

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

January 26, 2010, Kennewick, Washington

### MINUTES

**Voting members present:** Lon E. Baley, Jim Carlson, Brian Charlton, Scott Cheyne, Philip Hamm, Greg Harris, Rob Lane, Ed Macy, Mike Macy, Phil Rathbun, Ed Stastny Jr., Isabel Vales

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

**Members absent:** Jim Cramer (represented by Sid Sedegui), Dan Curry, George Rajnus Jr.

**Guests present:** Terry Burr, Bill Brewer, Rob Campbell, Gary Chapman, Oscar Gutbrod, Rachel Hankins, Steve James, Randy Knight, Richard Macy, Iraj Motazedian, Sid Sedegui, and Solomon Yilma

**A. Welcome and Introductions:** Meeting commenced at 10:10 AM with a welcome by vice-chair Mike Macy. Formal introductions were made and all present were asked to sign the signup sheet and verify accuracy of contact information. Voting members were identified on the signup sheet.

**B. 2009 Minutes:** The minutes for the 2009 meeting were included in the packets and had been emailed to members in advance. No changes were recommended. A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Ed Macy/Stastny), to approve the 2009 minutes without changes or additions, unanimously **passed**.

### C. PROPOSALS REQUIRING COMMITTEE ACTION

Note: Any reference to the "Standards" below refers to the OSCS Potato Certification Standards.

#### 1. WGO Off-Types – multiple tubers to report for large lots {Tabled from 2009, C. Oregon}

Mike Macy read through the material found in the meeting's 'Background Section.' Jeff noted that no proposals had been received for this item that had been tabled last year. There was no further discussion and **no action was taken**.

#### 2. BRR inspections for commercial lots {Blue Mountain District}

Mike Macy read through the material in the 'Background Section' for this item. Jeff McMorran further clarified the history of the BRR inspection requirement and reviewed how this agenda item came about. Jeff was asked if this proposed change amounted to a further 'exception' to the BRR inspections rule; Answer: No, it could more appropriately be viewed as a broadening of the existing exemption. The practical affect of the change would be that a seed grower who had planted a commercial field FROM ANOTHER Oregon grower would not have to have the seed lot sub-classed 'own-use-only' if they did not want to pay to have the BRR inspection done on their commercial field. The question was asked if any other states have the 'own-use-only' sub-class; answer (McMorran and Gutbrod): not officially, though many states will sometimes work with growers in unique situations who agree to plant back and not to sell a lot, and some states allow for a '1 year out' provision which is essentially a own-use-only' provision where a grower can plant back material from his own commercial field if it was planted with certified seed.

**No motion was made on this proposal**, existing rules unchanged.

#### 3. Auto-downgrades for G1 lots not 'unit planted' {OSCS}

Mike Macy read through the material in the 'Background Section' for this item. Jeff further clarified that 'unit planting' is a useful tool to detect and remove infected material. There are a few growers who have 'unit planted,' which in several cases have saved them from a downgrade. 'Unit planting,' however, is not the common practice for G1 growers now that G1 lots are much larger than they used to be due to the advent of minituber production. He felt this rule, that results in a downgrade of a multi-acre lot if a single mosaic was found, was too harsh, especially in light of the fact that no other state has this rule. Rob Campbell (Cal-Ore Seed) recommended the group adopt his proposal.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/Macy), **passed** unanimously to accept the proposed change that would remove the requirement that G1 class seed be unit planted. Specifically, the wording in Part IX-F-3 (page 13) would be revised to simply say:

