

*Prince Edward Island*

May/June 2023  
Volume 24 Issue 2

# POTATO NEWS



Publications Mail Agreement # 40011377

## In This Issue:

- Notice of Elections
- Planting Estimates
- Learning Through Travel



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May/June 2023

# POTATO NEWS

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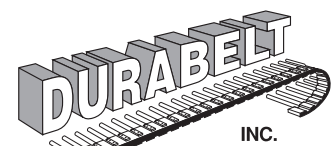
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Cover: Planting underway in central PEI. Photo: M.K. Sonier.



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# Chairman's Comments

by John Visser, PEI Potato Board Chairman



We are back into a new planting season – a time of promise and new beginnings for farmers. That being said, we are planting the most expensive potato crop in history, and we need to take very good care of it in order to protect that investment.

For those of us that produce seed potatoes as well, extra vigilance is needed this year given the virus pressures in the 2022 crop. We were able to hold our post-harvest virus cap in PEI even though other areas had to adjust theirs upwards, but we know there will be additional inoculum around this season. We have seen this before and were successful getting back on track with close management and a little help from Mother Nature.

We still have a ways to go to regain all our markets to pre-2021 levels, but there have been positives over the past year. It has been a good season for fresh markets. Our processing growers negotiated a contract settlement for 2023 that should provide positive returns, and the demand and price for local seed were up too.

Planting is now well underway, and at time of writing, soil conditions are quite dry. Some feel our acreage will be up slightly in 2023 due to strong fresh markets, steady

contract volumes and good local seed demand. It is always good to plant only for known markets, and to realize that if all major producing areas of Canada and the U.S. return to historical average yields, we may face overproduction this fall and winter. Please remember this and plant accordingly.

In reflection to the increased demand for local seed, investments are being made to our Fox Island Elite Seed Farm. It has been providing quality seed for over fifty years and operates under a closed system to protect the health status of the farm and the seed it produces. In addition to mainstay varieties, the Farm is working on accessing and bulking up new varieties that are in demand. Fox Island also produces clean seed for local market gardeners to help maintain a clean environment for commercial potato production across the Island. We thank the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the PEI Department of Agriculture for their support as we respond to changes in our seed markets.

On a separate note, the Junior Achievement PEI Business Hall of Fame was established to pay tribute to Island business leaders who have made outstanding and enduring contributions to business development and their communities. The 2023 Inductees are all from our agricultural sector. We extend congratulations to John Robinson and the late Alan Robinson, Warren Ellis and Mary van den Broek Grant.

Unfortunately the 2023 season has already witnessed farm accidents. We all know what a dangerous occupation farming can be and how quickly accidents can happen. Please encourage all farm staff to take the time to ensure they are following safe farm practices - work smart and safe both on the roads and on the farm this season.

We welcome your suggestions and feedback regarding industry issues, so please call your director or the Board office if you have anything you'd like to discuss.

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# PEI Potato Board News

## Town Hall Meetings with the PEI Minister of Agriculture

When Bloyce Thompson was first Minister of Agriculture and Land in 2019, a practice was instituted by the Potato Board of holding regular Town Hall meeting with the Minister on Potato Board director farms across the province. The format was a brief meeting with senior staff and the Board executive followed by a meeting in the warehouse or the field (depending on the season) with growers from the surrounding area.

Successful meetings have been held in East Point, Elmsdale, and Freetown. The town hall format gives growers a chance to chat informally with the Minister and keep him up to date on issues affecting farmers and the impact of government programs and regulations.

Town Hall meetings continued with Darlene Compton and after planting season the next one with Minister Thompson should take place this summer.

## PEI Well Represented on National Boards and Committees

Kendra Mills, Marketing Director of the PEI Potato Board was elected to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association at their AGM in April 2023. Kendra will serve a 3 year term representing Atlantic Canada. Kendra previously sat on the board until 2018. Our last PEI potato industry CPMA rep was Rick Burt who sat on the board from 2019 - until his retirement in 2022.

General Manger Greg Donald was elected to the Board

of the United Potato Growers of Canada in 2023 and will serve as secretary of this organization. Assistant General Manager Brenda Simmons has joined the executive of the Canadian Potato Council as Secretary and Seed Coordinator Mary Kay Sonier is serving a second year as Vice Chair of the Canadian Potato Council Seed Potato Sub-Committee.

## Staffing Changes

The Board welcomes Humna Khan to the PEI Potato Board staff. Humna is our new Junior Agronomist, and she'll be working with Ryan Barrett and PEI potato producers on a variety of projects.

Humna completed a B.Sc. in Agricultural Engineering in her native Pakistan, before coming to Canada to do a Masters degree with the Precision Agriculture team at UPEI. Humna directly worked on the soil electroconductivity research project for zone management sponsored by the Board and the FVGC potato cluster during her degree, including on-farm research trials. For the last two years, Humna has been working with the agricultural engineering team at Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, working on wild blueberry research, including a number of on-farm trials.

We're very happy to have Humna join our team in advance of the planting season as we get set up for new projects this year.



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# Summer 2023 Meetings and Activities

The third primary industry in PEI, in addition to fisheries and agriculture, is tourism, so it is no surprise that PEI is a popular place for summer meetings and conventions. 2023 will be particularly busy for the potato industry.

## Canadian Potato Council



In June the PEI Potato Board will host a special meeting of the Canadian Potato Council. There have been numerous committees and working groups convened over the fall and winter months in 2022-2023 reviewing the history, science, regulation, management and eradication efforts for potato wart. Much has been learned and plans are underway to improve the Domestic Long Term Management Plan moving ahead. Disease management plans such as the Potato Wart Domestic Long Term Management Plan and the Canada/US PCN Guidelines are regularly reviewed for improvement and change taking into account disease incidence and surveillance results. This meeting will provide Canadian representatives with up-to-date information from all the fall/winter activities and reports.

## Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada Summer Board Meeting



In July, PEI will play host to the FVGC summer Board meeting. At this time of year the FVGC Board visits a different growing region of Canada to tour farms and meet with growers to discuss their concerns and how the FVGC can have an impact. While in PEI the Board members will visit with potato, vegetable, blueberry and apple growers. Gerald Dykerman of Brookfield Gardens is the Atlantic representative on the FVGC Board.

## Potato Association of America AGM



Over 300 delegates from across North America and beyond are expected to attend this annual research gathering. A symposium on Soil Health, research presentations, posters, committee meetings, a business meeting and social events and tours will take place from July 23 to 27. The Delta Prince Edward Hotel will be the headquarters for the event.



## Under the Spire

We are continuing our partnership with the “Under the Spire Festival” (formerly known as the Indian River Festival) for the 2023 festival season. We’ve had tremendous success with the festival over the years, sponsoring shows from Rose Cousins, David Myles, Lennie Gallant, KINLEY and Dennis Ellsworth, Catherine MacLellan and others. This year we are excited to sponsor ‘Jessica Gallant is Dolly Parton’ taking place on July 29th. After two sold-out summers in St. Peter’s Bay, Jessica will be bringing the show to the historic St. Mary’s Church for a special night of stories and performances of some of Dolly’s best work. This is a must-see for fans of Dolly Parton. Thanks to Lindsay Connolly and the team at the Under the Spire Festival for making the partnership such a great fit for our industry. For more info, visit [underthespire.ca](http://underthespire.ca).

