

# Potato Certification and Foundation Seed and Plant Materials Advisory Committee Meeting

January 29, 2009, Tigard, Oregon

## MINUTES

**Voting members present:** Lon E. Baley, Jim Carlson, Gary Chapman, Scott Cheyne, Philip Hamm, Steve James, Rob Lane, Ed Macy, Mike Macy, George Rajnus Jr., Ed Stastny Jr. (for Roy Wright), Isabel Vales,

**Non-voting members present:** Daniel Curry, Russ Karow, Dennis Lundeen, Jeff McMorran (sec)

**Members absent:** Alan Peterson, Jim Cramer (represented by Sid Sedegui and Ron Pence)

**Guests present:** Terry Burr, Bill Brewer, Brian Charlton, Rachel Hankins, Randy Knight, Richard Macy, Iraj Motazedian, Ron Pence, Phil Rathbun, Sid Sedegui, Solomon Yilma, John J. Zielinski

**A. Welcome and Introductions:** Meeting commenced at 10:10 AM with a welcome by chair Rob Lane. The chair dispensed with formal introductions due to the late start but all present were asked to sign the signup sheet and verify accuracy of contact information. Voting members were asked to raise their hands.

**B. 2008 Minutes:** The minutes for the 2008 meeting were included in the packets and had been emailed to members in advance. A single change was noted by Ed Stastny that he was present but was representing Roy Wright as a voting member. A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Hamm/Ed Macy), to approve the 2008 minutes without changes or additions, unanimously **passed**.

## C. PROPOSALS REQUIRING COMMITTEE ACTION

### (1) Powdery Scab Reporting - multiple tubers to report

Jeff McMorran reviewed the "Background" information in the packet related to this item including the table that summarized how other states are currently handling scab. He also pointed out that although most states handle scab as a grade issue, Oregon is not like most states in that grade inspections are not required for certification (only an inspection for necrotic arcs if lot is to be shipped out-of-state). Phil Hamm asked how ODA grades for scab now, to which Ron Pence replied that ODA rarely is asked to do a full grade inspection on potatoes, but if it did, it would follow the US#1 grading rules, and if scab was encountered, a lab confirmation would be needed to confirm the presence powdery scab. Jeff pointed out that there is a tolerance for "scab" in US#1 Seed Potato Grade whereas the current the Oregon Standards have a zero tolerance for Powdery Scab for Blue Tag (US #1) but does not affect the class of the seed.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Mike Macy/Stastny), **passed** unanimously to accept the proposed change to add to the following wording to end of Section XVI-D of the Potato Seed Certification Standards, (page 17):

**"A single tuber found in a sample of 400 or more will not be scored against the lot."**

### 2. WGO Off-Types – multiple tubers to report for large lots

Jeff McMorran reviewed the "Background" information in the packet related to this item that was a carryover item from the 2008 Advisory Committee meeting. Although this item was brought forth on behalf of the Central Oregon growers, Richard Macy objected to the proposed wording. He felt it really did not address the issue of off-type plants being found in the Winter Grow-Out of small lots that may or may not reflect the actual purity of the lots in regards to off-types in the bin. In such cases a few 'off-types' could severely downgrade a lot's class even though the lot was fine and/or the condition easily rogueable the following field year. He felt that scored off-types found in the WGO should only affect the status of the lot if linked to off-types observed in the field the pervious summer. Jeff pointed out that lot mixing sometimes occurs at the time of harvest or bin loading and only linking off-types observed in the WGO to field scores would not reflect this situation. A discussion on where off-types might or

might not be introduced into a potato seed lot or WGO sample followed. When off-types occur in a WGO lot, they must be scored because OSCS staff has no way to know where the introduction occurred. As with the grower, OSCS staff takes every precaution to keep lots separate and all off-type plants observed in a lot are investigated to assure they come from a cut seed ball (as opposed to a volunteer tuber) and in in-row plantings. Some growers present questioned this diligence. No alternative wording for this issue was proposed and **a motion was made, seconded** (Ed Macy/Scott Cheyne) and **passed** that this item be **tabled** until next year. Jeff noted that proposed changes to the Standards in this regard should be made in advance of the actual meeting so that they could be included in the 'Background' items sent to all members prior to the meeting. OSCS will not be making any proposed changes to the Standards in this regard for the 2010 meeting but will include any that are submitted by committee members.