**“3. Generation -1 – Must be planted from Nuclear class or higher seed stock.”**

#### 4. Proprietary Potato Varieties – Clarifying Definition {Klamath District}

Rob Campbell discussed the background behind this item, emphasizing that it did not seem logical that a variety protected in another country, but not in the U.S. , should be considered ‘proprietary’ by OSCS. He felt that a variety with no legal ownership (in the U.S. ), that had no U.S. license fee, and for which one pays no royalties in for U.S. production should not be considered ‘proprietary’ by OSCS, further pointing out that no other state in the U.S. does this. He felt that only those varieties clearly protected in the U.S. should be considered ‘proprietary’ in regards to the certification standards that require the owner’s permission to grow/certify. Further discussion covered most of the points made in the ‘background section’ of the meeting packet. Jeff also explained that OSCS’s categorizing of a variety’s status as ‘proprietary,’ ‘public,’ etc. only relates to how OSCS applies the rules for certification; it does not preclude someone from claiming ownership in a legal realm. Proprietary claims beyond those defined by OSCS (for certification purposes) would be an issue between a grower and the variety owner and not involve OSCS. Clarification was requested on how a variety like Carlingford would be listed in the OSCS Standards if the proposal were adopted; answer: as ‘public.’ In the case of Carlingford and Oregon production, if a seed grower can acquire eligible seed stock from another source, it would be eligible for recertification in Oregon regardless of how the Canadian grower felt about it. Control of the variety, from Eric Robinson’s standpoint (the owner in Canada) would have to come from very tight controls on early generation seed distribution.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Ed Macy/Cheyne), **passed** unanimously to change the Standards to define ‘proprietary’ as those considered ‘proprietary’ in the U.S. only. Specifically to insert the wording “in the United States” after “proprietary status” in the first sentence of Part VI-C of the Standards (page 10) so that it reads:

C. Approval of “Proprietary” Varieties: All potato material with proprietary status **in the United States** must have the permission from owner or agent prior to release of inspection reports or issuing final certification. {The **bold underlined** portion added}

In discussions following the motion, it was the general consensus (not put to a vote) that the OSCS would define ‘proprietary’ (for the sake of enforcing the owner’s permission rule) as a variety that has either a PVP ‘certificate issued’ or ‘pending,’ or is a pre-commercial advanced line of a university/USDA/private variety development program, requiring MTA for production. Though rare, a potato variety that has been patented would also fall under this category.

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

##### 5. Varieties ‘latent’ to PVY Infection – Treatment in the Standards

Jeff gave a review of the PVY/Mosaic situation in the U.S. and Oregon, beginning with a brief history of the PVY strain proliferation phenomenon and how it relates to the term ‘latent variety’ (much of which is covered in the ‘background section’). Phil Hamm gave a brief summary of his research on PVY strains and symptom expression in various PNW varieties done under greenhouse conditions at Hermiston. Phil summarized that foliage and tuber symptom expression varied tremendously among the PVY strains and isolates tested and the various potato varieties (see proceedings of the Oregon-Washington meeting for more information). One point Sid Sedegui brought up and Phil reiterated is that concern for what strain one

has is somewhat variety dependent, the example given was that Russet Burbank did not show tuber symptoms for any of the PVY strains where as Shepody and Russet Norkotah often did. Phil felt, based on his research, that it was hard to know what you really had in a lot (virus wise) based on foliage symptoms alone. Analysis of the commercial seed lots trials done at Hermiston, which are visually evaluated with an ELISA follow-up, indicated that the known 'latent varieties' like Russet Norkotah and Shepody have the largest virus loads and the 'symptomatic varieties' continue to have low, or no, virus loads. This would indicate that current system, based on visual evaluations with ELISA conformation as needed, seems to be working on all but the 'latent varieties' (at least for now).

There was a discussion of several potential changes to the Necrotic Virus Management Plan (NVMP) as related to this topic that were brought forth at the recent national certification meetings in Detroit. The **first** - a requirement that all potato seed lots crossing state lines have a Post Harvest Test (regardless if they are for certification or re-certification). This rule change reflects the desire to hold the total amount of PVY in all certified seed lots in the U.S. down to a common value (5% was proposed), and the understanding that this cannot be done based on summer field readings alone (as is now the case). The **second** was that 'latent varieties' in the PHT be lab tested for PVY at all classes. The reason being that the visual-only system currently used in many states is tending to favor an increase of strains of PVY that are symptomless in the foliage, but that may be causing tuber necrosis. The **third** proposed change was that all seed lots crossing state lines receive a full grade inspection (not just an inspection for necrotic arcs). Even though this is not what is required under the MOU, and even though APHIS has no authority to require a grade inspection, such language continues to be inserted into the NVMP by states that want to 'force' the Canadians to do the same.