## Harmony House



We are continuing our strong relationship with the Harmony House by supporting two great productions as a Main stage Production Sponsor this summer. We will be a show and artist sponsor for ‘Inside American Pie’ and ‘The 27 Club’. Inside American Pie is a fan favorite, back for a third summer in 2023, having sold-out runs in 2021 and 2022. The show takes a deep dive into one of the most popular American songs – American Pie by Don McLean. Mike Ross shares the stage with Brielle Ansems, Greg Gale, Alicia Toner, and Kirk White as they explore the song through the music of the Beatles, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, the Rolling Stones, and more. The show runs several days a week from June 23rd to September 14th.

New for 2023 is ‘The 27 Club’. The list of iconic artists who died at the age of 27 is one of pop culture’s most enduring mysteries. Brielle Ansems, Keziah Collie, Carlie Howell, Max Keenlyside, and Kirk White celebrate artists like Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse while investigating the curious phenomenon of the 27 Club. The show runs Fridays and Saturdays from July 7th to September 16th.

For more info, visit [harmonyhousepei.com](http://harmonyhousepei.com).



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**PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND POTATO PRODUCERS  
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. The four vacancies are created by the expiration of terms in office of Katie MacLennan, seed director for the Western District; Rob Green, processing director for the Central District; Jason Hayden, table stock director for the Eastern District, and Chad Robertson, table stock director at-large. Katie MacLennan is eligible for election this year but Rob Green has decided not to re-offer for a second term. Jason Hayden and Chad Robertson, having already served two consecutive terms, are not eligible for re-election 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, 2023;
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, 2023;
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, 2023;
5. Have delivered to the Returning Officer, or have mailed and postmarked no later than the last day of July 2023, 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, 90 Hillstrom Ave., West Royalty Business Park, Charlottetown; Tel: 902-892-6551 or from the PEI Marketing Council Office: Suite 216 Farm Centre, 420 University Avenue, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7Z5; Tel: 902-569-7575.

Nomination forms containing original signatures must be delivered by, or postmarked no later than, July 31, 2023 to:

Ian McIsaac, Returning Officer  
Potato Board Elections  
Suite 216 Farm Centre  
420 University Avenue,  
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7Z5

## Best Management Practices for Seed Production to Keep Virus Levels Low

- Plant seed with the lowest PVY Post Harvest Test reading available.
- Use an in-furrow insecticide that is effective against aphids to prevent the buildup of aphids that live on potatoes in the field (such as potato aphids and green peach aphids).
- Begin weekly oil applications of at least 2 l/ac, and maybe higher depending on local virus pressure, shortly after emergence until just before topkill. Consider twice weekly applications when the plants are growing rapidly.
- Combine an aphicide application with the weekly oil spray.
- Rotate families of aphicide products to prevent the build up of resistance. (different modes of action)
- For particularly susceptible varieties, consider delayed planting to avoid early season aphids.
- Rogue fields as soon as plants are big enough and repeat prior to row closure.
- Use a border crop around susceptible varieties or border these varieties with more virus resistant potato varieties.
- Isolate as best able from commercial crops where there may be a higher tolerance for virus and aphid levels in the field.
- Follow practices to ensure rapid topkill.



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# A Change in Agricultural Journalism on PEI

Andy Walker has been a steady presence in the agriculture reporting scene on PEI for many years. He grew up in Stratford and is a graduate of the journalism program at Holland College. He gained a good appreciation of the importance of the Ag industry to the Island economy and landscape, as well as the wide variety in people, places and attitudes across the Island, while working for The Guardian in their bureaus in Montague and Summerside and then for the Journal-Pioneer in Summerside and Charlottetown.

Andy began freelancing full-time in 1997 and stepped in to the role of editor of The Island Farmer in November of 2000. As well as being editor of the Island Farmer, he also freelanced for a number of regional and national publications both in print and online over the last 22 years.

Andy is married to Angela Walker, who is a news reader at CBC Radio and is set to retire later this year. They have four children, April, Alex, Amber and Ashley. During retirement, Andy hopes to continue doing freelance writing and will work on completing a novel he has been picking at for quite a while. He and Angela also plan to spend a lot more time



with their two beautiful grandchildren.

We wish Andy the best in this next phase of his life and look forward to still seeing his words in print from time to time.

Page 4 [www.peicanada.com](http://www.peicanada.com) Island Farmer, March 8, 2023

## EDITORIAL

By Andy Walker  
[andy@peicanada.com](mailto:andy@peicanada.com)



### Provincial land use plan needed

The development of a provincial land use plan is something that has been advocated for some time by a number of sectors both within and outside agriculture. It was a major thrust of the Land Matters Advisory Committee co-chaired by former ADL president Jim Bradley and producer Lori Robinson. It had also been advocated by a number of previous commissions that studied the topic of land use and ownership. The Land Matters panel, the seventh commission to study land issues over the past 52 years, noted just 10 per cent of the Island is currently subject to a land use plan. Since these plans are usually developed by municipalities, there is little consistency. The idea was also advocated by the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability in its latest report to the legislature. Both the Federation of Agriculture and the National Farmers Union have come out in support of the idea in the past. The Federation of Municipalities is also calling for a province-wide approach as are planners and developers. Just days before an expected election call, the Dennis King government took what it is calling the first step in the process by issuing a request for proposals for what it terms a State of the Island report. Agriculture and Land Minister Darlene Compton noted the report, which could take up to 18 months to complete, will "provide an overview of the economic, environmental, and social conditions across the Island that need to be considered in the creation of new land use policy." It will also identify major land-uses and important trends and highlight where change might be needed. There are so many issues that fall under the topic of land use that are vital to the future of the agriculture industry, including strengthening the Lands Protection Act and the always thorny issue of consolidation of land in corporate or institutional hands. A province-wide approach is also needed when it comes to climate adaptation and mitigation issues. When provincial government officials appeared before the Standing Committee, they made no secret of the fact the process of developing the province-wide plan would take years rather than weeks or months. There is nothing inherently wrong with that—it is better to be right than quick. However, the timing of this announcement does strike me as slightly suspect. It is easy to hear the premier or any of his candidates saying, when any land issues arise on the campaign trail, that they support the idea of a land use plan and that is why they issued the tender call. A land use plan has widespread support among Islanders and there is likely to be little fundamental difference in the stance of any of the parties on the issue. Hopefully this represents a sincere effort by the Dennis King government to begin tackling the issue of land use and ownership and not just a way to shove it to the backburner until after the election should they again gain the confidence of the voters.

# Building Trust and Pride in PEI Agriculture

by Maggie McCormick and Jillian Ferguson

Long after they park their grocery carts, Islanders are still thinking about the cost of their latest grocery shop. According to the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI), when it comes to food, Islanders' top priorities are cost, inflation, and affordability of healthy options for their families, and their largest concerns with the food system include climate change and labour shortages (CCFI 2022).

On PEI, we're lucky to produce an abundance of high quality and affordable produce, but helping Islanders find that food, be proud of it and feel secure that it will be there when they need it is also an important part of the industry's job in the province.

Farm & Food Care PEI is a program through the PEI Federation of Agriculture that exists to bridge the gap between Islanders and local farms. Farm & Food Care tells the true stories of PEI agriculture that help consumers understand how all levels of the industry are making commitments to sustainable operations, safe working environments and providing delicious and healthy food. Whether they are new residents who have never been to an Island farm before, or grew up surrounded by farmland, Farm & Food Care is bringing Islanders to farms and farms to Islanders.

## Upcoming:

On August 5th, Food Day Canada, Farm & Food Care PEI will welcome hundreds of visitors to Mackenzie Produce, a cabbage farm and produce market on the edge of Stratford for the return of Breakfast on the Farm. An army of volunteers will serve up a locally produced breakfast provided by local commodity organizations during this free and fun event, where consumers have a chance to tour a working farm and meet with real farmers.