### 3. Modified Land History - 'Volunteers' Allowed

Following a review of the "Background" information in the packet related to this item, the group agreed that item B of the Potato Standards Part X. CROP HISTORY (pg 13) should be reworded by adding the italicized reference to the tolerance table on page 14, changing the placement of the negative element of the sentence, and replacing the word 'higher' generation with 'earlier' for clarity.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Stastny/ Rajnus), **passed** unanimously to accept the proposed change to Item B of Part X. CROP HISTORY (pg 13) as follows:

B. Volunteers: ~~No~~ Volunteer potatoes in ***excess of those shown on the field tolerance table (pg 14)*** will **not** be permitted in any field, except where the previous crop of the same variety was of an ~~higher~~ earlier generation than that being produced.

A question arose as to how OSCS scores 'volunteers' in the field: are they any between-row plant? Answer: Not necessarily. When OSCS inspectors come across between-row plants, they attempt to determine if the plant grew as a result of a cut seed piece that may have fallen off the planter or arose from a volunteer tuber from a previous season. Planting depth and 'volunteer' distribution are also considered. Of course, any other variety present would be scored as an off-type/volunteer. It was suggested that OSCS define 'volunteer' in the glossary.

### 4. Linking of Chemical Injury Found in Field to WGO

The "Background" information on this item was presented by Jeff McMorran. He noted that the change in the 2008 Standards in regards to abolishing chemical tolerances in the WGO had the unintended consequences of making uncertain the meaning of the statement found on page 14 of the Standards regarding chemical injury found in the field in excess of 3%. OSCS felt it was important for there to be some type of a link between significant chemical injury found in the field and those observed in the WGO. Currently such injury observed in the WGO would go officially unreported. Discussion followed on what type of injury observed in the WGO of such lots was significantly severe to warrant notation, how the inspectors should officially score it, and what the consequences would be. As discussed last year, observation of chemical injury in the WGO does not necessarily reflect on the fitness of the lot the subsequent field year, thus the consensus was that when chemical injury is observed in lots known to have greater than 3% in the previous field season, the action taken by OSCS staff would be limited to making an official note of this injury, and its extent, in the remarks box of the Final Report.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/ Hamm), **passed** unanimously to modify the Part XII-B-2, Page 14, of the Potato Standards for chemical injury to read: {bold italicized lines modified/or added}

2. Visible symptoms of chemical injury of any magnitude to ~~the extent~~ ***an incident*** of 3% or more of the sample inspected in the field may result in the field being withheld from certification pending test plot results ***where results will be noted on the final reports***. A representative of the Certification office may sample fields held for winter test on grid basis before harvest. The samples will be tested in the greenhouse.

At this point, Jim Carlson also brought up the importance on the part of OSCS staff to correctly mail the Final Reports to the correct grower, noting that this year his report was mailed to another grower (and vice versa) and that

this was not the first time this had occurred. The information in the Final Reports is considered confidential and confidentiality is compromised with such errors occur.

### 5. Changing the Grower Representation on the PCFSPMAC

Jeff McMorrان reviewed the table/graph found in the 'Background' section showing how both acreage and number of growers per district had changed over the last 40 years resulting in an imbalance between the number of representatives allotted for each district and the acres and growers represented. Jim Carlson noted that the Central Oregon growers and discussed this issue and suggested that one of their three representatives be replaced by an 'at large' position selected by the Oregon Seed Potato Growers Association. Bill Brewer also recommended that, due to declining potato acreage in the Malheur District, that in might be prudent to change the selection of the commercial representative from that district to one selected by the Oregon Potato Commission instead. Both proposed changes to the bylaws would allow for flexibility in the years to come should acreage change in different directions. It was also suggested that the term of the two commercial grower representatives chosen by the OPC be defined as having a three-year term as is the case with the other representatives.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/Ed Macy), **passed** unanimously to make the following changes to Article III Membership of the Bi-laws of the "Potato Certification and Foundation Seed and Plant materials Advisory Committee" {bold italicized lines added}.

