

*Prince Edward Island*

Fall 2025  
Volume 26 Issue 4

# POTATO NEWS



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*In This Issue:*

- 2025 Annual Potato Industry Banquet
- Young Farmers Update
- Faces of the Industry



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# Chairman's Comments

by Donald Stavert, PEI Potato Board Chairman



The 2025 harvest has wrapped up and for many, it was a difficult one to get through. Digging started a bit later than usual with growers trying to give the crop every chance to bulk and size up. A devastating drought this summer saw the overall yield down at least 20% Island wide. Although those with irrigation had larger sets and better size profiles, the lack of rain was felt by all. That said, the quality is excellent with gravity numbers even higher than last year. Hopefully the potatoes will store well as most were out of the ground before the fall rain began. Most will agree, that we are thankful Harvest 2025 is done.

Late summer and fall are always busy times for the industry. The new National Potato Wart Response Plan was active for this crop year, and a number of growers did soil testing to clear restricted fields. The Province of PEI announced a program to buy back index fields and take them out of production completely. This is very welcome news to the industry and we are very appreciative of the continuous support we have received from the province over the past few years. PEI once again participated in the National Soil Survey with the largest number of soil samples collected across the country. This amounts to a lot of extra work for CFIA and our growers and I want to thank them for their efforts.

We recently met with our potato colleagues across the country at the fall meeting of the


Canadian Potato Council.

There are several national initiatives underway now including market access, grade standards and updated BRR protocols. It is important that we make sure PEI is strongly represented at that table to ensure our voice is heard.

This will be my last Chairman's Comments column as my board term has come to an end. I have been honored to be chairman over the past year and feel we have navigated all the obstacles we faced as an industry well. I really enjoyed my time around the Board table, the Seed and Farm Committee as well as representing Island growers at some of the national meetings the board participates in. I want to thank my wife Judy, brother Peter and son Greg and nephew Isaac for handling things at the farm so I could attend meetings.

I hope everyone gets some down time over the holidays. I want to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2026.

*Donald W Stavert*



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# PEI Potato Board News



*The Board executive and staff met with the PEI Senators to provide an overview of the industry.*



*PEI Senators toured the G. Visser & Sons pack shed to better understand the packing process.*



*A great group of young men and women from Kinkora High School came out to visit Fox Island Seed Farm, some of which had strong ties to the industry, Maura Mulligan, D'Arcy Mulligan's daughter, Charleigh & Karson Webster, Jason Webster's twins Avrie Smith, Andrew Smith's daughter Karson McIver, Adien McIver's son (Donald Cousins grandson)*



*Former Chair John Visser presents a cheque to Chef Jane Crawford of Abiocco, winner of the Potato Seafood Chowder Competition.*



*GM Greg Donald met with Anthony Branker, Consul General and Shirley Wall-Mayers, Assistant Liaison Officer of the Consulate General of Barbados.*



*The PEI Potato Board welcomed the Trade Commissioner of Uruguay to speak about potential trade opportunities. L-R: Chris Jordan, AAFC, Krisdta Shaw, Anaclara Acuna, Greg Donald and Brent Byrnes, Trade Commissioner of PEI*



*PEI Potato Board chair Donald Stavert presents Rayanne Frizzel of PEI 4-H with a cheque for half the proceeds of french fry sales from Farm Day in the City.*



*PEI Potato Board chair Donald Stavert presents Michelle Buttery of PEI Family Violence Prevention Services a cheque for the other half of the french fry sales proceeds.*



*The staff of the PEI Potato Board would like to wish all PEI Growers and Industry members a wonderful, funfilled holiday season. We hope that health and prosperity will be abundant in 2026 for you all. Pictured below: From left to right: Kendra Mills, Krista Shaw, Scott Howatt, Mark Phillips, Rebecca MacSwain, Karen Martin, Amanda Pineau, Ryan Barrett, Holly MacDonald, Mark Pridham, and Greg Donald. Missing from photo Humn Khan, Marla Slater and Eleanor Matthews.*





Above: Jack Shaw, Alvin Keenan and Krista Shaw at Rollo Bay Holdings with the Grade 3 Open Farm Day. Pictured Right- Grade 3 class with Mark Phillips and Alex Docherty at Skyview Farms. Right below: Grade 3 class with Alvin Keenan.

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MARKETPLACE | EVENTS

# Farm Day in the City 2025



October 5, 2025 was another beautiful day for the 16th Annual Farm Day in the City. Lots of people, lots of information shared, and lots of french fries served!



# Passion for Potatoes Award

By: Krista Shaw, Director of Stakeholder Relations

The first Passion for Potatoes Award recipients were presented with tokens of the industry's appreciation at the recent PEI Potato Board Annual Banquet. Originating from the new Advocacy and Operations Committee, the idea was to highlight some of the special young people who may or may not come from a family farm, but who work in, are engaged in, and seen as very valuable members of the potato industry.

Calls for nominations went out to growers in early October for young people aged 22 and under. There were several nominations, and two winners were selected from the submissions.

This year the Passion for Potatoes Award recipients are Isaac MacEwen and Jacob Enman.

the farm.

Farming runs in his blood and like his Grandfather Wayne before him, Isaac's passion for the land and his strong work ethic make him a proud representative of the younger generation in PEI's potato industry.



Isaac is 17 years old and has had a love for farming, especially potatoes, since he was a young boy. He began at a young age planting, harvesting and selling Irish Cobblers in his farm stand and to local restaurants.

Isaac began working on farms at the age of 12, first with Marvin Stewart and later with Vernon Campbell, where he continues today. He's learned nearly every job there is — from warehouse work, working with cattle and operating machinery including windrowing. Vernon often remarks how reliable and hardworking Isaac is, and how much he appreciates having him on



Jacob is a 19 year old who works with G. Visser & Sons in Orwell. While he didn't grow up on a farm, when he was just 13 years old, he approached the team at G. Visser & Sons asking if he could have summer work with them.

He was initially hired to do small jobs to keep the farm property looking good, but he quickly moved to take on more duties. He was always eager to take on any tasks he was asked to do and did so with pride.

Jacob increased his responsibilities over the years and is now one of the leads for their field irrigation systems. This includes moving equipment from field to field, looking after the boom and reel pulls and working countless hours day and night to help keep the irrigation systems working effectively.

Jacob is a hard-working young man who has been able to grow his skill set over the years. He continues to be eager and willing to tackle any job placed in front of him, he isn't afraid to put in long days during peak seasons and is a strong asset to the G.Visser & Sons team.

# PEI Faces of the Industry

*By Rebecca MacSwain, Seed Specialist*



*David Horne of David B. Horne Farms*

David Horne operates David B. Horne Farms in Bloomfield, PEI, where he focuses on growing high-quality tablestock potatoes and maintains a few small seed plots.

After spending several years working in other industries, David returned to the family farm, bringing valuable experience from his time away. Alongside farming, he stays busy managing a trucking business, the Bloomfield Mall, and Horne's Luxury Coach, through which he has provided transportation for country music artists like Dallas Smith and George Canyon.

David and his wife Sherry have three adult daughters and four grandchildren. In the summer, the Horne family enjoys spending time along the Mill River.

Greg Hamill, a fifth generation farmer, along with his father Fulton, operates Fulton Hamill Ltd. in North Carleton, PEI.

Once primarily seed growers, the Hamills have transitioned their business to produce an assortment of red, yellow and round white varieties for the tablestock market, while still producing some local seed. As long-time licensed potato dealers through the PEI Potato Board, they've built lasting relationships with customers throughout Canada and the northeastern United States. Operating as both growers and dealers has allowed the Hamills to connect directly with their customers, streamlining the sales process.

In recent years, the Hamill's have extended their typical three year crop rotation by incorporating soil building crops into the traditional rotation – with a noticeable increase in soil health and productivity.

