall tillage and planting the treatments to get baseline data. Samples were collected to analyze soil chemistry, the soil health package, root lesion nematodes (RLN) and soil Verticillium dahliae (Vd). Most of the trials were tilled in the first or second week of September 2020. Three of the trials were seeded with spring barley, three with radish, two with radish-mustard mixes, and two with oats. Field

visits were made multiple times in the fall after the crops germinated and got established to collect soil samples for soil nitrate analysis at three depths in the soil profile. The percentage of green ground cover was also measured with a phone app during each of these field visits. Soil erosion testing was measured in a subset of these fields with metal splash pans to compare treatments. Follow-up soil sampling and compaction testing with a field penetrometer was done in the spring of 2021 ahead of spring tillage and potato planting. Potatoes were harvested in each trial by treatment area for grading to compare the short-term impact of the cover crops vs check on potato yield and quality attributes.

The baseline Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 soil sampling results for chemical analysis, and soil health were fairly similar, with the majority of the trials having relatively low soil organic matter (SOM) levels. The soil active carbon, soil aggregate stability and biological nitrogen availability also rated as low in most cases. However, a handful of trials showed some medium or high levels of soil respiration, which is worth further research to try and identify any trends.

The soil Verticillium dahliae (Vd) levels showed a drastic reduction by 72% on average across trials from the fall of 2020 to the spring of 2021. The root lesion nematodes





Left: Spring barley treatment seeded September 11, 2020 showing 75% green cover on average when photographed October 22, 2020. Right: Radish-mustard mixture seeded September 7, 2020 showing 69% average green ground coverage when photographed a day later on October 23, 2020. This radish-mustard treatment averaged 73% in early October, closer to that of this spring barley in late October, indicating its green cover also reduced further later into the fall season. Photos: M. McNeil

counts were somewhat different, remaining relatively steady on average between fall and spring sampling. However, there was a great deal of field-to-field variation in nematode counts.

Although the 2020 growing season was extremely dry, the fall brought more rainfall events to support the growth of the cover crop treatments. One of the spring barley treatments reached an average of 75% green cover, while the radish-mustard mixtures performed very well too, reaching up to 76% green cover. One of the radish-mustard treatments showed its highest green cover in early October, while the other reached peak cover in mid-November, indicating some variation by trial and the effect of planting date. Both of the brassica mixtures were the earliest seeded compared to the other trials, which helped maximize their coverage potential. The rest of the covers were more variable by trial, but did not exceed 25% green cover. The soil erosion testing showed more than three times more soil accumulation in the check strip pans compared to the cover crop pans in one of the trials. Almost all of the baseline soil nitrate data across trials and dates was low, with amounts tending to decline with increasing depth and as the season progressed. In addition, spring compaction testing in 2021 showed a trend towards lower compaction in the cover crop treatments at the 12 in. soil depth.

Potato yield and quality results from these trials showed a 28.8 cwt/ac marketable yield and \$386/acre crop value increase where cover crops were grown compared to bare soil the fall before potatoes. These results are similar to those obtained from trials from the previous year, where we observed a 25 cwt/ac marketable yield increase and \$423/acre crop value increase following the cover crop treatments. We are encouraged that we've seen similar levels of response two years in a row, with a number of the individual trials showing statistically significant results in favour of cover crops.



Spring barley seeded September 24, 2020 showing 10% green cover on average in early November 2020.