Beyond this fantastic meal, Farm & Food Care PEI is telling the story of farmers and those who work alongside them through Faces of PEI Food. Consumers are introduced to migrant workers, dieticians, chefs, scientists and, of course, our farmers in short videos and interviews, learning about their roles in the food system and putting a face to the industry.

This summer, Farm & Food Care PEI will make it easier than ever to bring home the healthy, local produce Islanders value so highly. FarmStand is an affordable and local digital payment solution, making it simpler to pay and simpler to

get paid for those who sell PEI's bounty at the roadside. Keep an eye on the PEIFA newsletter to sign up your farm stand this spring.

Through all of these initiatives, the main goal and purpose of Farm & Food Care remains the same: to connect farmers with off-farm Islanders to tell the true story of agriculture in the province. We want to hear from you, our Island farmers! If you are interested in learning more about any of the programming and initiatives we offer, or if you have an interesting story to tell, reach out to us at [farmfoodcarepei@gmail.com](mailto:farmfoodcarepei@gmail.com) and follow along on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok @farmfoodcarepei.


## Meet the Faces of PEI Food at [farmfoodcarepei.com/faces-of-pei/](https://farmfoodcarepei.com/faces-of-pei/)



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# Processing Contract Settlements

by Scott Howatt, Processing Specialist

We have arrived again at the start of spring cropping on PEI and with this comes the end of contract negotiation season; both are reasons to be thankful!

In the January issue of Potato News I reported that the Potato Growers of Washington (at that time) was the only North American grower organization to have agreements for 2023 pre-season contracts; settlements worth 19.7% up, over-the-whole-pile. The below-budget yields from their challenging growing season in the Pacific Northwest (PNW), combined with 25,000 fewer acres planted in Idaho created an unprecedented short supply of potatoes from the 2022 crop in the PNW.

This shortage of processing quality potatoes in the west, together with the continued inflationary pressure on crop input costs were the driving forces behind these record-setting agreements in the Columbia Basin in October. The Washington growers also reminded their fryers of the favourable economic factors in growing alternative crops, such as alfalfa and wheat, which require fewer inputs and are currently providing enviable returns on expenses. With the above issues in mind, Basin processors needed to secure their potato acres for 2023 and they agreed to contract increases close to 20% for a second year in a row.

Contrary to the wishful thinking that timely agreements would follow across the continent, the other contract talks across North America took months to complete. Negotiations in Idaho did not produce settlements and it was reported during a February PMANA video conference that individual growers in Idaho would likely be approached by their fryer reps in the coming weeks to accept contract increases valued at 18%. To date, we have not learned the absolute, final values of the processing contracts in Idaho for 2023.

In February, the Potato Growers of Alberta (PGA) and two fryers agreed to contract increases valued between 22-23%. Both agreements provided favoured nation protection to those fryers, but it wasn't until mid-April that the third fry company came to terms with their growers. In the end, all three settlements are worth 22-23% more. The next reported agreements came from North Dakota in March, where the growers who supply the JR Simplot plant in Grand Forks agreed to an increase of 18.1%. Typically, Cavendish Farms and the growers who supply the Jamestown, ND plant follow similar terms and values as the Simplot agreements. In nearby Wisconsin, contract talks stalled during March and then, in mid-April, Wisconsin growers reported they

still had not come to a negotiated agreement and that the fry company there was considering taking contracts valued between 18-18.5% to individual growers to sign in the field.

Through March and into April, grower reps in Maine, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Quebec and Prince Edward Island met their respective fry company reps and it wasn't until the later days of April, early May that most of these areas reported negotiated agreements.

April 19, the Agricultural Bargaining Council (ABC) of Maine met and approved the contract increase offered by McCain Foods worth 18.7%. We understand the other potato processors in Maine arrived at similar agreements with their growers. In PEI, after two days of mediation on April 5 & 6, and with further mediation discussions over the next two weeks, P.E.I. growers who supply Cavendish Farms voted on April 25 to accept a one year contract deal; an increase of 20% across-the-whole-pile.

The next week, growers in New Brunswick and Manitoba voted to accept final offers that were presented to them. NB growers voted on May 4 to accept a contract increase from McCain Foods for 2023 worth approx. 19%. At the same time in Manitoba, Keystone growers voted to accept an offer from JR Simplot. That offer is protected by favoured nation and at time of print McCain Foods have yet to finish their talks in Manitoba and therefore no value can be reported from Keystone. Also processing growers in Quebec are still in negotiations with St-Arneault.

With the contract settlements of 2023 laid on top of the increases in the 2022 contracts, the overall cost of quality processing potatoes for the North American fry companies will be up between 40-45% from their 2021 contract prices; by any measure, an incredible increase. Another, more simple way to look at this, a CWT of processing potatoes that was worth \$10 in 2021 is going to be worth somewhere from \$14.00 to \$14.50 in 2023. Both growers and processors



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know that most of this unprecedented increase has gone to cover inflated, crop input costs and the extraordinary increased costs of required capital investment for horsepower, specialized potato equipment, potato storages and exceptionally high-priced land. That said, all processing growers need to keep a very watchful eye on restaurant traffic and other factors like unemployment rates, interest rates and consumer confidence that measure how well our North American economies are performing.


Most important, and the factor that is within grower's control, is the supply of potatoes. As stated in the outset of this article, the short supply of potatoes has been the driving force behind the current price increases. If an over-supply of potatoes were to occur in 2023-24, our fry customers will be asking for a price decrease in their pre-season contracts. The Law of Supply & Demand dictates (and history has proven time and time again) that a contract price reduction will result if there is an oversupply of potatoes being offered to our fryers... no matter what happens with crop input costs or the costs for tractors, gear, warehouses or ground... Fact!

Growers in all areas can best help themselves, their industry, and their future if they only grow potatoes that they know are sold!



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# Nuffield: Learning Through Travel

by Mark Phillips, Marketing Specialist

International travel is a key education requirement for a Nuffield Scholar. The Nuffield Global Focus Program covered 35 days, 70,000 km, stopovers in 8 countries, and visits to just under 40 farms or farm organizations alongside scholars from over 16 countries. It was the trip of a lifetime; how do I put it into words? I'll start at the beginning. In the fall of 2021, I was among five Canadians fortunate enough to receive a Canadian Nuffield Scholarship through the Nuffield Canada Agricultural Scholarship program to travel internationally and research a topic of my choice. My selected topic is Public Trust in Agriculture, and I'm studying how farmers and organizations communicate with the public, engage on issues and earn a social license to farm.

The Nuffield Farming Scholarship Trust was started by William Morris, also known as Lord Nuffield, a philanthropist from the United Kingdom. A wealthy industrialist, he made his money with Morris Motors and was viewed as the UK's answer to Henry Ford. He valued travel as a way to learn more about your business and donated some of his wealth to establish Nuffield UK in 1943. In 1950, the Nuffield Foundation started a parallel program with Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Kenya, Rhodesia, and Tanganyika. Nuffield has grown to include over 16 countries, including Ireland, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Zimbabwe, and more. Scholarships are awarded to individuals to study different topics and bring knowledge back to their business, industry, and country. Potato Board GM Greg Donald (2015) and Seed Potato Grower Barry Cudmore (2004) are Nuffield Scholars.