Greg's wife, Kristin, and their children Charlotte, Nathan, and Thomas are also actively involved in the farm.

In his spare time, Greg loves to be outdoors; hunting, fishing and snowmobiling are all favorite pastimes.



*Greg Hamill of Fulton Hamill Ltd.*



Darryl Wallace farms alongside his brother Kent and their father Layton in Cascumpec, PEI. The Wallaces primarily grow processing potatoes for Cavendish Farms and also maintain seed plots to meet their own needs. Russets are the mainstay varieties on the Wallace farm. This season, they are growing Alverstone Russet, Dakota Russet, Mountain Gem Russet, and Russet Burbank.

Once a mixed farm with a milk quota, the Wallaces have since focused their operation on specializing in potato production, rotating with grains and soil-building cover crops. They continue to seek out new practices and improve operational efficiencies. This year, Darryl is experimenting with crimson clover and is exploring its potential benefits within the crop rotation.

*Pictured Left: Darryl Wallace of Wallace Family Farms Ltd.*

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# Fall 2025 CPMA Semi Review

By: Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

In September 2025, I travelled to Austin, Texas, for our CPMA semi-annual meetings (and 8 weeks feels like a lifetime ago in a “flood the zone” news cycle strategy!) While we have these planned meetings every year, this year’s events took on a different tone, given the trade environments we find ourselves. To that end, structurally, the meetings were changed to make room for more opportunities to have valuable discussions with members of both Canadian and US trade officials.

The meetings took place over three days, and had several different formats for engagement. First was an informative panel, including speakers, Dante Galeazzi from the Texas International Produce Association (TIPA), Dennis Nuxoll, VP, Federal Government Affairs, Western Growers Association (WGA), Tom Stenzel former co-CEO of the International Floral and Produce Association (IFPA) and John Hollay VP Government Relations for IFPA. A very engaging panel, these speakers brought very unique perspectives. However, the overarching message was very clear – the White House views on tariffs were not broadly shared within the produce industries, regardless of political stripe. The tariffs are in fact hurting their industries, the supply chain, and ultimately the consumers of both Canada and the US. And while there are others, fresh produce in particular would be one of the industries completely enmeshed in all three North American countries. With very little direction and accompanying paperwork from Congress (that tariffs in the past would require) the states, sectors and associations have been left to navigate the systems themselves. While most of the speakers had their opinion on what the future may hold or where the tariff discussion will net out, of course, no one has a crystal ball. However, it remains clear that the chaos we have all become used to with the current US administration doesn’t appear to be relenting.

Another enlightening session included a presentation from Steve Verheul, Canada’s former lead negotiator and the Canadian lead for the Coalition for North American Trade (CNAT). We learned a lot about the process of the CUSMA negotiation. His estimation was (at the time) that there was no real prospect of

an imminent Canada/US trade deal, that the economic impacts of the tariffs hadn’t been broadly felt, and that the US economy was just starting to see the indicators now through jobs, inflation and consumer prices. Only when this is seen and realized would it start to affect public sentiment. He did assert that he felt the anti-free trade approach was nearing it’s peak and that attempts at solutions or “off-ramps” would start to creep up.

Along with other presentations, a particularly interesting one was on the water situation in Texas and how that’s being handled and shaped for the future by the Texas Water Organization. I sat next to Susan Harper, a senior diplomat and Consul General for the Government of Canada at a few social events and was able to have great discussions on Canada-US trade situation and gain insight on her views on the subject. We also did a market tour, including H-E-B, Whole Foods and Central Market in Austin.

For me, the week was summed up very succinctly with one phrase “What is the biggest threat to economic growth? With the answer being uncertainty.”

Tariffs, particularly in these times, bring nothing but uncertainty and actually achieves the opposite of what’s intended. And while it’s very clear that the current US President does not believe in free trade, we remain steadfast as an industry and a country to ensure the success and prosperity of our industry.

## A NOTE OF APOLOGY



*In the Summer issue of the Potato News Blue Bay Farms owners were not properly identified. My deepest apology to Randall, Andrew, Pete, Klaas and Marten Neiuwhof.*

# AIM BBQs 2025



*Aim BBQ Eastern PEI, Arthur Mooney and Sons Farm, with a demonstration of the drone with Chad Mooney. All the AIM BBQ's had record attendance this year. Thanks to all who were able to join us at our BBQs.*



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# PMANA Fall Meeting 2025

*By: Scott Howatt, Processing Specialist*

The PMANA Fall meeting took place by Zoom video on Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. The conference, chaired by President Dale Lathim, had over thirty-five growers and organizational staff in attendance, representing eleven of the twelve associations across North America who act on behalf of potato growers during contract negotiations with frozen potato and potato chip processors. Eleven area reports were presented, providing details of the quantity and quality of their harvested crop, the current outlook and movement of potatoes in their area, as well as an update on the value of their contracts and any current progress in contract talks with their customers.

The overall combined production for 2025 in the eleven reports is projected to be up by over 6,640,000 CWT from the 2024 crop, representing a 1.5% increase. Growth in overall production is the opposite of what was intended, or needed, this marketing year. French fry processors in all areas (except McCain Foods in Alberta and Cavendish Farms in PEI) had cut growers contracted volumes to bring new-crop potato supplies down to adjust for the long inventory position from the 2024 crop and to allow for the slow-down in the annual growth rate of frozen potato product sales. This year-over-year growth in potato production follows two years of growers in parts of the Pacific Northwest (PNW) dumping excess potatoes, so you may ask, how are we (collectively) in an overage situation again?

A planted acreage analysis shows that growers in PNW did cut acres overall, led by Washington growers cutting 12,000 acres (7.8%). Alberta planted 4,300 more acres to supply the recently opened McCain Foods plant in Coaldale. Midwestern growers cut their acres collectively by 6,400; however, growers in the Atlantic Northeast (ANE) planted 3,400 more acres driven by over 2,000 acre increases in both Quebec and PEI. When the harvested acres from across all eleven PMANA reports are added together, acres harvested are down only 6,900 from 2024, which is less than a 1% decrease. The volume cuts across North America ranged from mid-single digit to low double digit, which should have resulted in nothing less than a cut of 50,000 planted acres to bring new-

crop production in line with the goals of the volume cuts from the pre-season contract talks. The Potato Growers of Washington (PGW) did their part, the rest of North American potato growers did not.

Compounding this “too many acres planted” situation, all the growers from the PNW, the Midwest and from parts of the ANE reported better-than-budgeted crop yields. Quotes of “record yields for some varieties” or “best yields of a generation” were shared during the Zoom conference and these yields more than offset any attempt by individual growers to match production with their reduced contract volumes. Improved yields over 2024 occurred in every growing region of PMANA, except Quebec and PEI. Unfortunately, the excellent growing season that was experienced across most of North America, combined with the acres grown to produce an overage situation which already has growers in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington dumping potatoes that have no home in the market place for the third year in a row, and has growers in the Midwest wondering what will be the fate of their overage spuds during this coming season.

This gives a viewpoint of the “how” we got here; but then you may ask, “why”? Never a simple subject, however, there are some hard truths. At the top is the poor returns from other cash crops in the North American commodities world. Geo-economic factors have combined to create over-supplies of corn, soybean, canola, wheat, etc. and therefore depressed prices. Alfalfa is not the “cash cow” (pardon the pun) it was just three years ago. According to Dale Lathim, in the Columbia Basin, contracted potato acres are currently the leading crop for profitability. Next, on a large portion of the ground in the PNW and Midwest, monies would already be spent as growers prepare their land and book their potato seed in advance of contract negotiations. To these facts you can then add growers who experienced two below-average yielding crops in the last four years. Most of these same growers did not predict nor budget for potato yield increases of 5-10%. Lastly, some western growers may have speculated that their Fry customers were cutting volumes too deeply and that these processors would need more potatoes

before the year was out. When we combine the above facts with some risky speculation, we can quickly find the North American potato industry in a repeated and gross over-supply situation.

