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HOLIDAY PROMOTIONS HELP RETAILERS GIVE BACK

Food banks nationwide received free Idaho potatoes during the 2015 holiday season thanks to a new "Buy, Get, Give" retail coupon promotion from the Idaho Potato Commission in partnership with Unilever's Country Crock buttery spread. **PAGE 4**



PLM CONTEST CONTINUES RECORD-BREAKING TREND

Nearly 5,200 retailers put their creativity on display in the Idaho Potato Commission's 2015 Potato Lover's Month Retail Display Contest from mid-January to mid-March, the biggest group of entries in the competition's 25-year history. And even more retailers are expected to vie for the new \$2,000 top award in 2016, along with twice as many cash prize award levels — the largest amount of prize money ever for the annual competition. **PAGE 6**

IPC PROVIDES 'A BIG HELPING' TO CHARITIES

The Idaho Potato Commission took advantage of the continuing appeal of the Big Idaho Potato Truck tour to deliver 'A Big Helping' to charities across the United States, providing groups with a unique opportunity to raise money and awareness for their causes. **PAGE 10**

IDAHO POTATOES STEAL THE SHOW AT FRESH SUMMIT

At the recent Produce Marketing Association Fresh Summit convention in Atlanta, attendees were treated to fun, food and even a little relaxation, courtesy of the Idaho Potato Commission, which featured sweet and savory potato treats in its Refresh Lounge, as well as an 'augmented reality' song-and-dance show at its booth. **PAGE 14**

IPC STEPS UP SUPPORT FOR RODS RACING

Potatoes are a favorite fuel source for endurance athletes, so Brady Murray, president and founder of RODS Racing, wasn't too surprised when a fellow athlete suggested the Idaho Potato Commission as a supporter for the fledgling triathlon group's work with orphaned children. **PAGE 16**

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IPC retail display contest continues to break records for entrants, prizes

Nearly 5,200 retailers put their creativity on display in the Idaho Potato Commission's 2015 Potato Lover's Month Retail Display Contest from mid-January to mid-March, the biggest group of entries in the competition's 25-year history.

And even more retailers are expected to vie for the new \$2,000 top award in 2016, along with twice as many cash

prize award levels, which will result in the largest amount of prize money ever for the annual competition.

"Every year, the contest gets bigger and better. In fact, we extended the 2015 retail competition from four weeks to nine weeks for the first time so that ample shipments of Idaho potatoes would be available," said IPC Marketing Manager Jamie Bowen.

"Most of the displays sell out during the contest, so those extra weeks from mid-January through mid-March ensured there were enough Idaho potatoes for everyone throughout the competition period."

The 2016 retail display contest also will feature double the number of spud-friendly partner products, as Country Crock Original buttery spread

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joins Hormel Real Bacon Bits as partners in the IPC promotion, offering retailers even more options for firing up potato lovers.

"By highlighting Idaho potatoes enhanced by both Country Crock Original buttery spread and Hormel Real Bacon Bits, retailers can cater to their shoppers' taste buds and their need for fast, convenient comfort food dishes that their families will love," said Bowen.

"It's a great partnership because the convenience aspect of both products is

huge," added Corrine Hjelmen, brand manager for bacon toppings at Hormel Foods Corp. "It's also a successful partnership between the center of the store and the perimeter. Bacon continues to grow [in popularity] with consumers, and this highlights the different variety of things that [shoppers] can do with both products."

The 2016 contest will honor first through 10th place winners in three different store categories, and everyone who enters will receive a free Hamilton Beach Personal Cup one-cup pod brewer, compatible

with coffee grounds, K-Cups and soft pods.

Each in-store display should incorporate clearly marked fresh Idaho potatoes (bag, bulk or both), Idaho dehydrated potato products, Hormel Real Bacon Bits and Country Crock Original buttery spread. (Country Crock 45-ounce Original can be comfortably placed outside of refrigerated retail space for secondary placement and cross-merchandising promotions for 14 days.)

Displays should also feature the IPC 2016 contest point-of-sale materials: two double-sided

Potato Lover's Month logo display signs, one large and two small double-sided signs with appetizing photos, and two inflatable Mylar Spuddy Buddies. In addition, the IPC website offers clip art and recipes at www.IdahoPotato.com/Retail.

Retailers will compete with other same-size stores in one of three categories: 1-5 cash registers, 6-9 cash registers, or 10-plus cash registers. Within each store category, entrants are eligible to win these prizes:

- 1st place\$2,000
- 2nd place\$1,500
- 3rd place\$1,000
- 4th place\$800
- 5th place\$700
- 6th place\$600
- 7th place\$500
- 8th place\$400
- 9th place\$300
- 10th place\$200
- Honorable Mention...\$100
(100 selected from remaining entries)

In addition, the Category Manager Match Program will award equivalent cash prizes to category managers at stores that qualify for a first through 10th place prize.

In their own 2016 IPC contest, military commissaries will compete in two categories by store size for the top category prize of a trophy and a trip to the Produce Marketing Association's annual convention in Orlando, FL. Second-place winners in each category earn \$500 in commissary gift cards and a plaque, and third-place winners receive \$250 in com-

missary gift certificates/gift cards and a plaque.

Contest details

Here's how to enter the IPC Potato Lover's Month 2016 Retail Display Contest:

1. Using fresh Idaho potatoes (bag, bulk or both), an Idaho dehydrated potato product, Hormel Real Bacon Bits and Country Crock Original buttery spread, develop an eye-catching display following the contest rules (available at www.IdahoPotato.com/Retail).