After travelling to Winnipeg in November of 2021 for my Nuffield orientation, I began my international travels in March of 2022. Fresh out of a lockdown on Prince Edward Island, I travelled into the unknown world of masks, hand

sanitizer, and COVID tests to attend the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC) in Norwich, UK. I met 150 scholars from over 16 different countries also attending the CSC. It was a great learning experience and an opportunity to make connections and friends from around the world. Post CSC, I continued my personal study travel through the UK, Belgium, Netherlands, Ireland, and Canada, connecting with farm organizations, government officials, and other Nuffield scholars. I met with organizations such as Bord Bia, Agri-Aware, and Europatat, all doing great things to engage the public regarding agriculture and sustainability. I also met with many like minded scholars like Anna Jones, who has written a book titled 'Divide', about the growing rural/urban divide, Brian Rushe, head of the Irish Farmers' Association, and Lorcan Allen, Business Editor for the Irish Business Post, who also studied social license from an Irish perspective.

These experiences were incredible, and I felt like I was getting a better understanding of the challenges facing agriculture. However, one day while staring at the globe on my desk, I thought about how I had signed up for an International Scholarship and had only touched down on one continent other than my own. To truly gain an International perspective, I would have to leave my Western Bubble. This led me to interest in the Global Focus Program.

The Global Focus Program (GFP) originates from Nuffield Australia, and many scholars maintain that it is a vital and successful element of the Nuffield program. Participation in a GFP provides a unique experience where scholars visit three to five countries on multiple continents, investigating agricultural marketing, trade and production issues, environmental and industry factors and experiencing different social and cultural aspects of each region.

Canadians are not required to do a GFP because our scholarship dollars are lower than other countries, and it would require people to dig into their own pockets. However, with the support of the Department of Agriculture and Land, the Prince Edward Island Potato Board, Mckenna Brothers, East Point Potato, G Visser and Sons, W.P. Griffin and Sons, Monaghan Farms, Farm Boys Inc, and others, I was able to raise additional funds to attend a GFP. While all options were intriguing, I settled on a program that explored New Zealand, Kenya, and Chile, all located on three continents I had never visited and may not have had the opportunity if not for this program. I was paired up with nine fellow scholars from Australia, Ireland, the United States, Japan, the UK and the Netherlands for my adventure.



*Canadian Scholars from Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and PEI meet up at the Triennial Nuffield Conference in New Zealand in March 2023.*

After several months of planning and trying to fit 35 days' worth of essentials into my bags, I arrived in Christchurch, New Zealand on March 23rd after over 40 hours of travel. Our New Zealand stop centred around the Nuffield International Triennial Conference. The Triennial happens every three years and is a nine-day agribusiness event. This year it was held on the South Island of New Zealand. Triennial conferences attract key decision-makers, investors, and influencers from around the world. It was an excellent opportunity to join International Nuffield alums to learn, innovate, and build international networks and business connections while learning about agriculture in Christchurch and the South Island of New Zealand.

If not for the GFP, the Triennial would not have been on my radar, but now I'm already eyeing up the 2026 event in Ireland. All six Canadian scholars from my year attended, as well as Canadian scholars from other years, including Island scholar Barry Cudmore. The program included visits to 11 farms, the 2023 Rural Leaders Agribusiness Summit and an intensive post-triennial livestock tour.

While the entire tour was fascinating, personal highlights included learning about new-to-me industries like Velvet and Truffles, different perspectives on climate challenges and proposed actions, visiting a New Zealand seed potato farm, seeing unique farming landscapes like hill-country land, the recent implementation of irrigation technologies and accompanying challenges, and the massive scale of some of the beef and sheep stations. The group visited Mt. Nicholas Station, a 40,000 ha self-sufficient operation. They run 29,000 Merino sheep and 2,300 Hereford cattle while producing their own hydroelectricity. While getting a rundown of the farm, we were served lunch amidst the beautiful landscape. We then took a boat from the station and had a grand entrance to Queenstown, pulling up to Steamer Wharf in style. It was a truly unique learning experience.

Climate change pressures in New Zealand were apparent, especially in the growing dairy industry. I had the opportunity to learn about issues from both sides of the equation – the need for change, but also the need for that change to be practical, economical, and to truly make a difference. As heard through the Triennial, "It's hard to farm green when you're in the red."

Post Triennial, the GFP group was now on our own. The nine scholars flew to Nairobi via Auckland, Brisbane and Dubai on another marathon of flights. We were greeted by host Sarah Flowers who chaperoned us for the next nine days through agricultural regions around Nairobi, visiting ten farms and agri-businesses. Highlights included Dudutech, a biological control products company; Kisima, Kenya's largest certified seed potato farm; and Kakuzi Farms, a large farm and a champion of community integration. The biggest highlight in Kenya was visiting Suyian Soul. In this eco-friendly bush camp, we saw first-hand how tourism and African wildlife could thrive together amongst a working 3,000-head Boran cattle ranch.

Kenya was breathtaking and challenging all at the same time. Seeing giraffes, elephants, hippopotamuses, and zebras in their natural habitat was incredible and an experience I won't soon forget. But, conversely, I missed many of the conveniences of back home, clean food and water, cell service, and sleeping without a bed net.

The price for a social license to farm in Kenya is much higher than in most of the Western world due to the tension between white British settlers and black smallholder farmers. Some locals might only have a cow that they graze along the side of the road, unlike the sizeable multi-thousand-hectare farms. Desperation and some tactical political prodding have resulted in these tensions rising resulting in arson, farmers squatting on the land, and in extreme cases, death. From Suyian Soul, Anne Powys recounted a gruesome tale of conflict between traditional herders and her estate. Dry



*The Global Focus Group including scholars from the Netherlands, Australia, Japan, Ireland, the UK, the United States, the Netherlands and Canada visit Dudutech, a biological control products company in Kenya.*





*Hydroponic seed potato production and packaging seed potatoes for distribution at Kisima, Kenya's largest certified seed potato farm.*

weather tensions and political pressure led smallholder farmers to graze tens of thousands of cattle on their land, causing damage to local wildlife and the ecosystems. Police intervention was unsuccessful, and tensions led to buildings being burned down, animals being killed, and the tragic loss of life on both sides. Social license is not for the faint of heart in Africa.

Many farms we visited had community outreach programs to give back to their communities, so they are viewed as positive contributors to their local economy and can enjoy the social license to farm and limit threats to larger farms. Community programs include access to running water, education, health care, and company housing. The larger farms also provide or contribute to extension and research efforts to help smallholder farms succeed.

In many cases, Kenyan farmers have forgone some of the mechanization available because a) replacement parts aren't readily available, and b) the farm is seen as more valuable to the community if it employs more people. One potato farm we visited had a two-row Grimme harvester sitting idle because they could employ more people harvesting by hand and were therefore more accepted in the community. Labour is inexpensive, allowing this farming model to be viable.

Our travels had gone smoothly until we fell ill on our last day in Kenya. After dragging our road worn and sick group to the airport, delays caused us to miss our connection in Istanbul.

While Istanbul seemed interesting, most of us were bedridden for the day, recovering from our African experience. We flew out the next day with another marathon flight of 14 hours from Istanbul to Sao Paulo, and then from Sao Paulo to Santiago, Chile. Finally, we arrived in Santiago, but unfortunately, our luggage did not. We spent the night in the airport, struggling to accept that our luggage might not come for a while (three more days). This side of travel rarely makes the brochures.

Once we were settled in Chile, we visited the Agriculture Ministry for an overview of Chilean agriculture before taking a guided tour around Santiago. Over the next nine days, we visited nine farms and agribusiness. Highlights included Agricola Garces, the largest producer



*Wildlife sightings are common and a definite highlight of any trip to Africa. The group saw elephants, zebras, giraffes and hippopotamus in their natural habitat.*

of cherries in Chile; Agrichile, a large European hazelnut producer that provided hazelnuts for Ferrero; Agrícola Ancali LTD, one of the largest dairy farms in Chile; and Agrícola La Selva, one of the top agri-businesses in Chile, which also gave us insight into their potato operation.