#### Article III. Membership

1. The Advisory Committee consists of thirteen voting members: eight growers of Certified seed potatoes; ~~one commercial potato grower from Malheur County~~; **one *two commercial potato grower* representatives *selected by*** the Oregon Potato Commission; one OSU researcher; one extension specialist; and one county agent. In addition, the Certification Program, and the Commodity Inspection Division, Oregon Department of Agriculture, shall be represented by one ex-officio member each. Other ex-officio members may be appointed as the Dean or the committee deem necessary.

2. Representatives of the committee shall be appointed from the following geographical areas by the organizations listed below:

~~Malheur Potato Growers Association (MPGA) — one who will be a commercial grower.~~

Klamath Potato Growers Association (KPGA) – three seed potato growers (includes Southern Lake County)

Central Oregon Potato Growers Association (COPGA) – ~~three~~ **two** seed potato growers (includes Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, and Northern Lake County)

Blue Mountain Potato Growers Association (BMPGA) – two seed potato growers.

***Oregon Seed Potato Growers Association – one seed potato grower***

Oregon Potato Commission – ~~one~~ **two** representatives who must be ~~a~~ commercial potato growers

College of Agricultural Sciences (OSU) – one researcher, one extension specialist, one county agent, one Foundation Seed representative (ex-officio), and one Certified Seed representative (ex-officio)

**Summary:** Selection of the Malheur commercial grower position transferred to the Oregon Potato Commission and one of the Central Oregon seed grower positions transferred to the Oregon Seed Potato Growers' Association. Three-year term for all members.

## 6. Maximum Mosaic Values Allowed in WGO for Certification

The 'Background' material for this item was presented along with the two tables showing the number of lots that have fallen into various % of Mosaic from 2004-2008 and another table that summarized the rules other states have in regards to maximum virus allowed in the WGO for tagging lots as certified seed. The first table emphasized the number of lots with over 20% mosaic that are still eligible for Blue Tags due to the lack of any maximum tolerances for tagging in Oregon. Jim Carlson felt that the tables prepared showing the % mosaic over the years would be more useful if they separated out the number of lots with 0% mosaic and not lump them into the 0-2% group. On the second table it was noted that six states have some type of maximum for virus found in the WGO whereas eight do not, including Idaho. The virus maximum for tagging was removed in Oregon at the time the Seed Law was instituted, which not all states have in place yet. Jeff noted that lots having over 2% mosaic (or 5% in 'latent varieties') are downgraded to G5, which has a 'BSA' listing for mosaic tolerance (buyer-sell agreement). Such lots are eligible for Blue Tag even when they have high virus levels because the Blue Tag is a grade issue. US#1 seed grade pertains to physical appearance issues and not virus content. Though a Yellow Tag could be used if mandated by a Standards change, this still would not change the negative perception of high mosaic level lot being eligible for certification in Oregon. Jeff noted that the reason for bringing up this issue is to (1) inform growers who may not be aware that some lots with high virus levels in the WGO are still eligible for Blue Tag and have been so tagged in the past; and (2) to see if the growers wanted to make some type of change to the rules in this regard (i.e., requiring a Yellow Tag for such lots, or putting a maximum allowed for tagging into the Standards). It was also noted that at the national meetings no agreement on this point had been arrived at and that at this point a maximum for re-certification (G4) of 2% mosaic is being proposed, but none for 'tagging' (G5 in Oregon).

There was no consensus for a need to change of the rules/practices in regards to WGO mosaic levels and those lots legible for blue tags (i.e.. lot eligible for certification). No motions were made on this issue.