2. Put up the display in your store's produce section for at least one week between Jan. 11 and March 11, 2016.

3. Submit a photo (digital preferred) of the display and an entry form (available at www.IdahoPotato.com/Retail) to the IPC so that it's received no later than March 25, 2016. Entries may be submitted online with a digital photo attached. All winners will be notified by June 3, 2016, and posted on www.IdahoPotato.com/Retail.

All entries will be judged on use of Potato Lover's Month signage, creativity of the display, how the display incorporates the partner products, and perceived salability of the display. Judging will be done by the Potato Lover's Month Display Contest Review Committee.

For photographs of the 2015 winning displays and a complete list of 2015 winners, visit www.IdahoPotato.com/Retail.

IPC scores fifth year as naming sponsor of national college bowl game

Idaho potatoes kicked off a blitz of national media exposure at the 2015 Famous Idaho Potato Bowl on Dec. 22, where the annual blue turf battle pitted a Mid-American Conference team against a Mountain West opponent.

The nation's longest-running cold-weather bowl, played at Boise State University, was televised live on ESPN and ESPN radio to millions of fans, and it was the only bowl game airing during its time slot. During the past four years of IPC sponsorship, the game broadcast has averaged 2.2 million viewers annually.

"The Famous Idaho Potato Bowl continues to provide tremendous exposure for the Idaho potato brand," said Frank Muir, president and chief executive officer of the Idaho Potato Commission. "From the name of the game, to the signage in the end zones and sidelines, to the numerous commercials that air during the game, our goal is to remind consumers to always look for the 'Grown in Idaho' seal when purchasing potatoes."

The high-visibility recognition of Idaho potatoes throughout the game included:

- Permanent signage in prominent locations throughout the stadium.
- Five television commercials.
- A new 30-second welcome message from Muir, aired nationwide at the beginning of the game.
- Public address mentions and video board announcements.
- Famous Idaho potato and Idaho potato logos on the field.
- Signage for the end zone, sideline and fences.
- Multiple broadcast commentators' mentions.
- Game day program advertising with IPC logo on the cover.

On the field, Miss Idaho 2015, Claira Hollingsworth, got into the action by flipping a specially commissioned commemorative coin during the coin toss. Watching from the stands was the lucky winner of IPC's recent Idaho Potato Tailgating Recipe Contest, who received an all-expense-paid VIP trip for two to the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl including a behind-the-scenes tour with college football reporter Heather Cox.

Between the third and fourth quarters, Muir and IPC chairman Dan Nakamura presented a giant-size check for \$2,500 to Brady Murray, the founder of RODS Racing, a non-profit group that helps find U.S. homes for orphaned children from other countries who have Down syndrome. In addition, the Idaho Grower Shippers Association donated three potatoes to the Idaho Foodbank for each person who attends the game — roughly an entire truckload of Idaho spuds.

Outside the stadium in the parking lot, the Big Idaho Potato Truck, the world's largest potato on wheels, was on site for fan photo ops and to promote this year's Big Idaho Potato Truck tour charity theme, A Big Helping, which has supported local charity programs nationwide.

Win-win partnership between IPC and RODS Racing runs deep

Potatoes are a favorite fuel source for endurance athletes, so Brady Murray, president and founder of RODS Racing, wasn't too surprised when a fellow athlete suggested the Idaho Potato Commission as a supporter for the fledgling triathlon group's work with orphaned children.

The IPC became the leading sponsor of RODS (Racing for Orphans with Down Syndrome) in 2013, the year Murray launched the elite endurance athlete organization. That same year, the IPC made a one-time \$50,000 donation to support the Utah-based charity, which assists families in adopting international children with Down syndrome. In 2014 and 2015, the IPC made a \$25,000 donation each year to RODS and incorporated the nonprofit into many of its marketing programs.

At the Walt Disney World Marathon in January 2016, RODS will kick off its biggest marketing campaign ever with its new spokesperson, Ironman triathlete James Lawrence, aka the Iron Cowboy.

"I knew James and knew his story [Lawrence recently completed a record-setting 50 Ironman races in 50 consecutive days in all 50 states], and I thought it would be a great way to promote RODS and Idaho potatoes," said Murray.

More than 200 RODS team members from the United States, Canada and Europe compete in nationally recognized and local events wearing jerseys with the Idaho Potato Commission logo on the front,

raising funds and awareness for adoption of insemination orphans. Murray, who was inspired to create RODS after his own son was born with Down syndrome in 2007, said the group has set a new fundraising goal of \$1 million.

"The IPC is a strong believer in supporting and promoting healthy lifestyles," said Frank Muir, president and chief executive officer of the IPC. "Idaho potatoes provide these elite athletes with not only the endurance they need to cross the finish line, but the added fuel and encouragement of knowing that their hard work and dedication help find much-needed homes in the United States for orphaned children with Down syndrome."

IPC marketing activities that support RODS are:

- On-field check presentation at the annual Famous Idaho Potato Bowl football game in Boise, ID, each December.
- National commercial promoting RODS/IPC partnership, aired during the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl.
- A two-minute spot about RODS that aired on "Radio Health Journal" in 2015, created by the IPC and heard by millions of listeners across the country.
- Permanent RODS link on the IPC website home page.
- RODS inclusion in Taser Talk, IPC's monthly consumer e-newsletter, several times a year.
- IPC inclusion in the RODS quarterly newsletter.