This part of the discussion was concluded by asking the group to consider (1) if differentiation between 'latent' and 'non-latent' varieties in the Standards is still merited; (2) if the ELISA testing program should be expanded to included all varieties at Nuclear and G1 class, and/or include testing 'latent varieties' at all classes; and (3) if the tolerance for G4 seed in the winter grow-out should be reduced to 2% (from the current 5%) or at least not allow for re-certification of a lot in excess of 2% mosaic in the PHT. Jeff showed a table that summarized what the tolerances for recertification and certification among other U.S. states were (see 'Table 2' at end of minutes). He noted that Oregon does far less testing for PVY in field-produced lots than most states.

A lengthy discussion followed on the various merits of these 'discussion points.' Phil Hamm asked several questions:

- (1) If any states tested for **PVY strains** in their programs (vs. just PVY); Answer: not to our knowledge. Many states participate in various strain-related 'surveys,' but these are not part of the official certification program (other than how such testing relates to the NVMP).
- (2) Would the proposed changes **increase the cost** to the seed grower; Answer: Yes and No. Any change that requires more testing will substantially increase the cost to the seed grower. However proposed changes that would limit re-certification eligibility to lots of 2% or less would only have only indirect costs. Downgrading G4 lots between 2-5% mosaic to G5 may have a larger indirect cost if contracts were written specifying G4 class seed. Ed Macy asked if any contracts were written specifying G4 seed. Greg Harris (and others) said this didn't seem to be a major issue in that most contracts to commercial growers were simply written for 'certified seed' not noting actual class.
- (3) Did Jeff feel the current system was 'broken' now: Answer: No, the system (in Oregon) seems to work fairly well in keeping mosaic down in certified lots, however he was concerned about the relatively low level of virus testing currently done in Oregon (both in regards to the appearance of the program among other states and the actual merits associated with testing). It probably didn't do that much good to test only very early generation lots for PVY because it is the later generations were PVY tends to rapidly build up and thus be detected. There may be some 'sticky cogs,' but any system will depend on what growers can afford. The perceived need for ELISA-based testing in some states may be a result of not conducting their PHT in a climate-controlled greenhouse where symptoms expression is more clearly defined. Sid noted that changing the way material is tested might bring down testing cost.

These questions were followed by a discussion on the impact, to a seed grower, of capping re-certification eligibility at 2%, but leaving the tolerance for PHT-G4 class at 5%. Several growers (Jim Carlson, Ed Macy) noted that they could not imagine anyone trying to recertify seed with 5% mosaic, and in fact experience had shown it is very difficult to meet WGO tolerances for mosaic when seed with far less percent mosaic than this was planted. Jeff noted that there was merit in leaving G4 at 5% for 'latent varieties' because it separated the lots of 2-5% mosaic from lots with much higher amounts, and that under the current diversification in class terminology among states it helps denote that the such lots were Field Year 5 material rather than appearing as a FY6 lot if downgraded to G5. The only drawback was the way Oregon would come across on national comparative charts. Steve James noted that the history of the 5% tolerance level was because Idaho was selling seed at higher levels of mosaic and this was having a negative impact on Oregon growers ability to sell seed ('blowing us out of the water' according to Oscar). It was pointed out that even if the tolerance for G4 was reduced to 2% in the WGO, growers could still sell such seed at G5 class.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/Macy), **passed** unanimously to limit lots eligible for recertification to lots with 2% or less mosaic readings in the post harvest tests.

Specifically, this would add the following footnote "f" Table 7 (Section XIV-F Pg 16) attached to Gen 4 Latent PVY (following the 5.00):

f- Only lots at or below 2% mosaic are eligible for recertification.

And the statement under IX-F #7 (page 13) will now read:

7. Generation 5 – Must be produced from Generation 4 or higher seed stock with a maximum of 2% mosaic in the post harvest test. This class is not eligible for recertification in Oregon.