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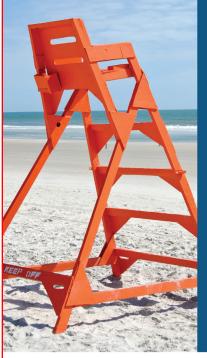


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Living Labs - Cover Crop Series

Fall Seeded Cover Crops After Potato Harvest

By: Morgan McNeil, Junior Agronomist, PEI Potato Board

Within the Atlantic Living Labs Initiative, the PEI Potato Board is leading the external component for Best Management Practice #2: examining fall seeded cover crops after potato harvest. It is known that bare soil in the fall is susceptible to erosion through heavy rainfall or wind events, and tillage resulting in carbon or other nutrient losses to the atmosphere. However, cover cropping provides aboveground living biomass and below-ground root tissue to support many biological soil activities. In 2021, there were six new trials set up, including three within the Souris and Area Watershed, two within the East Prince area covering the Dunk River Watershed, and the remaining trial within the Kensington North Watershed region. This particular set of trials was designed with grower interests and participation to compare different fall cover crops (5 trials) or seeding rates of the same fall cover crop (1 trial) against a bare check strip. Within these trials, three of them included winter barley compared to winter wheat or fall rye, whereas a few others just compared winter wheat or spring barley (seeded in the fall) to a bare check strip. One trial compared oats seeded at 3 different rates including 90, 120 and 150 lb/ac.

Trials were seeded within the first and second week of October 2021 following potato harvest. Four of the six trials were seeded with drills, but two of them were broadcast-applied. These trials were not fertilized in the fall, rather using leftover nitrogen or other nutrients residing in the soil that the recently harvested potato crop did not take-up.

Field visits were made multiple times in the later part of the fall after potato harvest to soil sample at multiple dates to test for soil nitrate concentrations (ppm) to three depths in the soil profile. The percentage of green ground cover was also measured in these trials during each of these field visits. Soil erosion testing was measured in a subset of these fields with metal splash pans to compare treatments.

There was no clear trend among the data of any particular cover crop performing the best over the others. The average results by treatment showed small differences in soil nitrate levels at each depth, particularly between the winter barley and winter wheat cereal crops. The oats and fall rye treatments tended to show the lowest nitrate amounts overall, and the spring barley the most. The fall rye established much faster than winter barley in the initial weeks after seeding. However, compared to the other crop treatments, the winter barley and the fall rye both still provided the best average green ground cover, reaching 53% and 42% respectively near the end of November 2021. The winter barley trials from 2021 were grown with a different variety from previous 2020 winter barley trials, so it will be interesting to see how the 2021 variety survives over the winter leading into the spring of 2022.

The oat crop struggled to get established, as it was broadcast before an extended dry spell for a number of weeks, slowing down emergence and establishment rates compared to most of the other cover crops drilled in. It then became cold and wetter than normal late in the season during November. This particular oats trial did not show





Figure 1a,b: Left (a): Winter wheat and Right(b): Winter barley growing side by side in the same field. Both pictures taken the same day on November 17, 2021. Photos: M. McNeil.

big differences in ground coverage between the different seeding rates, which in this particular case, was most likely related to undesirable weather conditions after seeding. Over a couple of years now, we haven't seen much of an increase in percent coverage with higher seeding rates, which indicates that a lower seeding rate may be sufficient for fall covers, particularly those that won't regrow in the spring (ie. barley and oats).

The soil erosion splash pan data collection from the fall of 2021 showed more soil accumulation from the bare check strips compared to cover cropped ground, statistically significant in one of the three trials. Once the third year of project data is collected this year in 2022, further analysis will be conducted. Overall, all of these results support many benefits for the use of fall-seeded cover crops instead of leaving soil bare for the winter.





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Figure 2a,b: Left(a): Fall rye photographed October 28, 2021 and Right(b): Spring barley photographed November 17, 2021. Photo: M. McNeil.



An Update From the:

PEI Department of Agriculture and Land

by Lorraine MacKinnon, Potato Industry Coordinator



Soil Building for Seed Potato Producers Program

In an effort to assist seed potato producers who have lost markets as a result of potato wart, the PEI Department of Agriculture and Land, in collaboration with the PEI Potato Board, has developed a program to support establishing or extending soil building crops. The program has recently been announced and applications are now being received. Growers who are reducing seed potato acreage by 10% or more are eligible to apply for support to 1) plant a soil building crop or 2) extend a perennial crop. The program was developed to allow growers to build soil health and sequester carbon in fields that were intended for potatoes, and to provide an income opportunity while growers consider future potato markets.