Chile had unique challenges with water rights. With crops like avocados relying heavily on irrigation, the tension between water use, the public and agriculture continue to grow, especially as more and more land is converted to agriculture. These pressures will only heighten as the climate changes. In some extreme examples, water has been diverted from public areas for agricultural use, resulting in the loss of lakes and drinking water being trucked into places where it was once readily available. In addition, extended periods of drought are putting stress on the water system. As a result, people are working to change the system that currently allows water to be owned and traded. They hope to include it as a constitutional right for the public in the future.

Chilean farmers in the southern area also face tension with the Mapuche indigenous communities that often results in violent arson attacks, roadblocks, and extortion of local producers. Farmers that we visited had to carefully navigate the relationship with their local indigenous people or face consequences. Some offered products, and some employment and community programs. Similar to Nairobi, the community programs were not so much a proactive means of earning a social license to farm but a necessity that would be costly and dangerous to overlook.

After finishing our program, we had one final half day as we awaited the last flight. We took advantage of the limited hours and climbed the better part of an active volcano in Pucon, Chile. It was great to get some exercise, bond with the group outside of the pressure of GFP travel, and of course, see the incredible views higher up on the mountain.

In summary, my GFP travels were an eye-opening experience that I'm still trying to process. The scale of farms and growth of the dairy industry in New Zealand was incredible, but it also created its own problems from a sustainability standpoint. They had similar connections to our potato industry as they use many resources for a primarily export-based market. As consumers put more pressure on farmers, it will lead to significant change but also an incredible strain on an already stressed farming population. Africa was an amazing experience. Full of unique challenges that we haven't faced and labour advantages that are not practical in the Western world. I learned about the benefits of preserving wildlife and the challenges to balance human needs with conservation in a growing population. Chile offered a grand scale and diverse production of products. It also brought cautionary tales of water use and community relations.

While the experiences are something I will take away, nothing can match the connections made during the trip. As best said through often quoted Maori proverb, "He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata." (What is the most important thing in the world? It is the people, it is the people, it is the people.) The accommodating nature

of the hosts, the openness of the farms, and the camaraderie of my travel companions are things I will remember all my life.

Returning home after 35 days of travel found me grateful for my life and work in PEI agriculture and left me with many experiences and new ideas to reflect on. I would like to thank the Potato Board, the above mentioned producers who supported me, the Department of Agriculture and Land, and most importantly, my family. In particular, my partner Janeen, who sent me off on this venture while 27 weeks pregnant and was tremendously supportive throughout the trip. Even bigger life changes lie ahead!



*The Global Focus Group visit Agrichile facilities where hazelnuts were drying. Chile is a key world producer of hazelnuts for Ferrero Rocher.*

# Living Lab Atlantic Uncovers the Green Energy of Cover Crops for the Environment and Farmers' Yields

**Brett van Heyningen, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada**

On Prince Edward Island (PEI), where weather is often unpredictable, one thing you can almost guarantee is a windy day. Surrounded by the Atlantic ocean, winds often whip across the Island, and that could have unintended effects on farm fields through soil erosion. Bare soil is highly susceptible to wind and water erosion from rain and melting events. When erosion occurs over time, farms lose valuable topsoil that is rich in organic matter making the soil less fertile or resilient to extreme weather conditions. Additionally, bare and water-logged soils are also much more likely to have excess nitrogen leak or leach to groundwater or be lost as nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas, to the atmosphere.

As farmers continue to focus their efforts on sustainability, for PEI, that means preserving soil health and water quality. This is why Living Lab – Atlantic, a four-year collaborative innovation project on PEI between researchers, farmers, and other partners, tested cover cropping as a management practice to enhance soil health. Simply put, a cover crop is a plant grown for the benefit of the soil, rather than to be harvested for food. With Living Lab – Atlantic, local farmers have been at the forefront of co-developing the practices and research activities they see as most beneficial, like cover crops. They have experienced

first-hand the impact of planting cover crops in their fields and in real-time since 2019.

Dr. Judith Nyiraneza, an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research scientist, co-leads the cover crop activity that involves several farmers and other researchers, including PEI Potato Board Research and Agronomy Specialist Ryan Barrett and Brandon MacPhail from MacSull Farms Ltd.

Dr. Nyiraneza, Ryan, Brandon and other participating farmers recently completed Living Lab – Atlantic research activities that set out to “uncover” the ideal use of cover crops within potato cropping systems and how they can be planted several times throughout the year, with varying benefits to farmers and their soil.

At AAFC's Harrington Research Farm, Dr. Nyiraneza studied full season cover crops that are planted over an entire growing season then plowed into the soil in the fall, prior to planting a potato crop the following spring. She tested a broad range of crops including grasses, legumes, and a mixture of legumes and grasses and found that pearl millet returns the highest carbon input into the soil. Pearl millet and sorghum sudangrass were associated with lower risk of soil nitrate leaching and higher total potato yield.

In another study, Dr. Nyiraneza evaluated winter cover crops planted in early to mid-September prior to planting potatoes the following spring. She found that winter cover crops, such as winter rye or winter wheat, reduced both soil erosion and nitrate leaching proving to be beneficial to the environment. Not only does winter rye and wheat recover quickly in early spring, it can provide additional protection during snow melt when risk of soil erosion is very high. Plus, farmers can also harvest it as a second cash crop. If harvested, winter wheat yield ranged from 4.5 to 7.6 tonnes per hectare and winter rye ranged from 3.2 to 5.1 tonnes per hectare.

Ryan Barrett from the PEI Potato Board has spent the last four years working with farmers, like Brandon MacPhail, across the Island to study fall-seeded cover crops. These cover crops are planted after harvest of a cash crop or after tillage to prepare for next year's crop. They include common grain crops like barley or oats, as well as newer crops to PEI



*Dr. Nyiraneza stands in a field of sorghum sudangrass at the AAFC Harrington Research Farm.*

like daikon radish. Brandon and other participating farmers contributed to cover crop testing and research by supplying the land, seed, equipment, time, and staff to undertake the crop management practice. Along with researchers, they determined which crops to plant as cover, in which fields, and for which production crops to follow. Ryan used splash pans in cover crop fields to measure the soil's vulnerability to be moved through erosion. Splash pans were introduced by Dr. Nyiraneza and tested in previous studies. They are simple ways to measure the soil particles splashed by raindrops. Nitrates in the soil were measured at different times throughout the fall, and soil health tests were performed before and after cover crops were grown.

The data that Ryan and participating farmers unearthed was a huge endorsement for cover crops. Over four years, he found a 25 to 30% decrease in topsoil collected in the splash pans, even in fields that had the slightest emergence of cover crops – solidifying their potential to reduce soil erosion. There was also a 30 to 40% reduction in soil nitrate amounts in the root zone where cover crops were planted. That's big news for the environment as the cover crop is sequestering those nitrates and preventing them from leaching into groundwater and waterways. Cover crops not only have farmers seeing green in their fields for most of the year, they are also putting more green in their wallets. In the year following a fall cover crop, the participants saw a 10% yield improvement in the potato crop averaged across more than 20 fields loaned by farmers for this Living Lab – Atlantic activity. Ryan says a \$25 to \$50 per acre investment in cover crops could lead to more than a \$500 per acre return on investment from increased potato yields, according to these results.

Dr. Nyiraneza, Ryan and Brandon now see fall-seeded cover crop adoption as a “no-brainer” and “win-win” for farmers.