In their reports, grower reps spoke of potato processing quality parameters being between very good to excellent. The only report that mentions quality issues was Manitoba and it seems they have this in-hand as any storage breakdown (from localized heavy rains at the start of harvest) occurred earlier. Smaller size profiles were reported from Wisconsin, Quebec, southern NB and PEI. The storability of the 2025 North American potato crop is very good. Representatives from Maine, New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Alberta informed the meeting that open potatoes from some of their farms will be transported by Cavendish Farms to PEI. According to Cavendish Farms management's CBC News interview in November, they are short 200M pounds of potatoes due to the summer drought on PEI.

On the finished side of the processing sector, we learned the growth rate of North American sales volume is growing between 1.0% to 1.5% year-over-year, and, for the most part, finished pricing is holding; not degrading as was predicted by some fryers during last spring's negotiations. This is good news for the sector as it marks much-needed stability in the marketplace for the processors. On the negative side, we learned the fryers in the PNW are experiencing strong headwinds in offshore sales; created by expanding exports sales from frozen potato processors located in China and India. To wrap up the news from the finished side of the business, new processing facilities in Washington State (J.R. Simplot) and Alberta (McCain Foods) should be coming into full production for the 2026 potato crop and the Agristo plant in North Dakota is still on schedule to be fully operational in 2028.

A few grower organizations have started to research their costs of production for 2026, and their preliminary reports indicate operational costs will increase between 3-4%. Projected cost increases in fertilizers, crop protectants, labour, machinery parts and repairs will be greater than the cost saving in interest fees. The inherent fixed cost increases which come from lower volumes (and reduced acres) are also a driving factor in costs increasing.

The Zoom meeting concluded with PGW reporting they have contract talks scheduled with Lamb Weston and J.R. Simplot in December. Otherwise, the rest of

the PNW reported they intend to talk with their fry customers in January at Potato Expo in Dallas, Texas. In my opinion, growers across North America have gained little in terms of contract negotiation leverage, compared to this time last year. In my November 2024 article I stated, "Regarding (raw potato) supply, some fryers and growers worked hard at balancing their supply and demand equation (this is no easy task) and they should be commended for these efforts. However, our sector has few buyers, and it only takes missteps by one (area or region) to have a ripple effect from coast to coast, across all growing areas." Going into contract talks for 2026, collectively, grower reps who go to the tables are facing a similar environment as last year. Each grower needs to emphasize to their fry customers that they need a return to stability and sustainability as well. To back this up with action, planted potato acres need to be cut to align with growers' most recent yield numbers and with the volumes that their processors are signing up. Surely, over the past two years, we have proven to ourselves that speculation on what volume your buyers may need versus growing exactly what your buyers have asked for can be very costly, both to each individual potato farm as well as for the whole industry.

## Upcoming Events & Program Deadlines

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

### December 2025

December 17 **PEI Potato Board of Directors  
Monthly Meeting**, Charlottown

### January 2026

January 5-8 Potato Expo, Dallas, Texas  
January 20 **PEI Potato Board of Directors  
Monthly Meeting**, Charlottetown

### February 2026

February 25 **PEI Potato Board of Directors  
Monthly Meeting**, Charlottetown  
February 26-27 **International Potato Technology Expo**, Eastlink Center, PEI

# Highlights from the 2025 IFPA

By Mark Phillips, Marketing Specialist

The International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA) hosted its 2025 Global Produce & Floral Show this October in Anaheim, drawing over 1,100 exhibiting companies and 3,500 buyers from more than 60 countries. The event showcased how technology, sustainability, and consumer health priorities are shaping the future of the global produce industry. While the West Coast shows, further from our traditional markets, sometimes feel a little less relevant, this year offered an excellent opportunity to reconnect with the industry and learn about trends in the produce sector. Of particular interest was the show's State of the Industry session with IFPA CEO Cathy Burns.

## Key Themes and Insights

**1. Innovation and Technology Leading the Way**  
Innovation was a primary focus again this year, from climate-smart packaging and extended shelf-life solutions to value-added, snack-ready formats that meet evolving consumer demands. IFPA introduced a new AI-powered data tool for members, offering proprietary insights into consumer trends, pricing, and category performance.

AI was a dominant topic throughout the event, influencing everything from supply-chain management to marketing analytics. However, industry discussions noted that adoption remains uneven—many workers still resist AI integration, while younger professionals often use it quietly as a competitive advantage.

**2. Consumer Behaviour and Market Resilience**  
IFPA's research shows that produce remains one of the most resilient grocery categories, even as consumers cut back in other areas. Shoppers are focusing more on reducing food waste, purchasing essential items, and eating for longevity and health.

The global health and wellness trend continues to grow, creating opportunities for produce brands to align with consumers' desire to "eat well to live well."

**3. Sustainability and Climate Resilience**  
**Sustainability remains a top global priority.**

IFPA's "Supply Chain of the Future" initiative was introduced to help members build smarter, more efficient, and climate-resilient distribution networks.

Speakers emphasized that climate change could cost the global economy up to \$190 trillion between 2050 and 2070, with food prices and food safety among the most noticeable daily impacts. Rising temperatures and humidity are increasing the risk of foodborne pathogens, underscoring the need for strong traceability and handling standards.

While sustainability remains a focus, supply chain challenges were also noted. Burns stated in her keynote, "this year's crops were one of, if not for many, the most expensive ever harvested, shipped and sold." Labour costs rose dramatically in many instances this year.

**4. Nutrition, Health, and the Role of Produce**  
The global nutrition conversation was front and centre. Despite increased awareness, diet-related chronic diseases continue to rise—obesity is projected to affect over 50% of adults and one-third of youth by 2050.

Encouragingly, research shows GLP-1 drug users (such as those taking Ozempic) are eating more fruits and vegetables and fewer ultra-processed meals. This presents a timely opportunity for produce to play a leading role in healthier eating habits. This creates an opportunity for fresh potato sales, but will likely create a challenge for the processing portion of the industry. The impact of GLP-1 use will likely result in smaller portion sizes for consumers, potentially affecting overall demand.

Tech companies are also stepping into nutrition: Apple is developing an AI-powered "virtual health coach," and Twin Health is creating digital "metabolic twins" using real-time data to support personalized diet and wellness plans.

## Takeaways for the Potato Industry

**Health Positioning:** Potatoes remain an affordable, nutrient-dense, and versatile food. Framing them as part of a healthy, balanced, and sustainable diet aligns with consumer priorities around longevity and wellness.

**Innovation Opportunities:** There is growing interest in convenience-driven packaging (smaller portions, ready-to-cook, or multi-use formats). Canadian growers

and packers could benefit from exploring value-added potato offerings that align with evolving retail trends. American company Plant Grow Harvest launched Tasty Little Digs earlier this year and announced Big! Digs during their show. Their booth drew a lot of attention on the show floor, and they were awarded the Best First-Time Exhibitor award.

**Sustainability and Provenance:** Consumers want to know where their food comes from. Canada’s strong reputation for food safety and quality can be emphasized through traceability programs and storytelling around origin and stewardship.

**AI and Data:** The rise of data-driven marketing and production tools will reshape how the industry understands demand, plans logistics, and communicates with retailers. Staying informed and prepared for AI integration will be important.

The 2025 IFPA Global Produce & Floral Show highlighted an industry in transition—embracing technology, health, and sustainability to stay relevant to modern consumers. For the potato sector, this represents both a challenge and an opportunity: to innovate while reinforcing the strong values of trust, nutrition, and quality that define PEI potatoes at home and abroad. While there is plenty of opportunity, the challenge lies in better serving consumers while managing rising costs.