Interested growers can select soil building crops that have a performance rating of three stars or higher on the Eastern Canada Cover Crops Decision Tool. Eligible crops are listed below. For soil building crops, including spring cereals, no biomass removal is permitted. For extending perennial crops, one cut is permitted.

The deadline to apply to the program is June 30th, and growers can contact me at 902-314-1607 if any questions arise. The program guidelines and application form can be found on the PEIDAL website.

Spring Potato Diversion

In April, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced a compensation program for seed potato producers who have lost markets as a result of potato wart, and as a result some diversion or destruction of potatoes will occur this spring. Potato destruction outdoors in spring is much more difficult to achieve than in the winter when potatoes can freeze outdoors.

The best option for producers is to divert these potatoes to another market, such as a dehydration plant. The second-best option is cattle feed. However, these preferred options may not be possible in all cases. The objectives of potato disposal in spring centre on preventing environmental contamination from seepage of decomposed potatoes, preventing plant health issues from cull piles or volunteers, and avoiding nuisance issues such as odour. Growers who

Soil Building & Extending Perennial Crops

1) Eligible soil building crops to be planted in Spring 2022 (No biomass removal permitted):

Category	Crop	Performance Rating		
Grasses	Millet, Pearl	3		
	Sorghum-sudangrass	3		
	Oats	3		
	Barley, Spring	3		
	Wheat, Spring	3		
	Ryegrass, Annual	4		
	Rye (Winter)	4		
	Timothy	3		
	Triticale (Winter)	4		
	Wheat (Winter)	4		
Legume	Clover (Red)	4		
Mix	60% Winter Rye/ 40% Oilseed	3		
	Radish			
(Other mixes may be	60% oats/ 40% Oilseed Radish	3		
considered based on species ratios)	70% Timothy / 15% Red Clover /	3		
species rutios)	15% alsike Clover			

2) For extending perennial crops, the crop must have been established prior to June 2022. One cut is permitted.

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are unable to divert potatoes for another use and need to destroy potatoes should contact the PEIDAL to discuss other options based on your farm's scenario.

REMINDER: Potatoes stored outside are subject to the deadline to dispose or cover cull potatoes which is June 15th. To obtain a permit to hold potatoes later than June 15th, please contact the PEIDAL.

Other Summer Activities:

- Potato Pest Update During the growing season, this weekly email update provides PEI-specific information on current crop conditions, results of pest monitoring services, and weekly rainfall amounts. 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 30th.
- Colorado Potato Beetle (CPB) Resistance Monitoring –
 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!

Dealer & Exporter License Renewal Deadline

2022/2023 PEI Potato Dealer & Exporter License Applications and Renewals are due on Friday, July 29th, 2022.

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



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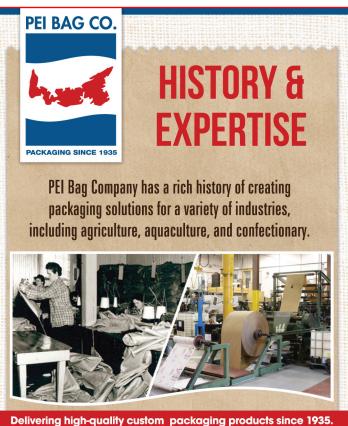
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AgriStability Deadline Extension

The 2022 AgriStability Enrollment Deadline has been extended to June 30, 2022. Producers now have until June 30th to enroll and pay their 2022 fees or opt out of the program without penalty. All other deadlines remain in effect.

Enhanced Coverage and Compensation

For the 2021 and 2022 program years only, in recognition of the difficulties navigating the pandemic and ongoing trade restrictions, the province of PEI has made important changes, increasing the coverage available to Island producers.

