

# IDAHO POTATO PULSE



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## Government Affairs Report By Pat Kole

This week USDA announced the “Choose my Plate” <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/vegetables.html#> nutrition and website campaign. The campaign was kicked off by First Lady Michelle Obama and US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, and replaces the My Pyramid logo. The produce industry was very involved in the development of this program and logo, and we hope that it will encourage increased consumption of potatoes.

The US House of Representatives Agriculture Appropriations Committee addressed the school lunch issue by directing USDA to rewrite their proposed rules to ensure that schools wouldn't be forced to spend additional money in meal programs. As proposed by USDA, the rules would force schools to spend an additional \$7 billion over 5 years, a burden that most school districts simply cannot afford. In large part, the increased cost is attributable to preferences given in the proposed rule to more costly fruits and vegetables as opposed to more affordable and equally nutritious vegetables such as potatoes.

## Industry Relations Report By Todd Cornelison

The “Zebra Chip Management” webinar presented by Spudman and Vegetable Growers News

Recently I attended a webinar on Zebra Chip Management put on by Spudman and Vegetable Growers News. The bulk of the information was given by two researchers who have spent the last several years battling this debilitating potato disease: Dr. Charlie Rush and Dr. Don Henne. **It is important to note that to date, there have been no finds in Idaho.** To view the webinar, follow this link: <http://spudman.com/index.php/webinars>

First, a bit of history:

- Zebra Chip (ZC) showed up in Texas in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in 2000. It has now been detected as far north as Wyoming and as far west as California. There have also been detections in Central America, Mexico and even in New Zealand.
- Early on, it was thought to only affect tuber quality; however, it has now been found that if left unchecked it has devastating effects on plants also.
- ZC is spread by Psyllids, much in the same way PVY is spread by Aphids.
  - Due to the insect action spreading the disease, the edges of the fields tend to be impacted first and heaviest.
  - Early symptoms include a yellowing and curling of the leaf and can mimic pesticide damage. Advanced stage symptoms include dead plants in the field.
- Due to the massive losses incurred by Texas chip growers, there was a research project developed to study the cause and solutions to the problem. The project is funded by grower dues.
  - In 2005/2006 ZC was at epidemic proportions in Texas.
  - In 2008 the ZC pathogen (Psyllids) and vector were identified.
  - In 2009 a multistate-multiscience team was put together and is funded through SCRI Grants.

What we know now?

- ZC affects all market classes of potatoes and is especially detrimental to russet type potatoes.
  - There are no current varieties that show complete resistance.
- ZC is not just a quality issue, it impacts yield also.
- Psyllids migrate in masses to cooler weather during the hot Texas summer, which brings them north.

- Psyllids live on all plants of the nightshade family.
- Dr. Rush urges all parts of the industry to be proactive in combating the disease.
- Much like PVY, regular scouting and trapping is needed, to control the disease.
- ZC is not the mystery it was in 2000; a good pest management system is the answer.
- Growers in Texas now manage the disease with a combination of in furrow seed treatment and early season IPM.
- There is some concern for resistance in populations; however, that has not been proven yet.

## Calendar

### June

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|-------|--|
| 7     | United of Idaho Board Meeting  |
| 7     | IEOPC Meeting, Twin Falls, ID  |
| 8     | IGSA Board Meeting, Twin Falls, ID   |
| 8     | IEOPC Annual Golf outing, Twin Falls, ID (fees paid individually, contact Bob Hansen)  |
| 10    | NASS Report: Stocks and Processing to June 1.  |
| 13-17 | IPC Foodservice Whistlestop Tour   |
| 14-15 | IPC Meeting, Eagle, ID   |
| 22-24 | NPC Summer Meeting, Grand Forks ND. Click here for Registration information: <a href="http://bit.ly/eCxRR9">http://bit.ly/eCxRR9</a> |
| 27-1  | IPC Retail Whistlestop Tour  |
| 29    | IPC Marketing Committee Meeting, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Idaho Falls, ID   |

### July

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| 5     | IPC Ag Affairs Meeting, 12:00-3:00 p.m., Idaho Falls, ID   |
| 5     | Potato Night at the Ball Field, Melaleuca Field, Idaho Falls, Contact Todd Cornelison for tickets. |
| 11-14 | USPB Summer Meeting, Columbus, OH  |
| 26-27 | IPC Meeting, Eagle, ID   |
| 29-31 | PMA Foodservice Convention, Monterey, CA   |