Other farmers on PEI are getting on board with the trend. The ability to farm more sustainably while boosting yields is what makes cover crops so enticing to potato farmers on PEI. At the start of Living Lab – Atlantic in 2019, less than 24% of potato acres were planted with cover

crops in the fall before planting potatoes. According to PEI Potato Board statistics, by the end of 2022, that number doubled to nearly 50% and is expected to grow through Living Lab – Atlantic-led peer-to-peer knowledge transfer as well as funding available to farmers through AAFC's On-Farm Climate Action Fund.

Ryan believes that PEI is not alone in demonstrating the need for winter cover crop adoption and hopes that the team's findings and knowledge transfer activities encourage more producers across Canada to adopt this practice.

Cover crops are preserving soil for the future and Dr. Nyiraneza notes that reducing rates of erosion for agriculture is one of the best things for farmers to do for their field. Over the long-term, it holds on to valuable top soil and increases soil organic matter while also increasing potato yields. However, the work on cover crops isn't finished. Agricultural Climate Solutions will study cover crops' potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as Canada continues to work towards net-zero emissions by 2040, proving that more benefits remain to be “covered” for cover crops.

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## Planting Intentions 2023 Canadian Potato Crop

May 8, 2023

Potato acreage in Canada will not be officially reported until early July, so it is often helpful to take an early look at industry projections across the country. Compared to last year at this time, with a cold and wet spring that delayed planting up to three weeks in certain areas, we are happy to report that most growers across Canada have started their planting in generally favourable conditions. Contract negotiations are finished in all provinces except Manitoba who are still in negotiations at the time of writing.

Demand for French fries continues to increase both in Canada and globally, and demand for potato chips and table potatoes continues to be stable. The seed sector was very tight for this growing season and the need for seed will continue to grow to support growth in all sectors and within certain regions and varieties. In addition, the supply pipeline, although not as short as last year, will continue to be tight through the transition from old crop to new crop, even with the strong, and early, crop out of Florida.

For 2023, UPGC estimates Canadian Potato Acreage will increase by 2.1%, to 395,115 acres, a record acreage for this country in comparison to previous years. Acreage planted last year (387,103 acres) was still higher than the 384,886 acres planted in 2021 and well above even pre-pandemic levels.

Here is an outlook by growing area:

### **Prince Edward Island**

PEI is still predicted to be the province with the highest acreage in Canada and will likely see a slight increase over last year's 83,600 acres. We estimate 84,000 acres with seed and processing sectors remaining stable to last year with most of the increase in the fresh sector. Growers are just beginning to plant their potato crop. Soil is dry as the Island has seen only spotty rains through April, however they are still on schedule for the usual mid-May planting.

### **New Brunswick**

With global demand continuing to rise for frozen fries, all provinces with processing plants will likely see some increases in the processing potato sector and we predict this for New Brunswick with a very slight increase in acreage for the province of 52,900 acres compared to 52,200 in 2022. Most growers have begun planting, taking advantage of warmer temperatures this week.

### **Quebec**

We are estimating Quebec growers will plant 49,000 acres, a 2.8% increase over last year's reported 47,928 acres. Fresh acres in total, will likely be fairly flat to last year although there may be a continued shift from reds to yellows. Processing acres, especially for French fries could increase to meet contracted volume requirements for the local processor. Chip acres will likely be similar. The largest increase may be seen in the reported seed acreage, this sector continues to grow in the northern areas of the province and the overall tight market for seed this year has encouraged greater numbers to be planted. Planting has been underway in the areas south of Montreal for a couple of weeks, however with colder temperatures and quite a bit of rain in April, many growers in the northern areas have just gotten started in earnest the first week of May. Moisture levels are good and recent weather has warmed the soil nicely. Some areas with heavy soil around the St Lawrence may be planted a little later as it is still too wet, but growers are very positive about this year's planting season.

### **Ontario**

Ontario is expected to plant 37,700 acres of potatoes this year bringing them closer to the record level of 38,325 acres in 2021, a level not seen since 2013. We should see some small increases in both the fresh and chip sector this year. With only one week of temperatures above 20 in April, spring conditions have not been overly warm, however with a generally milder winter and early snow melt, several producers in the southern region are well along with their work or finished planting. Planting in the traditional storage region in the Alliston area is also progressing well.

### **Manitoba**

We expect to see another small increase in Manitoba processing acreage as demand in the province, as well as Alberta, for processing potatoes continues to rise. At this time UPGC is expecting acreage to reach 81,200 up from 80,500 acres in 2022. The challenge is to find or convert over acres currently growing other crops into potatoes. Acreage for table potatoes will be similar to last year. UPGC will continue to track the change from reds to yellows in this province that we have seen in many areas of North America. Water levels in the reservoirs seem to be decent following good snow pack this winter, however growers in both sectors are concerned about cooler soil temperatures at planting time. Reports are that most areas have only started planting last week but received rain on and off the weekend following so most had to stop and will need more drying weather before trying again.

## Saskatchewan

Acreage estimate for Saskatchewan is expected to increase from last year's 7,100 acres to 7,500. The acreage is predominantly seed with some table production. We have seen some new growers enter this market taking advantage of government subsidies for irrigation and availability of land. With an overall tight seed market in North America and the good seed growing condition in the province we may see this movement into Saskatchewan continue. Planting is off to a slow start as the spring was cold and wet, with a blizzard at the end of April which set field work back by a week. The long range forecast now looks favourable, acres should be going in fast and growers with irrigation will be firing up their systems (it is very dry even with lots of snow this past winter).