- Paying the full cost of increasing program coverage to 85% (from 70%)
- Paying the full cost of increasing the program compensation rate to 80% (from 70%)
- Late Participation Penalties for 2021 will be reimbursed.

***All changes will be 100% covered by the PEI government.

Late Participation for 2021

Although the 2021 enrolment deadline has passed you can still participate in AgriStability as a late participant. Under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, governments agreed to allow producers to join the program after the enrolment deadline if there is a significant downturn in a farm sector and a gap in participation. To address the challenges facing PEI producers, the governments of Canada and PEI have agreed to late participation for the 2021 Program Year. This will ensure all PEI producers can access AgriStability support for the 2021 program year to help protect the viability of their farm.

Interim Payments

The AgriStability Interim Payment feature allows you to apply for program benefits before completing your fiscal year. An Interim Payment is an advance on the final AgriStability benefits that may be available. You must submit program forms or interim request and pay the required program fees to apply for an interim benefit.

The Agristability Program is designed to help farm operations facing large margin declines caused by combinations of production losses, increased input costs and declining market conditions. AgriStability provides whole farm margin coverage when your farm's program year (current year) margin falls below 70% of your farms historical reference margin. Your reference margin is reflective of your farm's five-year historical performance and uses income tax and supplemental information.

To be eligible for Agristability, a producer must complete a minimum of 6 months of consecutive farming activity, complete a production cycle, be farming in Canada, and report farming income to the Canada Revenue Agency. Producers must enroll, pay their fee (based on their reference margin), and submit tax and supplemental information by the following deadlines:

If you have any questions regarding the program, deadlines or changes please call the PEI AgriStability Administration at (902)836-0435 or toll free 1-855-251-9695.

Programs under the BRM suite work together to cover different areas of farm risk.







Industry Updates

United Potato Growers of Canada Hires New General Manager

April 13, 2022 -United Potato Growers of Canada has hired a new General Manager, Victoria Stamper, of Mascouche, Quebec, a community just north of Montreal. Victoria will join United in this senior role, effective Monday, April 25th. She replaces outgoing General Manager, Kevin MacIsaac, who announced his retirement from the organization earlier in the year.

Victoria brings a commodities distribution background to the organization, with the principles of supply, demand, and profitability being very familiar to members of the potato industry. She grew up in London, Ontario, and attended the University of Guelph, obtaining a Bachelor of Commerce with a Major in Marketing. She moved to Montreal and studied at McGill University in the Bachelor of Arts, Psychology Program. She is fluent in English and French. Her professional development also includes training in the Six Sigma Program at the yellow belt level. An active volunteer, she has given her time to organizations including, Pinewood Elementary, Scouts Canada, and the MS and Cancer Society.

Victoria's work experience over the years has created a strong background in sales, purchasing, marketing, administration, and human resources. Her decision to change careers and focus her talents on the potato industry can best be described by Victoria's statement "It is product that has to be marketed, no matter if the commodity is



steel or potatoes. World events are factors of influence, and a have a large affect on the membership needs of an organization like the United Potato Growers of Canada. I'm looking forward to working with potato growers all across the country by first of all learning about their needs and then by bringing value to their businesses."

United Potato Growers of Canada Chairman, Ray Keenan

said "our executive has conducted an extensive search

for a candidate to fulfill the needs of our organization and to strengthen it going forward. Victoria's commodity distribution background brings a new dynamic to our organization, and when coupled with her fluent presentation skill sets, make her an excellent fit to promote the principles of Supply and Demand for UPGC. We look forward to working with her."

Chairman Keenan also said, "We would like to thank our former General Manager, Kevin MacIsaac, for his years of service in a leadership role with the organization since 2011. We wish him well in his future endeavors and appreciate his efforts during this transition period."

The United Potato Growers of Canada was formed in 2006, with membership from the east coast of Prince Edward Island to the west coast of British Columbia. Its mission is to create a more balanced supply of potatoes by providing accurate production and marketing information for Canadian Potato Growers.