*Below: Mark Phillips standing in the booth at the IFPA 2025  
Photo credit :Fresh Plaza Astrid Van Den Broek*



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# 2025 Annual Potato Industry Banquet

By: Kendra Mills, Marketing Director

The 2025 PEI Potato Industry Awards Banquet took place on Friday, November 21st in Charlottetown. Two deserving members of the Island's potato industry were presented with Industry Achievement awards and a new recognition for deserving youth in the industry was introduced and presented.

Boyd Rose, partner of East Point Potato and RA Rose & Sons, was recognized for his significant involvement in the industry. Boyd started farming with his brother Myles and father Robert, growing potatoes for the seed, table and eventually processing industry. But it was through the purchase of East Point Potato (formerly MacKay & Hughes), with his partners, where Boyd found his stride, turning that company into the innovative and successful fresh potato packing operation it is today. From a young age, Boyd recognized the value of industry involvement and leadership, and has served with the Potato Producers Association, Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (FVGC, formerly Canadian Horticultural Council) and several terms with the PEI Potato Board as both a director and chairman of the Board. Boyd's steadfast character, common sense approach and sense of humour were cited as reasons for his success. His leadership has had a positive influence on his daughters, two of whom also work in the potato industry.

Pat Quilty was also presented with an award for his commitment to the PEI potato industry, particularly in the seed sector. Pat is Operations Manager with the Potato Quality Institute (PQI), which he joined in 1999. Pat has an extensive background in agricultural science, earning his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from MacDonald College of McGill University in 1982, and through his experience as Lab Technician and Supervisor with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Under his direction, PQI has become a cornerstone of seed potato testing and certification, offering a wide range of potato diagnostics. This work protects the integrity of PEI seed potatoes and helps ensure each new crop starts strong, healthy,

and disease-free. Pat's grower-driven philosophy has always been at the forefront of his work. His leadership in overseeing a specialized, industry-serving lab, owned and guided by PEI potato producers, has ensured that growers receive timely, accurate and science-driven seed testing, which is essential to their success.



*Premier Rob Lantz spoke words of resilience and strength about the potato industry to begin the evening, followed by (pictured below) Minister Thompson, Minister of Agriculture who pointed out that the Potato boards outgoing Chair, Donald Stavert was a great representative for the industry, and finally MP Kent MacDonald passed along well wishes. What a great way to start our evening.*





*New Chair Katie MacLennan presenting outgoing Chair Donald Stavert with a token of appreciation.*



*Award recipient Boyd Rose being presented his Award by PEI Potato Board Chair, Katie MacLennan.*

*Below: Chair Donald Stavert passing the gavel to new Chair Katie MacLennan, the first female Chair of the PEI Potato Board.*

*Below: Rebecca MacSwain, and Katie MacLennan with Pat Quilty presenting him with his industry award.*





Boyd, owner operator of East Point Potatoes in Souris PEI, and Arlene Rose, married 41 years have created a beautiful family which consists of 3 daughters and so far 5 grand-daughters. Pictured Keisha Rose-Topic, Ellen Lukeman, Arlene Rose, Boyd Rose and Jorie Steason.



Pat Quilty manager of the PEI Potato Quality Institute and also father of 3 girls, gives his time and energy to his family, his job, and the growers who he serves. Pictured, Eddy Bush, Aleya Quilty, Ruth Quilty, Pat Quilty, Brielle Doyle and Jordan Doyle. (Missing daughter Tia and Chad Locke)



*It was wonderful to see a packed house at The Delta Prince Edward, so many wonderful growers, supportive industry members and generous sponsors, making for a memorable evening for the Potato Industry Award recipients. Don't forget to mark you calendars for next years event!*

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# Update from the Department of Agriculture PEI

By: *Rodrigo Sampaio dos Santos, Potato Industry Coordinator*



The 2025 crop season tested PEI producers with one of the toughest droughts in recent memory, cutting yields across several commodities and leaving a clear mark on the province's potato crop. Yet it also underscored the resilience and determination of the industry. Working closely with growers and partners, the Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture (PEIDA) advanced initiatives that strengthen the potato sector and build a more sustainable future.

In June, close to 40 participants gathered in Emerald for the Potato Crop Scouting Clinic. Sessions covered integrated pest management, pest and disease scouting, weed resistance, nutrient deficiency symptoms, and biosecurity, with practical tips from experts and professional scouts. In July and August, hybrid Crop Update Meetings in Charlottetown and Kensington brought together growers, researchers, and industry partners to share timely updates on weather, pest pressures, and crop development.

From June to September, the Aphid Alert Program expanded monitoring with 49 traps across 42 fields, including commercial sites to enhance surveillance in areas with lower control of aphids. The Green Peach Aphid, a key concern, was detected very early, causing initial alarm, but went absent for nearly a month before reappearing later in the season. Numbers stayed low throughout, with 223 individuals identified—almost half of the 2024 count of 426, itself a record low. These reduced numbers are expected to support strong results in post-harvest virus testing of seed lots.

A major accomplishment this season was the launch of the PEI Nutrient Calibration Trials Project, a three-year initiative funded through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership program. Led by Agronomic Extension Specialist Sophia Oku, the project will update nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium recommendations for potatoes—across early, mid, and late season cultivar groups—as well as corn, winter wheat, and soybeans. Trials are underway in New Annan for potatoes and in Harrington for the other crops, with the goal of establishing nutrient application

rates tailored to soils of varying nutrient status. Preliminary findings are being analyzed, with full recommendations expected after three years of replicated research, likely in 2028.

The season also included a visit from agriculture commissioners from Maine and Massachusetts, reinforcing valuable cross-border partnerships. Currently, about half of PEI's index fields applied to the PEI Index Field Buy-Back Program, a proactive initiative that demonstrates the industry's resilience in addressing potato wart while maintaining confidence in PEI's seed sector.

PEIDA strengthened its capacity with new staff appointments: Kyra Stiles as Manager of Sustainable Agriculture, Patti Ann Baird-Gill as Cereal and Oilseeds Development Officer, and Jake MacKinnon as Agriculture Information Supervisor in the Agriculture Resources Division. In the Animal and Plant Health Division, Jackie Garnhum became Manager of the PEI Analytical Laboratory, and Lori Connolly Brine was appointed Director.

PEIDA is also proud to support the 2026 International Potato Technology Expo, showcasing PEI's leadership in potato production to a global audience. Planning is underway for the Potato Conference at the Expo in Charlottetown on February 26 and 27, with an agenda being developed alongside experts in potato production.

The PEI Department of Agriculture remains focused on the interests of producers, with new and ongoing projects planned for 2026. By combining extension and collaboration, PEIDA continues to strengthen the potato industry and support its sustainability for years to come.



# From Soil to Sea:

By: Brett van Heyningen, Communications Advisor Atlantic region of AAFC

From soil to sea: researchers and farmers are turning modelling data and crop rotation options into healthier waterways on Prince Edward Island.

When you're surrounded by the ocean, soils tend to be sandier than more inland provinces. Water can enter groundwater more quickly in sandy soils and then migrate to nearby waterways. Because of this, farming practices can have a direct impact on the water quality of the limited freshwater streams and rivers that feed into brackish estuaries and eventually the ocean.

While there are many important practices that farmers already use to help maintain healthy waterways, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research scientist Dr. Yefang Jiang, based at the Charlottetown Research and Development Centre, set out to use soil and water modelling data to find out how various in-field beneficial management practices could help reduce nitrogen from entering groundwater and improve surface water quality in streams, lakes, and coastal areas.

Where water sampling typically occurs in summer months, the team used a model to simulate the sampling data from the fall, winter, and spring to determine the annual effects of nitrogen on waterways. Dr. Jiang found that red clover and other forage legume crops can result in excess nitrogen in soils that can

enter groundwater and receiving waterways if it's not utilized by the next crop.