Following the passing of this motion was a long discussion on the merits of ELISA testing of WGO lots. Jim Carlson noted that he had been questioned on the NPC meetings as to why Oregon didn't do more ELISA testing of its WGO lots. He wondered why some states that do ELISA testing in the WGO (and 'boast about it') still have high mosaic levels in the commercial seed lot trials. How can a state that tests for PVY in the lab still have a 27% mosaic in the commercial seed lot trials? This was largely unexplained. Jeff pointed out that in some areas (Montana/Canada) the results of the PHT are only 'advisory' to the grower. Question: Do all states require a WGO and do they use ELISA: Yes, except for Washington and Canada (though Washington will when MOU signed). Most states use ELISA only as a backup to a visual program; some ELISA-test all scored mosaics, only Idaho tests all lots by ELISA. Rob Lane asked if the push will be for all states to test all lots like Idaho does; Answer: No, at the national meetings most states have stated they would not and could not afford this level of testing. Jeff also pointed out that he felt Idaho was in error by totally substituting ELISA testing for a visual inspections for mosaic because it leaves open the possibility of missing either a non-reacting (but symptomatic) PVY strain or a totally new virus. Last year OSCS had two samples that tested negative for PVY by conventional means (test kits and ICIA lab), but yielded a positive for PVY<sub>no</sub> when a PVY strain screen was done by Phil's lab. Ed Macy also pointed out that the WGO results are only as good as the sample taken, and that it is always possible for a grower to 'skew' the results by only taking samples from areas of his field that were visually clean for mosaic during the summer (i.e. the center of the field). For more information on the PHT requirement/practices of other states see:

[http://oregonstate.edu/potatoes/PAA%20Postharvest%20survey%202004%20\\_all%20states\\_.pdf](http://oregonstate.edu/potatoes/PAA%20Postharvest%20survey%202004%20_all%20states_.pdf)

## 6. Possible New Fee Structure For N and G1 Class Seed (discussion only)

Jeff pointed out that, due to the nature of the way inspections are done, OSCS staff must spend far more time on inspections of Nuclear and G1 class lots than they spend on older generations for the same fee. The disparity comes from the fact that all plants in a Nuclear and G1 field are inspected (2 rows/pass and 4 rows/pass, respectively) where as OSCS inspectors simply do a diagonal pass through a G2-G5 field. Referring to a chart

not in the packets (see end of minutes), the increased effort to inspect a 1 acre G1 field was at least 10 times a G2 field, and a Nuclear class was 20 times the effort. The problem has become more acute as the size of G1 fields has dramatically increased over the years. This year, for example, OSCS had a 5 acre G1 field that took about 12 man-hours to inspect at a fee of only \$150. A G2 field of this size would take about 20 minutes. In times past, when there was mandatory PVX testing requirement for G1 fields, very large G1 fields were generally down graded by growers who did not want to pay the testing cost, but testing is now only required for 'latent varieties.' Though OSCS does not need the Advisory Committee approval to change or raise fees, and are not planning on doing so this year, this information was presented at this time simply as a 'heads up' that OSCS is seriously considering a fee change at the Nuclear and G1 levels. Ideally, N and G1 fields would all be tested for PVY, and this cost would be rolled into an initial per acre application fee (however any change in testing requirements would have to be approved by the Advisory Committee and Board). More will be forthcoming on this item next year.

#### **7. PVY Survey - Plans for 2010 (discussion only) and the Necrotic Virus Management Plan -**

This item was discussed at the Growers meeting that preceded this meeting and not further discussed here.

#### **E. OTHER UPDATES:**

**Winter Grow-out Report** – Terry Burr reviewed the results of the 2009-2010 WGO, which at the time were almost done. The number of lots entered this year was down somewhat from previous years, but the percent of lots tested, relative to total lots entered into the program, was up, at about 80% (see table at end on minutes). Mosaic was found in about 50% of the lots. The new lots size definition was implemented and was helpful to for standardizing greenhouse operations. For the first time in many years, PVX was observed in the WGO (2 lots). Terry also summarized how lots are handled when they arrive, pointing out that they are GA dipped and placed in the warming room shortly after arrival, but not planted until peeping is observed. He mentioned this because some growers were concerned that their lots were not planted sooner even though they had brought them in early. The GH staff has no further control over when peeping (and thus cutting/planting) occurs. Terry also mentioned that we saw very little chemical injury this year, and what we saw was pretty much limited to a few lots from a single grower. Some discussion regarding potential carryover chemicals in fields followed.