For more information, please contact: Info@ unitedpotatocanada.com; Victoria@unitedpotatocanada.com.

U.S. Fresh Potatoes Begin Export To Mexico

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Mexico's national plant protection organization (SENASICA) announce that the United States has begun exporting potatoes beyond the 26-kilometer border zone that previously marked the limit of their export. The two countries reached an agreement late last year to expand that market access for U.S. potatoes, something that the United States has sought for more than 25 years.

"Through this accomplishment, we are delivering better markets for U.S. farmers, supporting economic growth, and providing access to our southern neighbors to the high-quality and safe products our farmers work hard every day to grow and sustain. USDA will continue to fight for new and expanded markets for American products as we help the nation build back better," said U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

The U.S. potato industry estimates that this access for U.S. fresh potatoes to all of Mexico will provide a market potential of \$250 million per year, in five years. This is an increase of \$190 million from the current export value of \$60 million.

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NPC applauds first shipments of U.S. fresh potatoes to Mexico in 25-plus years

May 12, 2022 - The National Potato Council (NPC) today welcomed the news that the first shipments of U.S. fresh potatoes crossed into Mexico yesterday, May 11. The successful crossings signal the start of Mexico's process to restore full market access for U.S. fresh potatoes after decades of disputes and legal obstructions.

"This is an important moment for the U.S. potato industry and our partners in the federal government who have fought for decades to restore access to this vital market, but we know the work is not over if we are to keep the border open," said NPC President and Washington state potato grower Jared Balcom.

The shipments come after more than 25 years of regulatory and legal obstructions by Mexico, and one year after the Mexican Supreme Court ruled unanimously that U.S. fresh potatoes were legally authorized to be imported.

"Today's news wouldn't be possible without the tireless work of Secretary Tom Vilsack, Ambassador Katherine Tai, and their outstanding teams at USDA and USTR," said NPC CEO Kam Quarles. "Both agencies have made the restoration of U.S. potato access a top U.S. trade priority. We thank them for getting us to this important step and we will need their continued partnership to ensure that the border remains open as we seek to grow the Mexican market for potatoes."

Mexico is the largest export market for U.S. potatoes and products valued at \$394 million in 2021. Despite the previous restriction to the 26-kilometer border region, Mexico was the second-largest market for fresh potato exports in 2021, accounting for 124,449 metric tons valued at \$60 million last year.

The U.S. potato industry estimates that access to the entire country for fresh U.S. potatoes will provide a market potential of \$250 million per year, in five years.

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association Reminds All Drivers to Share the Road This Spring

Winnipeg, MB, May 17, 2022—The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA), in support of Canada Road Safety Week, encourages motorists and farm machinery operators alike to pay attention, drive defensively, and share the road this season. Canada Road Safety Week takes place May 17-23.

To highlight the importance of being safety conscious on roadways, CASA has developed resources, including social media posts, public service announcements, and safety advice articles, with tips and information for motorists and farm machinery operators.

"With the spring planting season underway, this is an ideal time to remind motorists and farm machinery operators that road safety is a shared responsibility," says Andrea Lear, CASA's Chief Executive Officer. "Regardless of what we're driving, it's crucial not to become complacent with road safety."

"We know that when collisions involving farm equipment occur, they are likely to cause injuries or worse," Lear says. "That's why it's essential to encourage all Canadians to pay attention and drive defensively so that everyone can reach their destination safely."

For more information and resources, visit casa-acsa.ca/en/resources/road-safety-week.

Upcoming Events & Program Deadlines

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

May 2022

May 30- World Potato Congress.

June2 Dublin, Ireland.

May 31 Crop Insurance Application

Deadline for potatoes.

June 2022

June 15 Cull Burial Deadline

June 30 **Deadline for Applications for 2022**

CFIA Seed Potato Certification

Program.

June 30 Acreage Report Submission

Deadline to the Potato Qaulity

Institute.

June 30 **2022 AgriStability Enrollment**

Deadline.









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