## Alberta

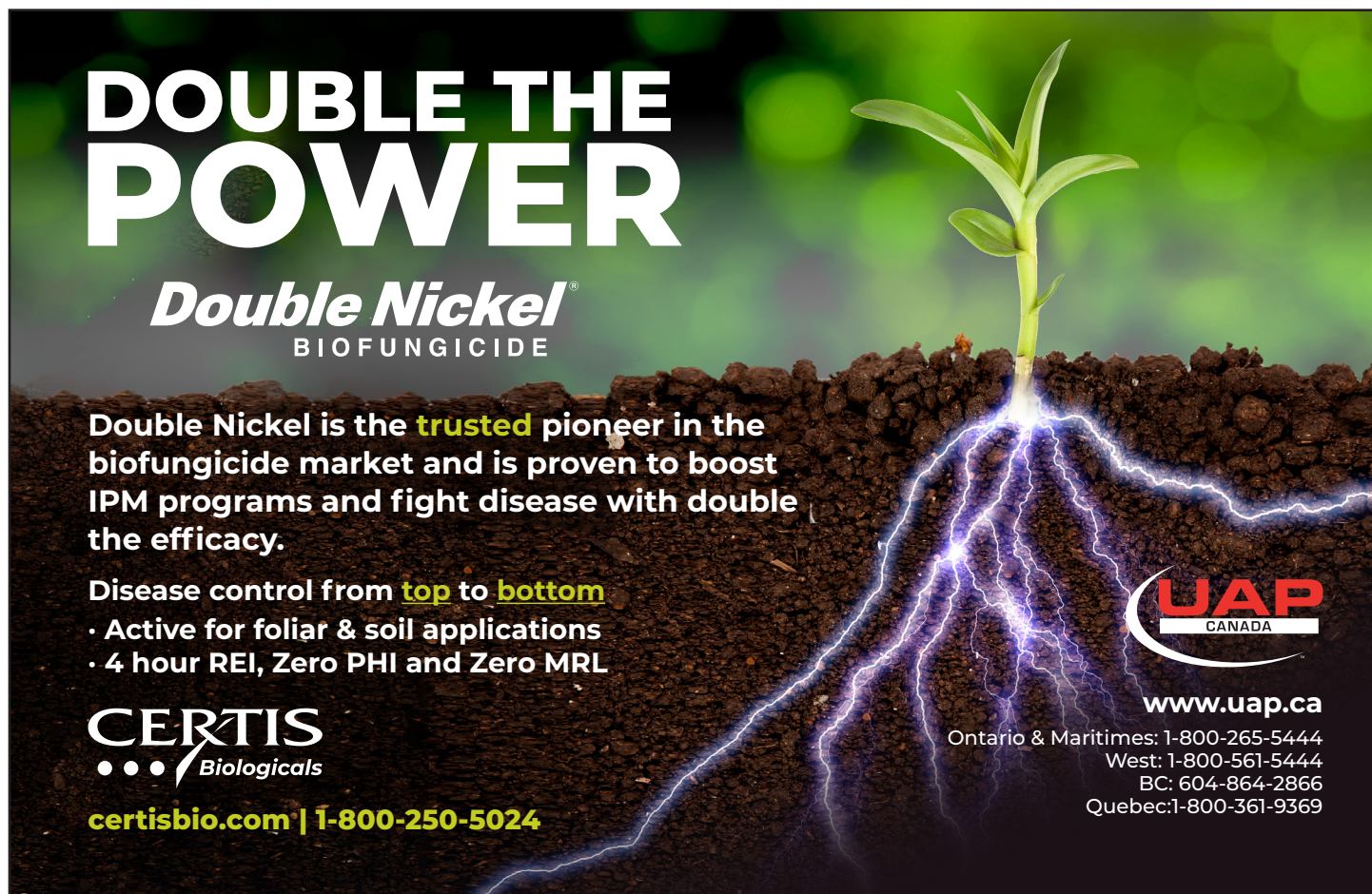
Contract negotiations have now been settled in Alberta so we are in a better position to estimate the planting intentions for the province, however this can, and may, change quickly as contract commitments are finalized. Our best estimate is 76,500 acres which would be up from last year's 73,080 acres. Alberta's acreage has steadily been on the rise other than a dip in 2020 due to cutbacks of processor volumes as a result of COVID protocol in restaurants. With the announcement in March of the significant investment

in McCain's Coaldale facility, we imagine this increase in processing acres will continue. Despite decent snowpack this winter, Alberta is already seeing forest fires due to very dry conditions. Commercial growers will finish planting in the next day or so under very dry conditions. Seed growers have not yet begun planting their crop in the northern region. Table acreage should be similar to previous years, while the chip acreage will now be spread among three chip processors.

## British Columbia

UPGC estimates 2021 potato acreage in BC will be at 6,500 acres which is the same as 2020. Although the potato crop has been profitable in the province, there are always higher value fruit crops competing for the existing land base, making further expansion very costly. Growers have been planting for some time now and some are about 50% complete, however recent rains put a halt on planting in some areas. Most growers are ahead of the planting last year allowing for good spacing between varietal maturities.

*Information provided by Victoria Stamper, the General Manager of the United Potato Growers of Canada. She is located in Mascouche, Quebec and can be reached at 514-770-8742 or [victoria@unitedpotatocanada.com](mailto:victoria@unitedpotatocanada.com).*



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## Canadian Holdings as of May 1, 2023 ('000 cwt)

	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>22-23 vs. 21-22</u>	<u>22-23 vs. 3 yr avg</u>
<b>PEI</b>	<b>8,768</b>	<b>7,611</b>	<b>10,121</b>	<b>10,220</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
New Brunswick	4,778	3,138	5,126	4,620	-9.9%	6.3%
Nova Scotia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total Maritimes</b>	<b>13,546</b>	<b>10,749</b>	<b>15,247</b>	<b>14,840</b>	<b>-2.7%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
Quebec	2,898	2,823	4,464	3,361	-24.7%	-1.0%
Ontario	1,324	1,710	2,370	1,733	-26.9%	-3.8%
<b>Total Eastern Canada (inc. Maritimes)</b>	<b>17,768</b>	<b>15,282</b>	<b>22,081</b>	<b>19,934</b>	<b>-9.7%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
Manitoba	5,997	7,252	6,338	6,462	2.0%	-1.0%
Saskatchewan	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A
Alberta	7,480	4,699	4,496	6,151	36.8%	10.7%
British Columbia	134	202	108	77	-28.7%	-48.0%
<b>Total Western Canada</b>	<b>13,611</b>	<b>12,153</b>	<b>10,942</b>	<b>12,690</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
<b>CANADA TOTAL</b>	<b>31,379</b>	<b>27,435</b>	<b>33,023</b>	<b>32,624</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>

## Prince Edward Island Disposition as of April 30, 2023 (cwt)

	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>22-23 vs. 21-22</u>	<u>22-23 vs. 3 yr avg</u>
Production	24,302,000	21,000,000	27,209,000	26,600,000	-2.2%	10.1%
Canadian Shipments	2,239,685	2,310,402	2,334,228	2,528,358	8.3%	10.2%
U.S. Shipments	2,066,413	2,230,575	1,095,834	2,723,301	148.5%	51.5%
Export Shipments	645,463	449,205	694,186	791,088	14.0%	32.7%
<b>Total Fresh</b>	<b>4,951,561</b>	<b>4,990,182</b>	<b>4,124,248</b>	<b>6,042,747</b>	<b>46.5%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>
Processing / Local Use	8,377,913	6,893,358	7,917,586	8,148,520	2.9%	5.4%
Seed for Next Crop	0	0	0	0		
Cullage	2,202,530	1,502,831	5,046,435	2,188,689	-56.6%	-25.0%
<b>Total Disposition as of April 30</b>	<b>15,532,004</b>	<b>13,386,371</b>	<b>17,088,269</b>	<b>16,379,956</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
<b>Holdings at May 1</b>	<b>8,769,996</b>	<b>7,613,629</b>	<b>10,120,731</b>	<b>10,220,044</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>

## Projected Utilization as of May 1, 2023 (cwt)

	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>21-22</u>	<u>3 yr avg</u>
Fresh	1,743,785	1,322,113	2,393,643	2,073,015	-13.4%	13.9%
Processing	5,385,081	4,710,355	6,182,480	6,496,797	5.1%	19.7%
Seed	1,641,131	1,581,162	1,544,611	1,650,232	6.8%	3.9%

## CPMA Announces Board of Directors for 2023-2024

April 26, 2023: The Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) has announced its Board of directors for 2023-2024. Election results were announced during the 2023 CPMA Annual General Meeting. CPMA also issued its thanks in a release to Aaron Bregg, Rick Burt, Joe Sbrocchi and Brian Slagel for their volunteer hours and contributions to the board of directors over their years of service.

