

IDAHO POTATO PULSE



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President's Report By Frank Muir

There will be a meeting of the Idaho United States Potato Board (USPB) members and IPC Commissioners/staff on Wednesday, March 4, 2009 at 2:15 p.m. at the Shilo Inn in Idaho Falls. For the past 7 years we have held this meeting to discuss issues likely to come up at the USPB meeting and what views the Idaho industry might have on these issues. This is an important meeting as the Denver USPB meeting the following week will be discussing important matters including a proposed assessment increase.

Government Affairs Report By Pat Kole

The past week the Idaho legislature was focused on two issues: the budget crisis and review of agency administrative rules. Like most states, Idaho faces a huge shortfall in tax revenues. Many legislators believe that the January tax receipts, which should be available shortly, will be dramatically reduced and the pressure to cut appropriations correspondingly increased. There is a sense of "forlorn hope" permeating the building. As an example, UI/CALS Dean John Hammel told the Agricultural Affairs Committees that they would have to close two Extension Stations as part of balancing their budget. Most agencies have had their rules approved this session. IPC's rules were approved by both the Senate and the House.

The Idaho Food Producers meeting centered discussion on a proposal to increase the penalties for abusing animals. There will be a bill submitted on this subject and you should review this carefully. We'll notify you when the bill gets introduced.

Industry Relations Report By Todd Cornelison

Ag Affairs Meeting Held in Pocatello

The IPC's Ag Affairs Committee held a meeting shortly after the Potato School in Pocatello. The meeting was held in an open style format allowing time for the industry to voice their opinions on everything from legislative issues to transportation issues. The meeting's goal was to make sure that the committee was in tune with the pulse of the industry. If we go by the number of people in attendance and the various parts of the industry that were represented, i.e. growers, processors, fresh warehouses, etc., the meeting has to be deemed a huge success! I thank everybody who took the time to show up and provide input to the committee. Summarized below are just a few of the issues tackled. If you would like more in depth information from the meeting, please send me an e-mail at tcornelison@potato.idaho.gov and I will send you a copy of the minutes.

Conference call with Department of Ag Director Celia Gould

Given the troubled economy, it's no surprise that the budget for the department of Ag has been cut, but most industry representatives were a little alarmed to hear it was cut 31%! Director Gould assured us that the 31% was an accurate number but not very representative due to the fact that almost a full half of that cut was anticipated and covered through budgetary holdouts that were not needed for this year. The other approximately 15% will not affect our inspection programs and will be addressed internally by the department.

Conference Call with Dirk Helder of the EPA

Dirk Helder explained to the participants that the open discussion period for fumigants was very helpful. He said that there was broad support from all industries for the following changes: first, reentry times should be extended to 5 days; second, there was support for a set GAP standard on the use of fumigants and it should be applied to the label; third, all growers and applicators should have a fumigant management plan; fourth, fumigants should have a restricted use label; and finally, there should be a responsible stewardship training program. Some items that continue to be a real challenge are: buffer zones, overlapping buffers and air monitoring. The EPA, however, is willing to look at new research. The discussion was more positive than previous meetings with EPA because of

their willingness to take into account the type and temperature of applications with the overall goal of reducing buffer zones.

Conference Call with John Burcham of the USDA RMA (Risk Management Agency)

John Burcham gave the committee an overview of the changes in Multi Peril Crop Insurance for 2009. The biggest change is that potato price elections for the state of Idaho were increased from last year's \$6.00 election to \$7.35. Also, there is an additional value for seed covered by a certified seed endorsement. There is still a storage endorsement available but there have been some minor modifications to it. To get all the latest information, contact your local crop insurance agent.

Conference Call with Jeff Raybould on CAMP (Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan)

Jeff Raybould joined the meeting on a conference call after attending several water meetings in Boise to fill us in on the latest CAMP issues. Jeff gave us the history behind CAMP, i.e. shrinking stream flows at Thousand Springs and the lowering aquifer level. CAMP is an effort to reduce unneeded litigation and legislation efforts. During Phase one, CAMP hopes to make a 300,000 acre feet change through demand reduction, crop mix rotation and CREP programs. Some of this water will be used to supplement surface water by using groundwater to increase stream flows. At the time of the meeting, CAMP was about 40% funded and had a wide range of support by industries from agriculture to municipalities.

Calendar

February

- 9-10 UPGA Marketing Committee and Board of Directors meetings, Hard Rock Hotel, Las Vegas NV
- 10 Foreign Animal Disease Response Course, National Guard Armory, 1069 Frontier Road Twin Falls, ID
- 11 Foreign Animal Disease Response Course
Bonneville Co. Law Enforcement Bldg, EOC Conference Room (B02), 605 N Capital Avenue
- 12 IGSA Board Meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 17 IGSA Sun Valley Convention Committee Meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 19 Miller Research Crop Pest Management Seminar,
Burley Best Western, Burley, ID (9:00 am – 12:00 pm RSVP required)
- 23-24 Idaho Ag Summit (DoubleTree Riverside - Boise)
Contact Rick Waitley, 208-888-0988 or www.idahoagsummit.org
- 23 Ag Shippers Workshop, Boise ID, in conjunction with Ag Summit,
8:30 am – 12:30 pm, Double Tree Riverside.
- 23 Ag Summit Strolling Dinner , DoubleTree Riverside - Boise, 5:30pm
Contact Rick Waitley, 208-888-0988
- 24 Foreign Animal Disease Response Course,
Farmer's Mutual Telephone Company, Community Room 319 SW 3rd Street, Fruitland, ID
- 25 Foreign Animal Disease Response Course, Idaho State Department of Agriculture,
Conference Rooms A & B, 2270 Old Penitentiary Road, Boise, ID
- 24-25 United Fresh Produce GAPs Meeting, Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, Washington, DC
- 23-26 NPC 2009 Public Policy Conference, L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, Washington, DC
- 25 Food Producers of Idaho Weekly Legislative Meeting
Idaho Ag & Grain center - Boise: 9:00am, Contact Rick Waitley, 208-888-0988
- 19-26 Potato Industry Leadership Institute

March

- 4 Food Producers Weekly Legislative Meeting, Idaho Ag & Grain Center, Boise, ID
- 4 IPC nomination meeting for Grower, Shipper and Processor positions, 2:00 p.m., Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls, ID
- 4 USPB Idaho Board Members and IPC Commissioners/staff meeting; 2:15 p.m., Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls, ID
- 5 R&E Committee meeting, Shilo Inn, Twin Falls, ID
- 10-13 USPB Annual Meeting, Denver, Co
- 11 Food Producers Weekly Legislative Meeting, Idaho Ag & Grain Center, Boise, ID
- 17-18 IPC Commission Meeting, Boise, ID
- 18 Food Producers Weekly Legislative Meeting, Idaho Ag & Grain Center, Boise, ID
- 22-27 World Potato Congress, New Zealand