

IDAHO POTATO PULSE



Brought to you by the Idaho Potato Commission
Website: www.idahopotato.com

President's Report By Frank Muir

We hope that you are finding the Idaho Potato Pulse to be beneficial to you. Our intent is to be timely with information that is helpful to our industry members, especially our growers.

If there are topics you wish us to be covering regularly or have any feedback for us, we welcome your input.

Of note, the USDA recently released its forecasted valuation of the 2008 Idaho Potato Crop at \$815 million. Congratulations... that means we are on track to achieving our fifth consecutive revenue year-over-year increase. The IPC will continue to push forward with demand-building programs to help maintain this positive trend long-term.

Government Affairs Report By Pat Kole

This week in the Idaho legislature will center around budget issues, and also consideration of bills introduced earlier this session. Most observers don't see many dramatic changes taking place due to the budget uncertainty. On the federal level, four Idahoans are participating in the NPC/USPB leadership program. Last week they were in Oregon looking at processing plants and packing facilities. This year's participants are: Travis Blacker, Jared Gehring, Nora Olsen, and Eric Whalen.

Industry Relations Report By Todd Cornelison

News from the Idaho Ag Summit:

Idaho Power adds a new buyback program.

In an effort to make its power buyback programs more attractive to growers, Idaho Power has added a new "dispatchable" program. While the company still offers the "timer" program, where growers pick how many days a week they will allow a shutdown, the dispatchable program allows the grower more options. Under this program, the power company attaches wireless controllers to the pumps so they can be shut down electronically. This allows the company to tailor the shutdowns for its power needs, in turn, allowing them to pay more for the power. Here are a few of the highlights of the new program:

- The dispatchable program covers the same time period - June 1st through July 31st.
- The dispatchable program offers higher incentives to the grower, and is available at no cost to the grower down to a 50 hp pump. The program is available on smaller hp motors but at the grower's cost.
- Under this program, the grower allows shutdowns between 2:00 – 8:00 pm on weekdays, for no more than 4 hours a day and 15 hours a week. There are no shutdowns on July 4th.
- The maximum amount of shutdown hours for the season is 60.
- The customer is contacted by 4:00 pm the day prior to the shutdown and has the opportunity to deny a shutdown.
- The customer is contacted 30 minutes prior to an agreed upon shutdown.
- The customer can opt out 5 times during a season.
- For growers that have the ability to take part in these programs, their power cost can be reduced by 70-80% during the program period, which calculates to an approximate 38% reduction in their annual power costs.
- For more information on buyback programs, please contact your power company directly.

Saying Goodbye to Senator Larry Craig

Along with multiple other state agencies and associations, the IPC took the opportunity to say goodbye and thank you to Senator Craig and his wife. On behalf of the IPC and the potato industry, Commissioner Mark

Coombs offered a gift to Senator Craig and thanked him for his tireless efforts for Idaho agriculture and more specifically the Idaho potato industry.

Calendar

February

- 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: 9:00 am)
Contact Rick Waitley, 208-888-0988
- 19-26 Potato Industry Leadership Institute

March

- 3 United Potato Growers of Idaho Board meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 4 Food Producers Weekly Legislative Meeting, Idaho Ag & Grain Center, Boise, ID
- 4 United Potato Growers of Idaho Potato Partners Meeting, Shilo Inn
9:00 am – 2:00 pm, Idaho Falls, ID
- 4 PCN Update by Eoin Davis 2:00 pm, Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls, ID
- 4 IPC nomination meeting 2:00 pm, Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls, ID
- 4 USPB Delegates meeting 2:20 pm, Shilo Inn, Idaho Falls, ID
- 5 United Potato Growers of Idaho Potato Partners Meeting, Burley Inn
9:00 am – 1:30 pm, Burley, 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
- 19 IGSA Board Meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 22-27 World Potato Congress, New Zealand

April

- 7 United Potato Growers of Idaho Board meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 14-15 IPC Commission Meeting, Boise, ID

May

- 5 United Potato Growers of Idaho Board meeting, Idaho Falls, ID
- 14-15 IPC Commission Meeting, Boise, ID
- 16 IPC Marathon, Boise, ID
- 15-19 NRA Show, Chicago, IL