The following directors were elected to the CPMA Board of Directors:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>SECTOR</u>
Brian Faulkner	BCfresh	Grower or Packer or Shipper
George Pitsikoulis	Canadawide Fruit Wholesalers Inc.	Wholesaler
Mario Masellis	Catania Worldwide	Wholesaler
Andrea Vandergrift	Costco Wholesale Canada	Retail
Robert Johnson	Country Grocer	Regional Retail
Bernard Coté	Courchesne Larose Ltée	Wholesaler
Daniel Terrault	Cultures Gen V	Grower or Packer or Shipper
Dan Martin	EarthFresh	Grower or Packer or Shipper
Jennie Coleman	Equifruit	Grower or Packer or Shipper
Dave Pullar	Federated Co-operatives Limited	Wholesaler
Steve Bamford	Fresh Advancements	Wholesaler
Jozef Hubburmin	Fresh Direct Produce Ltd.	Wholesaler
Jerry Dzikowski	Giant Tiger Stores Ltd.	Regional Retail
John Corsaro	The Giumarra Companies	Grower or Packer or Shipper
Sabrina Pokomandy	Highline Mushrooms	Grower or Packer or Shipper
David Dube	Krown Produce	Wholesaler
Oleen Smethurst	Loblaw Companies Ltd.	Retail
Mimmo Franzone	Longo Brothers Fruit Markets Inc.	Regional Retail
Steve Boulianne	Metro Inc.	Retail
Stephan Schmekel	North American Produce Buyers	Limited Wholesaler
Steve Roosdahl	The Oppenheimer Group	Grower or Packer or Shipper
Kendra Mills	P.E.I. Potato Board	Affiliated Services
Michael Catalano	POM Wonderful LLC	Grower or Packer or Shipper
Zack Jones	Save-On-Foods Limited	Retail
Yan Branco	Sobeys National Procurement	Retail
Colin Chapdelaine	Star Group/ BC Hot House Foods	Wholesaler
Tom Bak	Sysco	Food Service
Kimberly Roberts	Walmart Canada	Retail
Jeff Madu	Windset Farms	Grower or Packer or Shipper



# Industry Updates

## Congratulations to Award Winners

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.

Now in its fourth year, IWCA is proud to present the six women chosen as the 2023 Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture. Please join us in congratulating:

- **Ana Badea**, research scientist, barley breeding and genetics, AAFC
- **Della Karen Campbell**, farm manager, Everdale
- **Kelly Daynard**, executive director, Farm and Food Care Ontario
- **Judith Nyiraneza**, research scientist, AAFC (PEI)
- **Darby McGrath**, VP, research and development, Vineland Research and Development Centre
- **Heather Wilson**, research scientist, adjunct professor, University of Saskatchewan

These six women will share their stories, wisdom and insights 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, The Trough 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 an event this November, 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](http://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 (Bayer CropScience Canada, Farm Credit Canada, John Deere, Egg Farmers of Canada, Manitoba Canola Growers) for their support.

## Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada Celebrates Successful Centennial Annual General Meeting

VANCOUVER, BC - The Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (FVGC) successfully concluded its Centennial Annual General Meeting (AGM) on March 16, 2023, at the

Westin Bayshore Vancouver. The event brought together members, partners, and stakeholders in person to discuss critical issues that impact the fruit and vegetable industry in Canada.

FVGC members were able to listen to and vote at the meetings virtually, if they were unable to attend in person. The theme of this year's AGM was "Building on 100 Years of feeding Canada and the world". The theme reflects FVGC's commitment to continue being the strong, unified voice representing Canadian fruit and vegetable growers. As the Canadian fruit and vegetable industry continues to evolve and face new challenges, FVGC remains committed to supporting its members and promoting their interests. Through its advocacy work and various initiatives, FVGC is dedicated to ensuring the Canadian fruit and vegetable industry remains vibrant and prosperous for many years to come. FVGC reached its 100th year in 2022, but delayed celebrations until this year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

FVGC was glad to welcome many of their past presidents (with service dating back all the way to 1983!) to celebrate their centennial year with them. They joined the current FVGC President, Jan VanderHout, and Executive Director, Rebecca Lee, in cutting the Centennial Cake. FVGC was honoured to have John MacDonald, Ken Forth, Ken Porteous, Murray Porteous, Alvin Keenan, Brian Gilroy, Steve Levasseur, Jack Bates and Marcus Janzen in attendance.

Jan VanderHout, President of FVGC, expressed his satisfaction with the outcome of the AGM, stating, "The Centennial AGM provided a great opportunity for our members to reflect together on our achievements and explore solutions for the important issues facing our industry. It was wonderful to see so many passionate individuals gathered in one place to celebrate our 100-year milestone and share their insights on how we can continue to grow and thrive in the years ahead."

Rebecca Lee, Executive Director of FVGC, echoed VanderHout's sentiments, saying, "The success of this year's AGM is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our members, partners and staff. We are grateful for the support we received, and we look forward to continuing our work to promote the interests of the Canadian fruit and vegetable industry."

FVGC members elected the Board of Directors that will serve from March 2023-March 2024. The new Board of Directors is as follows:

President: Jan VanderHout  
 1st Vice President: Marcus Janzen  
 2nd Vice President: Albert Cramer  
 Finance Committee Chair: David Hoekstra  
 Members for BC: Jason Smith  
 Members for the Prairies: Beth Connery  
 Members for ON: Charles Stevens, Quinton Woods  
 Members for QC: Jocelyn Gibouleau, Pascal Forest  
 Members for the Atlantic: Gerald Dykerman, Phillip Keddy

At the AGM Banquet, FVGC presented three awards to individuals who have made significant contributions to the fruit and vegetable industry in Canada. The Doug Connery Award\* was presented to Deb Hart, Vice Chair of the Seed Potato Sub - Committee, for her commitment and passion for the potato industry. The Honourary Life Member Award was presented to David Jones, retiring General Manager of the Canadian Potato Council, for his tireless efforts in advancing issues affecting the Canadian potato industry over the last 11 years. Finally, the Outstanding Achievement Award was presented to Don Brubacher, former Manager of the Ontario Potato Board, for his lifelong dedication and service to the potato industry.

The FVGC congratulates all the award recipients and thanks them for their exceptional contributions to the fruit and vegetable industry in Canada. In addition to celebrating its centennial year, FVGC was excited to relaunch its Next Gen: Growing into the Future Program this year. The program was delayed due to the COVID19 pandemic but is now back in action. The Next Gen program aims to bridge the gap between FVGC's past 100 years of success and its next century of growth and innovation by providing opportunities for young growers to learn and develop skills to become future leaders in the industry. FVGC is committed to investing in the next generation of growers and ensuring that the Canadian fruit and vegetable industry remains strong and prosperous for years to come.

The Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (FVGC) represents growers across the country involved in the production of over 120 different types of crops on over 14,237 farms, with a farm gate value of \$5.9 billion in 2021. FVGC is an Ottawa-based voluntary, not-for-profit, national association, and, since 1922, has advocated on important issues that impact Canada's fresh produce sector, promoting healthy, safe, and sustainable food, ensuring the continued success and growth of the industry.

\* The Doug Connery Award is named after a former member of the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada.

# Upcoming Events & Program Deadlines

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

## May 2023

May 31 **PEI Potato Crop Insurance Application Deadline.**

## June 2023

June 15-16 **United Potato Growers Crop Transition Conference.** Minneapolis, MN.

June 22 **Monthly Board Meeting.** Charlottetown, PEI.

June 30 **CFIA Seed Potato Certification Application Deadline.**

## July 2023

July 12 **Monthly Board Meeting.** Charlottetown, PEI.

July 16-18 **Potato Marketing Association of North America Summer Meeting,** Lethbridge, AB.

July 19 **Summer Canadian Potato Council Meeting.** Calgary, AB.

July 24-27 **Potato Association of America Annual Meeting.** Charlottetown, PEI.

## August 2023

Aug 11 **Monthly Board Meeting.** Fox Island, PEI.

TBD **AIM Field Days.**

The Doug Connery Award seeks to formally honour the commitment and passion Doug Connery brought to the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada and its initiatives. This award publicly recognizes the person who, in the course of their association with the FVGC and Canada's fruit and vegetable sector, has made outstanding contributions to the improvement and advancement of the industry.



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