**ODA Update:** Sid passed out a handout that summarized the status of Gobodera species testing at ODA, noting that last year none were found and in this year's survey, with 70% of the samples analyzed, no Pale Cyst Nematodes were found. This years survey is concentrating on fields of seed that came from Canada or Idaho. This is a four year survey effort and would continue each year as long as APHIS agrees to pay for it. Continued sampling of seed fields for this nematode was important to help quickly delimit the area affected should a PC Nematode be found in an Oregon field. Sid also mentioned that the ODA has been auditing commercial and seed growers to ensure compliance with the terms of the MOU and NVMP that involves only planting certified seed and having an inspection for necrotic arcs made at the shipping point.

**Oregon Foundation Potato Seed Project:** Isabel Vales began by listing several new releases from the Oregon program including Purple Pelisse, Red Sunset, Owyhee Russet, and Crimson Red, noting that more information on these varieties as well as other varieties and advanced lines, are available on the PVMI web site. She then summarized a few changes in the Oregon Variety Development Program (see yellow report included in packet). Changes to the program were substantial this year due to the tightening budget situation and the retirement of Steve James and Dan Hane. Minitubers of the red varieties Modoc and Mazama are still available. She noted that orders for 2011 must be received by Feb 11, 2010, and a 50% down payment is required when ordering. Richard Macy noted that buying one year in advance could be a problem for most growers. Such a long 'lead time' is required to allow for tissue culture bulking and mini-tuber production, and well as storage to overcome tuber dormancy. Foundation Seed is discouraging later orders, but they may be considered if small. Contrary to the policy set last year, the Foundation program will consider the production of varieties other than new PVMI releases in order to fill two GH this year, though priority will be given to new PVMI varieties. Ed Macy asked if a grower would receive their money back if material originally ordered but not needed could be resold to another grower; answer: yes, possibly with a portion taken out (i.e., an 80% refund might be an option).

Jeanne Debbons summarized a few changes in the PVMI policies. She noted that the PVMI Board had reduced the licensing fees for Tri-State growers to \$100 (from \$250) and to those outside the Tri-State to \$250 (from \$1,000). This was done to promote the use of new Tri-State varieties and thus develop an interest in them. It was felt, by the PVMI Board, that the higher fees were discouraging growers from even trying out new PVMI varieties. It is hoped that any revenue lost due to reduced licensing fees would be made up by increased royalties down the road.

**OSU and Crops Science:** Russ Karow reviewed a CSS update (green copy included in packets). Budget issues and the future of the OSU Potato Variety Development program topped the list. All programs had deal with a 15% cut in operational funds that has put a severe strain on the programs. In addition, long-standing 'earmarks' grants for research have been greatly reduced over the years. The position at Powell Butte is to be refilled thanks to support from the Oregon and Washington Potato Commissions, royalty payments from PVMI, and grant money, and Dan will continue to work half-time for the next year, funded from grant money. This is not a sustainable way to support either position. If the funding situation continues to deteriorate, OSU may be forced to close several experiment stations in the near future. He also noted that there is currently a major reorganizing effort aimed a cost savings going on in both the Extension Service (anticipate agent loses) and at the university level.

**OSCS/Seed Service:** Dennis Lundeen thanked all for their participating in the meeting and for their ongoing support of Seed Certification in Oregon. He referred the group to the insert in the packets that summarizes certification activity for 2009 and a table that summarized activity to date. Acreage in 2009 was down about 4.3%, and new plantings in 2010 are down about 10% this year (so far), due mostly to reduction in grass seed production. There were, however, some up turns including corn certification in the Hermiston area by Pioneer and Monsanto, which is new to OSCS. Dennis noted that some counterfeit Oregon tags for Crimson clover were discovered in Italy. Jim Carlson asked if OSCS would have to raise fees to cover the acreage reductions, or would the new corn acreage cover the short fall; answer: no fee increase are planed for this year (season), and the corn program is still in the formulative phase and not currently a revenue stream due to the high cost of operating this program, though we are working on ways to reduce the cost of this program by hiring some local part-time inspectors to help with the daily inspections.