"Soybeans, timothy, or buckwheat are great alternatives to red clover and leave little nitrogen in the soil after harvesting. Through our model, we found that replacing red clover with soybean can help reduce excess nitrogen in the Dunk River watershed by as much as 17%. Soybeans can also give farmers a second cash crop with potatoes."

Researchers from Fisheries and Oceans Canada found that the nitrogen reduction in the watershed when replacing red clover with soybean in the rotation reduced levels of nitrates, a common form of nitrogen, in estuaries further downstream from the Dunk River by up to 8%. Additionally, the reduction in nitrogen can lead to a 24% decrease in average sea lettuce biomass in the upper estuary. Sea lettuce growth can cause harm to aquatic animal life when it decomposes and uses up dissolved oxygen, known as anoxic events.



Dr. Yefang Jiang



Adam & Kimberlee Jay with 5 of their 6 children (Caleb on left)

## YOUR IWK

From 2024 to 2025, Prince Edward Islanders had approximately 254 inpatient stays at the IWK. One patient was 13-year-old Caleb, who was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

**"We knew we were delivering our son into the best hands we could at the IWK. The team was amazing—the nurses, doctors, and staff. We're so lucky to have the IWK close to home."**

- Adam Jay, Caleb's father and G. Visser & Sons COO.

Today, Caleb is thriving. To learn how you can support the IWK, email: [Barbi.Holland@iwkfoundation.org](mailto:Barbi.Holland@iwkfoundation.org) or call 902-470-3949



# A Look at What's Happening in the PEI Potatoes Social Media World

*By: Julie Jones, Brand and Social Media Manager, VMG*

“Change is the only constant” is a saying attributed to the Greek Philosopher Heraclitus, but as a social media manager, it has also become my personal motto. The social media landscape is constantly evolving, but one thing remains unchanged: social media is still one of the most direct and effective ways for businesses to connect with consumers and build a genuine sense of community around their brand.

## **Our Current Platforms**

While we have all but retired X (previously Twitter), Facebook and Instagram continue to be the core platforms for PEI Potatoes. With more than 43,000 followers combined, these channels let us share the seasonal rhythm of the Island's potato industry - planting, growing, harvesting, and all the moments in between. We're fortunate to have an active, loyal audience that consistently engages with the content we share.

In the first quarter of this fiscal year alone (July 1 to September 30), our content had more than 1.4 million views and generated nearly 30,000 interactions - proof that people are eager to follow along with the story of PEI Potatoes.

We've also been making a deliberate push toward younger audiences by investing more time in TikTok. Using our mascot, Tate, as our on-camera talent, these videos are fun, quirky and lighthearted - exactly what the platform demands right now. Our strategy is simple: get the next generation familiar with PEI Potatoes now, so that as they grow into primary shoppers, the brand is already in their heads!

We've also recently added LinkedIn to our mix. It can be a valuable space for connecting with growers, retailers, researchers, buyers, and government partners, and it provides us with a professional channel to share industry updates.

## **What Guides Our Content**

Across every channel, our approach is rooted in a few simple goals: strengthen awareness of PEI Potatoes, celebrate the people who grow them, and

continue building a community that feels proud to choose our product.

## **Our core messages stay consistent:**

- Add more potatoes to your meals, and choose PEI when you do!
- Growing potatoes is part of our identity as Islanders.
- PEI Potatoes stand out for quality, taste, and care in every step of the process.

To support this, we use a blend of organic content and paid advertising to ensure the brand stays visible as social media continues to shift into a pay-to-play environment.

## **Growers at the Heart of the Story**

One of the things our audience loves most is seeing the real people behind the work. Each season, we aim to visit at least one new farm to gather fresh photos and videos. This year, we've worked with photographer Victor Karki, who has helped us capture beautiful moments in the fields.

Some of our strongest-performing posts feature growers, families, and the hands-on process that makes this industry so special. A big thank you to every farmer who welcomes us onto their property, and those who share their own photos with us, tag us, or use the #PEIPotatoes hashtag.

## **Building Community Through Engagement**

The PEI Merch Store has added a fun new layer to our social presence. Our giveaways, especially the vintage t-shirts, have become super popular. The September giveaway had more than 4,000 entries, and we have another lined up for December.

We're also excited to have Savour by Shannon back again this year. From November through June, she'll share a monthly recipe reel showcasing simple, delicious ways to enjoy PEI Potatoes. Her content was among our top performers last year, and we expect her new series to resonate just as strongly.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or news/photos for PEI Potatoes' social media account.



*All curls and smiles for Jessica Townshend's daughter in a potato field*



*Above: Savour by Shannon (photo credit:Simon Reid Studios)Pictured below: a photo from Farm Boys by Victor Karki*



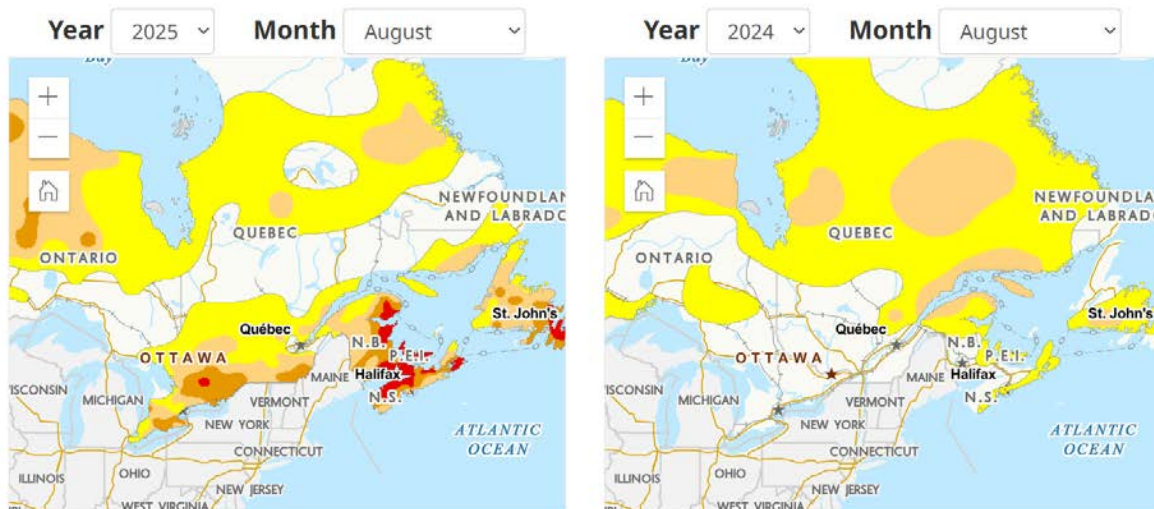
*By Victoria Stamper, General Manager of United Potato Growers of Canada*

It is hard to believe we are already November with the end of 2025 approaching quickly... and what a year it has been!

It started off a little rocky with the sudden threat of US tariffs and the late season volume cuts by some of the processors early in spring, growers in all three sectors were anxious about making final decisions on planted acreage surrounded by so much uncertainty. In the end the majority of growers in Canada, and in North America in fact, forged ahead with plans with the exception of Washington state and Manitoba who did cut processing acres by close to 15,000 and 5,000 respectively. After over a month of back and forth about tariffs many fresh growers moved forward “fingers crossed” that CUSMA would hold, at least for this marketing season. The only disappointment if we can use that word, would be in Idaho, who did not reduce acreage from last year despite processor volume cuts and a lack of interest in more raw potato supply from the dehy sector of which the majority for North America is located in that state.