## 7. Printing of Winter Grow-out Results Booklet

Some examples of Winter Grow-out Results Booklets from other states were presented. Discussion followed on the value of such reports that list only those lots that 'pass' the winter grow-outs and/or are eligible for recertification are listed (as opposed to the field readings presented in the Directory). General consensus seem to be that the printing of such a booklet would serve little purpose because it would not come out until most seed lots were already committed. Comments as to the importance of getting the current Seed Directory out as early as possible in the fall were made.

## 8. Winter Grow-Out Sample Size – using 400 tuber 'standard' sample

With the aid of the 2 tables presented in the 'Background' Jeff compared a proposed tiered 400 'standard' tuber number system for WGO samples with the current sample size requirements, summarizing some of the advantages of switching to such a system such as conformity with other state systems and having a more uniform and thus less error prone system of WGO sample sizes. Though general approval of the system proposed was made, Ed Stastny expressed concern that the system, as proposed, would lower the accuracy of the test because less tubers would be required as the plateau cutoffs were approached (i.e. 25-30 acres and 45-50 acres). Ed proposed the 'steps' be modified so they better overlapped the current system, using one 400-tuber sample for 11-20 acres, two 400-tuber samples for 21-40 acre fields, and requiring three samples for seed fields over 40 acres. **Question:** Could more than the 'minimum' 400 tubers be submitted as a sample? Answer: Yes, as is currently the policy, the WGO crew will plant all tubers submitted (and keep count of the number planted). The rule simply defines the minimum number required. **Question:** Are the % scores (i.e. for mosaic) calculated against the number tubers planted or the number plants emerged and actually evaluated? Answer: Number emerged and evaluated, either by direct count, or using a calculated emergence %. **Question:** Is there a minimum number of tubers that can be submitted? Answer: No there is no minimum, but OSCS strongly recommends that at least 220 tubers be submitted to reduce statistical errors such as the impact a single + mosaic would have on a lot of only 50 tubers. **Question:** Could a minimum of 220 tubers put into place? Answer: A few years back the committee voted down such a proposal due to the high value of early generation lots (i.e., each tuber is costly to loose to a WGO sample). In its place however, OSCS staff agreed to allow growers of these valuable early generation lots to eye-index their material and thus keep the remainder of the tubers that are not used in the actual grow-out. Only one grower has used for this option to date.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/Cheyne), **passed** unanimously, to change the Oregon WGO samples size requirements by using a 400-tuber 'standard' sample size. Under the new system acreage above 10 acres will require 1 to 3 standard 400-tuber samples such that 11-20 acres would require a single 400 tuber sample, 21-40 acres would require two 400-tuber samples, and any acreage over 40 acres would require three 400-tuber samples. Acreage below 11 acres would be the same formula as currently used (220 + 20 tubers per acre).

#### D. UPDATES AND ISSUES FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION

**Winter Grow-out Report** – Terry Burr reviewed the results of the 2008-2009 WGO. A chart showing the % mosaic was distributed. Overall the amount of mosaic was relatively low with 46 of the 87 lots showing no symptom of mosaic, and 85% of the lots tested having less than 2% mosaic. Though a few chemical-like symptoms were observed in a handful of lots, there was nothing out of the ordinary. Terry used a spreadsheet system to keep growers informed on the progress of their lots this year, which Ed Macy said was useful. Jim Carlson asked how a PVY-ELISA system for the WGO as practiced in Idaho would affect our system. Jeff answered that overall readings would likely rise because he suspects that some PVY infected plants with very mild symptoms might not be scored. OSCS uses ELISA only to confirm +/- symptoms and in some cases bulk samples are taken where the visual symptoms in a lot are very difficult to reliably read. They are not used on 'healthy plants' except when requested for Idaho bound lots. Four such lots were PVY tested this year, and four were tested last year (at the grower's expense). Based on this experience, some changes would likely have to be made in the way lots were planted and/or read if this system were to be adopted unless the visual scoring for mosaic was eliminated at the same time. Cost of such a system would be high (see 2008 minutes for more discussion on this topic).

