

IDAHO POTATO PULSE



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Government Affairs Report By Pat Kole

It looks like the current House leadership is absolutely set upon passing the Senate version of the Food Safety legislation which includes the "Tester amendment" that exempts small producers from meeting food safety requirements. The produce industry has been virtually unanimous in asking that this provision be removed. Many members of Congress want to see this provision removed, so in order to prevent that from happening, the leadership has put the Food Safety bill in the "Continuing Resolution" that must be passed or the federal government will shut down. This type of gamesmanship prevents a thorough and honest debate on the merits of the issues raised and leads to misguided public policy.

Industry Relations Report By Todd Cornelison

GAP Harmonization Audit Tested on Idaho Grower

A group of industry representatives met in Burley on December 2nd to test a rough draft of the most recent harmonized GAP standard on an actual grower. The IPC would like to thank Dan Moss and his staff for taking the time and effort to help not only Idaho, but the entire potato industry for aiding us in the first dry run of the harmonized GAP standard. While the standard is far from perfect and at this juncture, not even potato specific, Dan Moss and his employees agreed to sit through an actual audit and provide feedback to the group. Their observations and input will be invaluable in providing us with a path forward on this immense project.

Idaho Growers should be aware that the new standard will not be ready for the 2011 season and they should be prepared to pass USDA GAP audit which is the current standard used by Idaho at this time. For a draft copy of the Harmonized Standard, please follow this link http://www.unitedfresh.org/assets/GAPs2010/Harmonized_Standard-pre-farm_gate_111010.pdf for help in passing the current USDA GAP audit, please follow this link <http://www.kimberly.uidaho.edu/potatoes/gap.htm>. For any other questions on the audits or harmonized standard, please contact Todd Cornelison at (208) 559-4792 or e-mail me at todd.cornelison@potato.idaho.gov

NPC Requests Growers Take a Research Prioritization Survey

NPC has been working with state potato organizations, individual growers and the potato research community to identify national research priorities. Part of this collaboration included an NPC/USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) hosted symposium, held in January 2010. The symposium included researchers, growers and allied industry partners and stimulated discussion on identifying potato research needs. The results of the symposium allowed the NPC to develop a web-based grower survey that will be useful in more clearly identifying research priorities.

The need to clearly articulate potato research funding priorities has increased dramatically as traditional funding sources, including ARS and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), formerly CSREES, have remained constant in size while the need and cost of research has increased. The only significant new source of funding, the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, requires a high level of national prioritization and coordination among researchers for grant funding.

Your participation in this survey is critical to the potato industry's ability to secure research funding. Click on the link below to access the survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NPC_research_survey

MPCI Deadlines loom

SPOKANE, Wash. December 6, 2010—The Risk Management Agency reminds producers of winter and spring sales closing dates for the Multiple Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI) programs, the Adjusted Gross Revenue Pilot (AGR) available in select Northwest counties, and the Adjusted Gross Revenue-Lite (AGR-Lite) programs available throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Upcoming regional sales closing dates:

January 31, 2011: Final date to obtain or change AGR insurance in select counties in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Final date to submit required documents to continue or change 2011 AGR-Lite insurance for EXISTING POLICY HOLDERS in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

February 1, 2011: Final date to obtain or change crop insurance coverage for 2011 Spring Planted Onions in Idaho, Oregon and Washington and Cabbage in Oregon and Washington.

March 15, 2011: Final date to obtain 2011 AGR-Lite insurance for NEW APPLICATION/ENROLLMENT POLICIES in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Final date to obtain or change ALL OTHER Spring Seeded MPCI (excluding wheat in counties with Fall and Spring planted types).

RMA also reminds producers of the important link between Federal crop insurance and Farm Service Agency (FSA) Disaster Assistance programs for the 2011 crop year. To maintain eligibility for FSA's disaster programs, producers must obtain a policy or plan of insurance of at least catastrophic (CAT) level coverage if available. For those crops that are non-insurable, coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program must also be timely obtained. Producers are encouraged to visit with their local FSA office to ensure they are in compliance with the new linkage requirements. If there is no coverage in a county for a specific crop under the traditional MPCI program, producers may ask a crop insurance agent whether they would be eligible for coverage under a written agreement.

Producers are encouraged to contact a local MPCI agent to learn additional program details well ahead of the final sales closing dates. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers throughout the U.S. or at the website address: <http://www3.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents/>

Calendar

December

9 United of Idaho Board Meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
14-15 IPC Meeting, Eagle, ID
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January

5-7 Potato Expo 2011, Las Vegas, NV
7-9 NPC 2011 Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV
7-9 USPB Winter Meeting, Las Vegas, NV
11 Introduction to Food Safety Workshop, Hilton Garden Inn, Idaho Falls, ID
18-20 32nd AG EXPO, Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID
19-20 43rd Annual Potato Conference, Pond Student Union, Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID
25-26 IPC Meeting, Eagle, ID

February

24-3 Potato Industry Leadership Institute, Bakersfield, CA and Washington, DC
28-3 NPC Public Policy Meeting, Washington, D.C.

March

8-10 Practical Food Safety & HACCP Workshops for Potato Packers, Twin Falls, ID

8-11 USPB Annual Meeting, Colorado Springs, CO
12 NASS Report: Stocks and Processing to March 1.
22-24 Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) Workshop, Boise, ID