**A tale of two crops?**

We can see differences in the east and west right from planting through until harvest. In the west planting went well, weather conditions were good and most growers were in the ground early. In the east it was a slower start with wet and cool conditions through most of Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick however PEI seemed to fair better with early potatoes planted in April seeing tops of rows closed by June. In fact most growers on the island were reporting some of the best plants seen in years by mid summer. With generally good weather in June, we were hearing similar reports across the country. However, by mid-July it was as though the taps were turned off in the east, with nearly drought like conditions in most regions, as we can see in the drought maps comparing August 2025 on the left to August 2024 on the right.



Quebec, as well as parts of New Brunswick and Ontario, did manage to get rain through August and into September recovering yields in most areas. The west continued to fair well due to the much higher levels of irrigated acres in Mantioba and through the prairies and BC did not experience any significant rainy periods as they have some years. By the time the late harvest started the damage was done in PEI with many reporting yields down anywhere from 20-30%, a very frustrating outcome after such a promising start.

recover with estimated production increases of 2.2% and 1.0% respectively. Although representing smaller volumes, BC and Saskatchewan are also forecast to have increased production this year after an excellent harvest and growing season for both.

### So we should be happy should we not?

Yes we should, however this optimism has been tempered all summer by a sluggish retail market. What is impacting demand this year has been the question on many growers' minds in eastern Canada, around

PROVINCE	UPGC Estimates for 2025-26 Marketing Year				PRODUCTION ESTIMATES COMPARISON			
	Planted Acreage	Harvested Acreage	Yield	Production ('000 cwt)	2025 vs 2024	2024	2023	2022
PEI	87,300	87,000	255	22,185	-14.4%	25,930	25,813	27,789
NEW BRUNSWICK	52,100	51,900	320	16,608	-2.3%	17,006	14,879	17,000
NOVA SCOTIA	800	800	280	222	-1.0%	224	222	240
NEWFOUNDLAND	415	415	130	53	11.3%	48	50	52
<b>TOTAL MARITIMES</b>	140,615	140,115		39,068	-9.6%	43,208	40,964	45,081
QUEBEC	49,125	48,325	315	15,222	2.2%	14,901	11,656	14,278
ONTARIO	40,215	40,015	225	9,003	1.0%	8,915	8,602	8,160
MANITOBA	74,444	72,077	411	29,624	7.9%	27,446	29,388	26,139
SASKATCHEWAN	7,300	7,191	250	1,798	3.6%	1,736	1,780	1,450
ALBERTA	80,000	78,800	420	33,096	10.0%	30,089	32,063	26,813
<b>TOTAL PRAIRIES</b>	161,744	158,068		64,517	8.9%	59,271	63,231	54,402
BRITISH COLUMBIA	5,870	5,850	375	2,194	16.8%	1,878	2,140	1,600
<b>TOTAL CANADA</b>	<b>397,569</b>	<b>392,373</b>	<b>331.8</b>	<b>130,005</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>128,173</b>	<b>126,593</b>	<b>123,520</b>

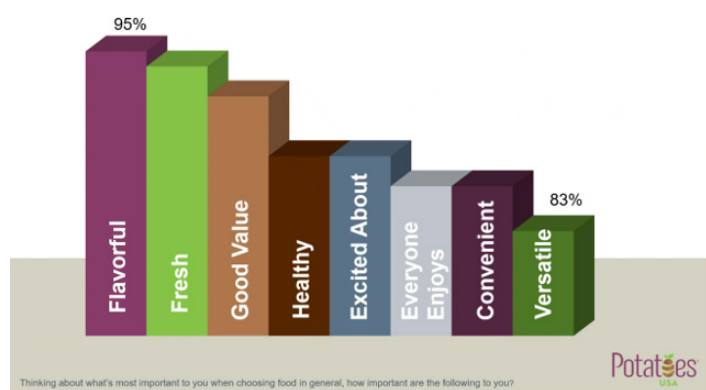
However, overall harvest conditions were very good all across Canada which is reflected in the low level of lost acres, only 1.3% of planted. There were some high temperatures at the start of October that did slow harvesting a bit and is pushing growers to keep a very close eye on storage this season, but in general most were finished on time or even early. The size profile may be on the smaller side, with higher sets, but the quality is reported as excellent across Canada. So we should be happy with the crop, but...we do not have the official Statistics Canada report, it will be released December 5th, however United Potato Growers of Canada is estimating Canada's highest production on record at just over 130 million cwt. We must note the impact of the processing sector on those numbers. Alberta actually increased planted acres this year due to the McCain Coaldale expansion coming online, and with record yields, in Manitoba as well, we are not surprised to see this increase in production. The surprise might be more in Ontario and Quebec who if you had asked mid-August, were expecting similar results to PEI with yields greatly impacted by the lack of precipitation. In the end they received enough timely rains in most of the heavy growing areas to

the US, and on the mind of UPGC. We have discussed this with growers, industry experts and organizations throughout the supply chain and there seems to be a number of factors to take into account. With the early crop of round whites in Quebec and Ontario it seemed to be a combination of very high temperatures through June, July and August and consumers choosing other vegetables like cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce that "fit" better with the hot weather rather than standing over a stove and cooking potatoes. We also noticed a lower number of retail ads and promotions and an increase in everyday pricing for a 10lb bag of \$2 and sometimes \$3 per bag depending on the retailer when compared the same time last year. Potatoes continue to be great value per pound when compared to other vegetables, but with lower spending power, many consumers are reconsidering their retail grocery purchases. That leads us to the some of the other issues weighing on the market these days including the government shutdown in the US, continued uncertainty about the tariff situation impacting Canadian businesses, and let us not forget the impact of GLP-1 (ex. Ozempic) medications, all combining to create an overall lowering of grocery spend across

North America, not just in potatoes but other vegetables as well. Studies show that the GLP-1's do tend to lower consumption of ultra processed foods, so more impact on the potato chips and frozen fries, however fresh potatoes are also likely impacted by the smaller portion size and less extravagant meal preparation at home - both the package size and even the size of the potato itself will continue to be considerations for the near future based on current consumer behaviour and dietary habits.

**So what are the strategies?**

**What's important when choosing food?**



First, it is not all doom and gloom, Potatoes USA concluded their annual survey and potatoes still rank as America's favourite vegetable!

How can we capitalize on the general popularity of potatoes? First, recognizing changes to consumer behavior can help us to identify opportunities to promote potato consumption. How people are eating as well as when they eat, whether it is fewer regular meals or following a particular dietary regime, and the attributes of food that are important to them, can help us meet the consumer where they are in their consumption habits. Health and wellness have become increasingly important to multiple generations of consumers giving rise to protein additives, promotion of vitamins and minerals, all naturally occurring in potatoes. Education about potato nutrition and its role in a healthy diet, not just to the end use consumer but to less traditional influencers such as doctors, nutritionists and even chefs can also provide benefit long term. With every challenge, every barrier to the overall consumption of potatoes, there is an opportunity to change behaviour.

Most growers we have spoken to, not only in

Canada but also in the US, are expressing the same sentiment; we have a very large crop in North America and it will likely be a challenging marketing campaign, but slow and steady is the way to proceed. Long term storage quality will be key, allowing growers and packers, and processors, to move through inventory at a pace that makes sense from an economic standpoint, avoiding flooding the market and holding prices stable. There have been tough years in the past, and if I have learned anything in my short time in this industry it is that potato growers are a tough and hardy bunch, innovative and brave, and in it for the long haul.

We at UPGC will continue to provide growers with the best information possible, not just about supply but also about demand, to assist in good decision making about the crop. Our efforts to improve data collection about potatoes continue, working with government, other potato and vegetable associations, and of course you the growers. We are working hard to develop our national data platform that will allow for the real time collection of data directly into protected provincial databases that assist in analyzing the consolidated trends at a national level with more in-depth analysis on supply based on colour, inventory and shipping progress.