**OSCS Update:** (Dan Curry was not present but included a Seed Services update in the packets)

#### F. OTHER BUSINESS – Fee Structure update (see above)

**PAA Meeting:** Phil Hamm announced that the PAA would be holding their national meeting in Corvallis this year Aug 15-19. These are scientific meetings that involve several hundred folks from all over the world. All are welcome to attend. It was last held in Corvallis in 1989. The OPC has been approached about being a sponsor and has offered assistance in organizing and promoting the event.

#### G. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

**Scott Cheyne** volunteered to serve as vice chair of the Advisory Committee for the 2010 year and was thus so nominated and unanimously elected into office.

#### H. ADJOURN

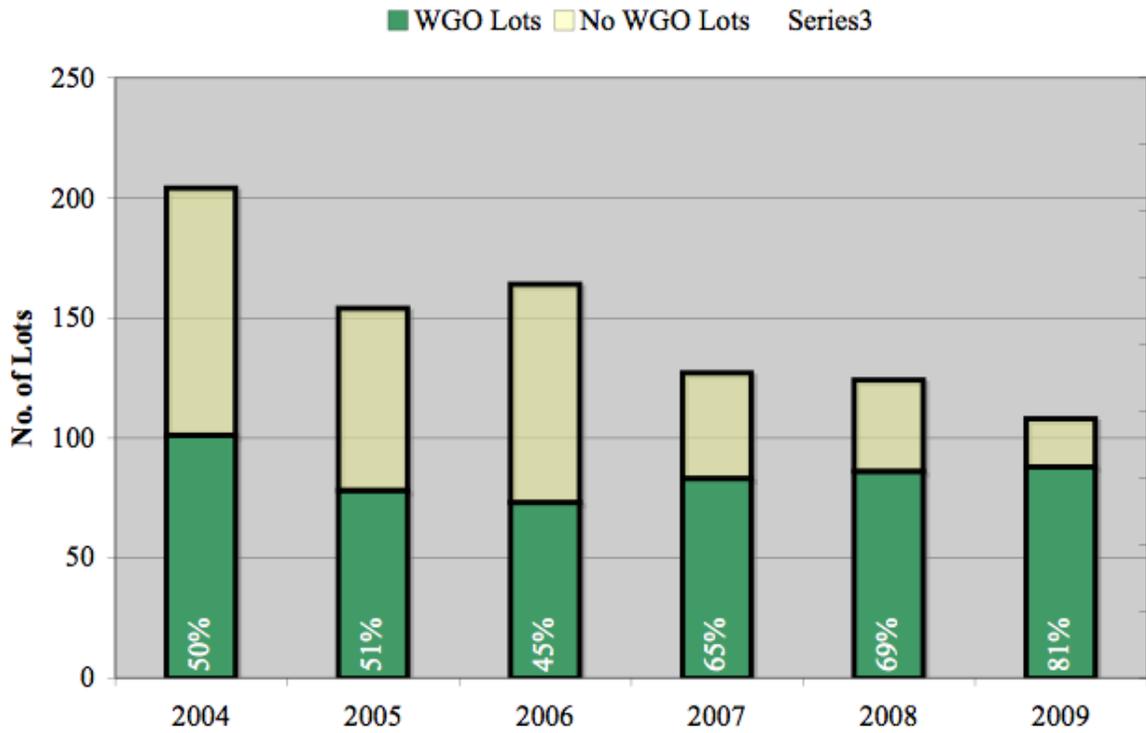
Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM

Submitted 2-1-2010 by Jeff McMorran

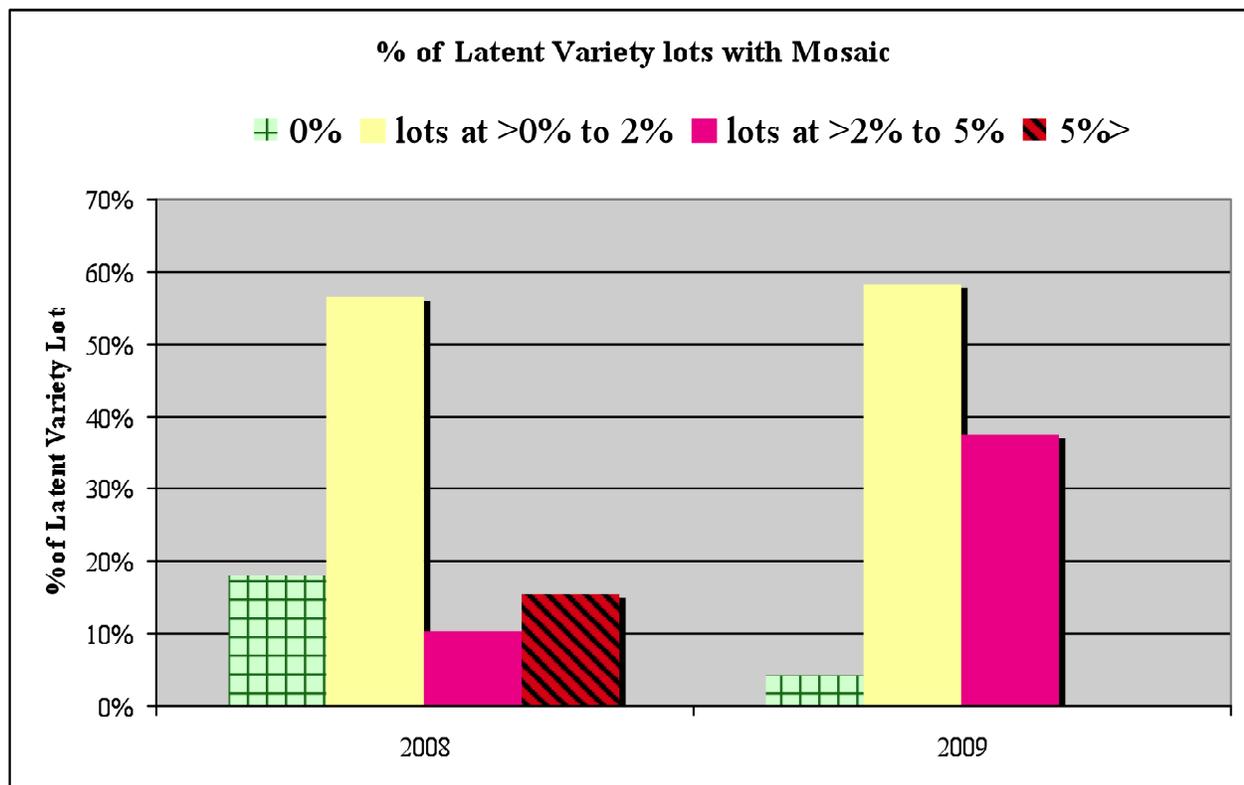
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These minutes are also available at: <http://www.oscs.orst.edu/advcom.html>

**Lots with and without a WGO**



**% of Latent Variety lots with Mosaic**



**Table 2 - Maximum Mosaic allowed in WGO for certification (by State)**

| State      | Mosaic allowed |               | State           | Mosaic allowed |                    |
|------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
|            | Re-Cert.       | Cert.         |                 | Re-Cert.       | Cert.              |
| California | 2.0, 5.0 %*4   | PHT-NR, BSA * | Montana         | 0.5            | ??                 |
| Canada     | ? (=E4)        | PHT - NR **   | Nebraska & WY*3 | 4-8            | 8%                 |
| Colorado   | 3%             | 10%           | New York        | 0.5            | 5%                 |
| Idaho      | 2%             | ?? (5-15%)    | North Dakota    | *** (0.5)      | (0.5%) PHT-NR, *** |
| Maine      | 0.5            | 5%            | Oregon          | 2%, 5% *4      | BSA *, PHT-NR      |
| Michigan   | 0.5            | 5%            | Washington      | 1.5            | BSA *, PHT-NR      |
| Minnesota  | 0.5            | PHT-NR        | Wisconsin       | 0.5            | 5%                 |

\* - BSA = Buyer Seller agreement (I.e. no maximum tolerance for mosaic to certify) \*\* - PHT-NR = Post Harvest test not required for Certification; \*\*\* - "Detremined by Commmissioner"; \*4 - 5% on 'PVY Latent Vaieties" at G4