**Review of Appeals Granted in 2008** – Jeff reviewed the appeals made by growers in 2008. All were granted, and included: (1) several for lack of proper winter grow-outs (ELISA only); (2) several involving the chemical injury downgrades; (3) one for a WGO sample error made by grower (wrong lot submitted); and (4) several for inadequate field history to support class. The field history issue was resolved based on the fact that soil fumigation was used (Modified Land History) and very early generation tubers had been planted in the previous potato seed crop. Jeff pointed out that the 'Field History' portion of the application did not show a problem (i.e. was incorrectly filed out) and the error was only noticed when inspectors conducted the first inspection. To help 'discover' these situations at the time that applications are accepted, a 'Permanent Records' binder of growers' field maps over time has been created and will be used as applications come in.

**Potato Directory** – new format in 2008. New format was found acceptable.

**Erwinia now called Pectobacterium** – quick review of the name changes were made (see 'Background').

**Necrotic Virus Management Plan** - Via a prepared slide (see attachment), Jeff reviewed some of the discussions made at the National PAA and NPC Certification meetings in Detroit this last December in regards to the management of PVY and ways this problem might be addressed. Suggestions included changes to the NVMP including requiring PVY-ELISA testing of all 'clean' WGO lots and imposing a national maximum of 2% PVY for recertification. The 2% rule implemented in Oregon would require changing the tolerances for G4 lots of 'PVY Latent Varieties' that currently have a tolerance of 5% mosaic. Oregon is the only state that has different PVY tolerances for latent and non-latent varieties.

**Replacement of Steve James on committee by Brian Charlton** - Announced, and thanks were made to Steve James for his long service to the committee.

#### E. OTHER UPDATES:

**ODA Update:** During the earlier Grower's meeting, Sid Sedegui from ODA reviewed the status of the on-going Potato Cyst Nematode Survey and the survey for Potato Mop-Top Virus. See those meeting

minutes for more information. Sid also noted that the audit of potato seed growers as part of the MOU between APHIS and ODA (State Potato Harmonization Program) was taking place.

**Oregon Foundation Potato Seed Project:** Solomon Yilma referred to the report found in the packet, noting that OFPSP was focusing its production on minituber varieties out of the Tri-State Program that amounted to a fair sized reduction from previous years. All of the 2008 production has been sold except for a small amount of Premier Russet.

**OSU and Crops Science:** Russ Karow passed around and reviewed a CSS update (copy included). Budget issues and the future of the OSU Potato Variety Development program topped the list. Interviews for the new Dean of the School Agriculture were also announced.

**OSCS/Seed Service:** Dan Curry passed around an "OSU Seed Services" update noting that the seed lab is now ISTA accredited.

**OSCS Update:** Dennis Lundeen thanked the group for its willingness to serve on the Advisory Committee. He then introduced Rachel Hankins, OSCS's newest inspector, and brought the groups attention to the OSCS Activity Summary (in the meeting packet) that shows the full extent of OSCS activity in the role of Certification in Oregon.

#### F. OTHER BUSINESS – none

#### G. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

**Mike Macy** was nominated (Stastny/Hamm) and unanimously elected vice chair of the Advisory Committee.

#### H. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 12:25 PM

Submitted 2-5-2009 by Jeff McMorran

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These minutes are also available at: <http://www.oscs.orst.edu/advcom.html>

#### 5. PVY Issue - Revisit the concept of 'Latent Varieties' in regards to PVY and Proposed 'Recommendations' to be added to the NVMP

##### Change in PVY strains

'Natural' selection for 'latent strains' in Certification

Increased incidence/threat for tuber necrosing strains

General build-up of inoculum - threat to entire industry

##### 'Proposed' changes to NVMP

- PVY-ELISA testing of all 'clean' WGO lots
- national max. of 2% PVY for recertification \*
- establishing comparative methods for WGO results