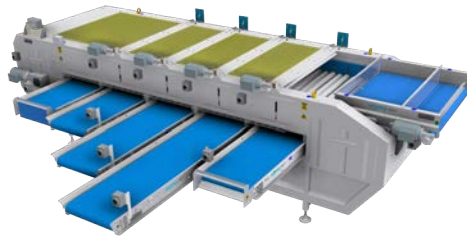
Thank you for your continued support of United Potato Growers of Canada, we wish you the best for the season and hope to see you on our monthly conference call where we can discuss your concerns, thoughts and suggestions for improvements.





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# PEI Young Farmers Update

*By Jamie Ward, Young Farmers Program Coordinator*

It has been a busy and rewarding few months for the PEI Young Farmers Association, with a full slate of events designed to foster learning, connection, and the strengthening of our agricultural community.

We kicked off the summer with two well-attended farm tours. On July 19th, members spent the day in Prince County visiting Shore Lane Farms, Compton's Farmers Market, and Tiny Acres Holsteins. The tour provided a comprehensive look at diverse operations and sparked valuable discussions on innovation and day-to-day farm management.

Our second tour took place in Queens County on Thursday, July 31st, where we visited Eastview Dairy, Howmac Farms - BSSI Inc. Members had the opportunity to explore different production systems, ask questions, and learn from experienced producers across the potato and dairy sector.

In August, we launched our first-ever anonymous policy survey to better understand the most significant challenges facing young farmers today. The insights gathered will help guide our policy focus over the upcoming year and ensure that member priorities are clearly represented.

We continued our momentum into the fall with an After-Work Social on October 30th, giving members a chance to unwind, connect, and share ideas heading into the winter season.

Most recently, we were pleased to host a Nuffield Scholarship presentation featuring Jamie Heinrich from Kangaroo Island, Australia. Jamie shared an inspiring talk on engaging young people in agriculture and discussed insights from his 2017 Nuffield project.

Following the presentation, we held an Industry Job Panel, which brought together a group of experienced and diverse voices in agriculture:

- Ross Toebes – Co-owner of AgPro Workwear and Regan Farms
- Suz Brouwer – Owner of Eastview Dairy

- Jamie Heinrich – Nuffield Scholar and Co-owner of Ella Matta Pastoral

- Jake MacKinnon – Agriculture Information Supervisor and involved with his family operation at Red Farms

The panel provided thoughtful discussion on career paths, challenges, and opportunities within PEI's agricultural sector, offering valuable insights for young and aspiring producers.

Alongside our events, we have also made strong progress on organizational development. Over the past three months, we launched a new PEI Young Farmers website featuring valuable resources, industry links, and information for members. We are also excited to share that we have welcomed over 30 new members in the past 90 days, a milestone that reflects the growing interest and engagement among young farmers across the Island.

Looking ahead, we have several exciting events planned. In January, we will be holding a membership roundtable to review the findings of our policy survey and discuss next steps for the organization. And in February, we look forward to welcoming members to our Annual General Meeting, scheduled for Friday, February 20th, from 10 AM–2 PM (final details to be confirmed).

We look forward to continuing to build momentum, support young leaders in agriculture, and provide meaningful opportunities for connection and growth across the industry.



# CPC Fall Report:

## What's Moving at the National Level

*BY: Caleigh Hallink-Irwin, General Manager, Canadian Potato Council*

It's been a busy and productive season for the Canadian Potato Council, and much of the work underway has direct implications for growers: market access, crop protection tools, and national regulatory decisions that could affect how you grow, store, pack, and sell your crop. Here's a snapshot of the work CPC has been advancing on your behalf.

### **National Meetings and Events**

The fall meeting season is well underway! Caleigh and other CPC members have attended the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), the Alliance for Potato Research and Education (APRE) Research Roundtable, and on Nov 13, our CPC Fall Meeting in Toronto.

At NAPPO, discussions focused on pest risk assessments, cross-border collaboration, and the emerging role of AI in plant health, reinforcing the importance of predictable, science-based regulations for stable trade.

At the APRE Research Roundtable, researchers highlighted emerging nutrition science that reinforces potatoes as a nutrient-dense vegetable and tackled big topics like protein quality, the ultra-processed food debate, and future research priorities. The session underscored APRE's continued investment in high-quality studies to counter misinformation and support a stronger public understanding of potatoes' role in a healthy diet.

CPC's fall meeting agenda was packed, with updates on everything from market pressures and grade changes to Mexico market access and PMRA decisions, with a focus on aligning on the key issues shaping the year ahead.

### **Plant Breeders' Rights (PBR)**

After years of consultation and work, the federal government published proposed amendments to the Plant Breeders' Rights Regulations in October, including extending the protection period for potatoes from 18 to 25 years. CPC and the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (FVGC) both submitted strong letters of support, as this change will help keep Canadian

breeding programs competitive and encourage new variety development.

### **Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR) Amendments**

Amendments to the SFCR for fresh fruits and vegetables came into force on October 8, 2025. Overall, this is a positive modernization effort: aligning grade specs, reducing regulatory burden, and reflecting modern marketing practices. There weren't many actual changes to potatoes, especially as they remain under control of CFIA and are not being transferred to DRC, but the Text Market Authorization (TMA) for 2" Canada No. 1 rounds will only become "official" once the CFIA-DRC Memorandum of Understanding is finalized.

### **Crop Protection & PMRA**

A big win! After years of work and investment by PEI and industry, the PMRA is finally proposing registration for the sale and use of Clove Leaf Oil Technical and DECCO 070 EC Clove oil (DECCO 070 EC). CPC and FVGC will both be submitting letters of support to the PMRA.

PMRA's latest workplan did however include several timeline shifts and delays for their decisions on important products like chlorothalonil (late 2025), clothianidin (late 2026), and CIPC (late 2027).

Across the board, FVGC and CPC continue to push for better and faster access to new technologies, more practical data requirements for biopesticides, and the application of a food lens within PMRA, so that regulatory decisions better reflect the realities of food production and the needs of growers.

As we head into winter and the new year, CPC will keep pressing forward on files that matter: trade stability, crop protection tools, science-based regulation, and strong national coordination. We're always happy to hear from growers, so if there's an emerging issue or something you'd like us to keep an eye on, please reach out.

# 2025 PEI Potato Variety Trail

by Ryan Barrett, Research & Agronomy Specialist

The PEI Potato Board conducted a small variety trial in Bonshaw, PEI this year to compare the performance of several commercially available varieties against industry standards, focusing on yield and quality, especially for potato wart resistant and yellow-fleshed types.

The trial was planted on June 4th and harvested on October 3rd, 2025. Rainfall was significantly less than normal (230 mm recorded between June and September), which may have affected results.

The varieties were tested in a randomized complete block design (RBCD) with four replications per variety. Two varieties (Alegria and Belmonda) had less than one hundred percent emergence, primarily due to set rot after planting.

## Key Findings by Variety Type:

### Red Varieties

- AAC Fuschia (wart resistant) had a significantly lower marketable yield than the standard, Red Norland.
- This low yield appeared linked to more tubers per plot but a smaller overall size profile; AAC Fuschia had no tubers in the “Large” size category.

### Yellow Varieties

- Colomba stood out with the highest total and marketable yield among the yellow varieties, followed closely by the standard, Satina.
- Alegria, Belmonda, and Electra had very similar yields and size profiles, all lower than Colomba and Satina.

**Table 1: Red and Yellow Varieties:**

Variety	cwt/acre					# Tubers /plot	Notes
	Total Yield	Market. Yield	Small	A Size	Large		
AC Fuschia	229 a	135 a	95 b	135 a	0 a	144 bc	trace wireworm
Norland	270 ab	215 bc	55 ab	184 bc	30 a	132 ab	
Alegria	220 a	152 ab	68 ab	129 a	23 a	118 ab	trace scab, ww
Belmonda	220 a	159 ab	62 ab	129 a	30 a	114 a	significant scab, trace wireworm
Colomba	319 b	248 c	71 ab	215 c	33 a	168 c	trace wireworm
Electra	227 a	154 ab	73 ab	151 ab	3 a	143 bc	trace scab, ww
Satina	269 ab	203 bc	66 ab	173 abc	30 a	144 bc	trace wireworm
p value	<0.001	<0.001	0.015	<0.001	0.21	<0.001	

**Table 2: Russet/Long-Type Varieties**

Variety	cwt/acre					# Tubers /plot	Notes
	Total Yield	Market. Yield	Small	A Size	Large		
Elland	250 b	197	53	190	7	121	trace scab, moderate ww
Hilite Russet	198 a	154	44	150	4	94	trace wireworm
Mountain Gem	239 ab	190	49	184	5	104	trace wireworm
p value	0.076	0.205	0.841	0.22	0.885	0.122	

- Belmonda was notably susceptible to scab, showing significant scab present on tubers, while Colomba and Satina showed little evidence.

Russet/Long-Type Varieties

- Elland achieved a significantly higher total yield than Hilite Russet, but its yield was not significantly higher than the standard, Mountain Gem Russet
- The size profile was generally similar across all three russet/long-type varieties.

The PEI Potato Board expects this variety

evaluation trial will continue in 2026. We would like to thank Cameron Farms for hosting the trial and Steve Watts of Genesis Crop Systems for partnering with us in implementing this trial. A full report will be available on the PEI Potato Agronomy website.

*Below: Birdseye view of 2025 variety trial, hosted by Cameron Farms. Each variety has four single-row replicates.*



# PEI Potato Board welcomes new Board of Directors

*By: Kendra Mills, Marketing Director*

The Prince Edward Island Potato Board elected a new executive team at the November 19, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

The Board is pleased to announce that Katie MacLennan will be the new Board chair. Katie has served on the board for 3 years as the seed sector representative. In assuming the chair position, Katie becomes the first female chairperson of the PEI Potato Board. Katie farms with her husband Jonathan and operates MacLennan Properties Ltd in West Cape.

Shawn Birch was elected as the new Vice Chair. Shawn is in his 3rd year on the Board from the processing sector and farms with his brother Cory and father Melvin at Birch Farms Ltd in North Bedeque. Randy Visser remains the Secretary-Treasurer, his second year in the role. Randy and his partners operate G. Visser & Sons in Orwell.

The Board welcomes new directors, including Marijke Oudshoorn from Spud Isle Farms Ltd in Morell, where she farms with her husband Will. Also, Pat Clarkin who joins as the seed representative. Pat farms with his son, Brodie at Clarkin Farms Seed Potatoes in Emyvale, PEI

The remaining board members include Rit VanNieuwenhuyzen, Guy Cudmore, Andrew Nieuhof, Ian Shaw, Dianne Huestis and Chris Rennie. Rylan MacLellan remains on as the Young Farmer's representative.

The PEI Potato Board recognizes and thanks outgoing directors John Griffin, Becky Townshend and retiring chair, Donald Stavert, for their significant contribution to the industry during their terms.

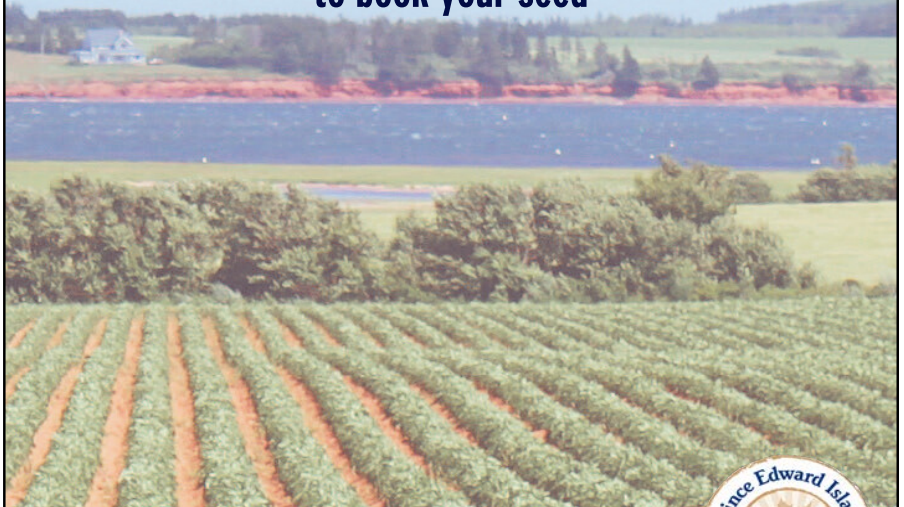
The PEI Potato Board comprises 12

directors elected by their peers to serve a three-year term. The Island is divided into 3 districts: Western, Central and Eastern. There are three directors per district and three At Large; one representing each of the three sectors of the industry: Seed, Table and Processing.

The directors are all registered growers and serve staggered terms so that as one term expires, one new director is elected from each district. This helps to maintain continuity in board operations from year to year. Board directors may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

## Fox Island Elite Seed Potato Farm

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**For a list of seed available for sale go to:  
[peipotatoagronomy.com/seed-for-sale/](http://peipotatoagronomy.com/seed-for-sale/)**



# Industry Updates

## **Mette Ching is nominated by the PEI Institute of Agrologists to the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame.**

Growing up along the Fraser River in British Columbia, Mette Ching developed a deep appreciation for rural life and a love of animals, which led her to pursue a career in agriculture. She earned a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of British Columbia in 1970 and embarked on a professional path that would span over five decades and significantly shape the agricultural landscape of Prince Edward Island.

Mette began her career as a professional agrologist specializing in farm business management during a time of transition in Canadian agriculture. When she joined the PEI Department of Agriculture as a farm business representative, she was among the few female professional agrologists in the province. With the agricultural sector facing challenges such as energy crises, low commodity prices, and structural change, Mette played a vital role in supporting producers through the development of farm business management programs at both the federal and provincial levels.

Originally intending to stay on PEI for just two years, Mette's course changed when she married Gordon Ching in 1971 and joined the family operation, Black Pond Farms Ltd. Together, they transformed the farm from a small mixed operation into a highly specialized 700-acre potato farm known for innovation and environmental stewardship. The farm received numerous accolades, including the CM MacLean Top Grower Award (1975) and the PEI Soil Conservationist of the Year Award (1992).

Beyond the farm gate, Mette has been a dedicated and tireless leader in the agricultural community. A strong believer in youth development, she was a long-time leader in the Eastern Kings 4-H Club and contributed extensively to the Eastern Kings Exhibition Association.

In 1998, Mette made history as the first female president of the PEI Federation of Agriculture, where

she was instrumental in securing stable funding and strengthening the organization's long-term viability. Her leadership opened doors for other women in agriculture, including national leaders such as Mary Robinson, former president of both the PEI Federation of Agriculture and subsequently the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

Mette's commitment to the profession of agrology is equally commendable. She served as president of the PEI Institute of Agrologists (2008–2010), registrar for six years, and was a founding member of the Canadian Farm Business Management Council in 1992. Her influence extended beyond agriculture into health care as well, serving on the Board of Directors of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for six years.

Over 50 years, Mette Ching has demonstrated outstanding leadership, innovation, and service in agriculture. Her contributions have not only strengthened the farming industry on PEI but have also inspired and empowered a generation of women to pursue leadership roles in agriculture. She continues to be a role model, mentor, and trailblazer whose legacy will endure across the sector.

(Taken from the Dalhousie University Website)



*Pictured above: L-R Greg Donald, Lynda Ramsay, Bertha Campbell, Gwen Vessey, Claire Martin, Carolyn Bateman, Mette Ching, Cherry Wakeman, Kathleen Casey, Katherine Mundle, Patricia Manning*

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