

Potato Certification and Foundation Seed and Plant Materials Advisory Committee Meeting

January 25, 2011, Kennewick, Washington

MINUTES

Voting members present: Jim Carlson, Brian Charlton, Scott Cheyne, Philip Hamm, Greg Harris, Rob Lane, Ed Macy, Mike Macy, Nancy Osterbauer (representing Jim Cramer), Phil Rathbun, Ed Stastny Jr.

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

Members absent: Lon E Baley, Jim Cramer (represented by Nancy Osterbauer), Dan Curry, George Rajnus Jr.

Guests present: Terry Burr, Bill Brewer, Gary Chapman, Rachel Hankins, Randy Knight, Richard Macy, Iraj Motazedian, Solomon Yilma, Richard Wagstaff, Darrin L. Walenta.

Note: (1) In these minutes “Q:” = question, “A:” = answer;

(2) Any reference to the “Standards” below refers to the OSCS Potato Certification Standards.

A. Welcome and Introductions: Meeting commenced at 10:15 AM with a welcome by chair Mike Macy. Formal introductions were made with voting members asked to identify themselves. All present were asked to sign the signup sheet and verify accuracy of contact information. Ed Stastny pointed out that according to the membership list included in the packets the terms of several voting members had expired as of the last meeting. This was an oversight on the part of the secretary who usually sends out notices of expired terms to the districts in advance of the meeting giving the district time to appoint a new representative or extend the term of the current representative. This notice did not happen this year. It was agreed to accept as voting members all shown on the membership list regardless of ‘term expires’ date.

B. 2010 Minutes: The minutes for the 2010 meeting were included in the packets and had been emailed to members in advance. No changes were recommended. A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/R.Macy) to approve the 2010 minutes without changes or additions, unanimously **passed**.

C. PROPOSALS REQUIRING COMMITTEE ACTION

1. Change in the WGO sample size for 1-11 acres to 400 tubers

Jeff reviewed the material in the packet related to this issue. He noted that changing the seed sample size requirements for the Winter Grow-Out to match those specified in the Necrotic Virus Management Plan (NVMP) would have minimal impact on the sample size requirements while avoiding complications that might arise by not meeting all the provisions of the current plan. Oregon has signed on to the MOU that has the NVMP as an appendix, thus Oregon is required to abide by this plan. It is not certain, however, that having a small variation in the tuber sample number would have any affect of acceptance of Oregon seed if the sample amount was not changed. Q: Would the cost to the grower be the same? A: All samples received from 1 through 11 acres would be charged the same fee, namely \$135 (based on current fees). This would represent an increase of \$73 for fields that were 1-5 acres (due to the \$60 minimum fee) with progressively less increase in fee for fields larger than this. The grower would also loose more tubers, a cost that would be most acute for the very early generations that are more valuable. For example, a 2-acre field under the current sampling requirements (220 tubers + 20 tubers per acre) would require 260 tubers, under the proposal 420 tubers would be required. Jeff reminded the

group that OSCS allows for Nuclear and very small G1 class lots to be eye-indexed, if desired. Eye-indexing allows the grower to supply OSCS with only melon-balled eyepieces of the tubers and keep the rest. The pieces provided need not be numbered.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Lane/E.Macy), **passed** unanimously to accept the proposed change that would have the size of the WGO sample match those specified in the PVY Necrotic Virus Management Plan. Specifically that 400 tubers be required for lots that are at least one acre in size and 200 tubers for lot less than 1.0 acres.

The specific changes would be as follows:

- (1) Under “**Fees**” section F (page 8): 1 & 2 would be replaced by – “**1. Fields less than 1 acre: \$60; 2. Fields 1-20.9 acres: \$135; 3. Fields 21-40.9 acres: \$270; 4. Fields greater or equal to 41 acres: \$405.**
- (2) Under **Part XIV “Winter Greenhouse Requirements” section C** (page 16), items 2 & 3 would be replaced by “**2. Fields less than 1 acre: 220 tubers, may be eye-indexed if early generation material; 3. Fields 1-20.9 acres: 420 tubers; 4. Fields 21-40.9 acres: 840 tubers; 5. Fields 41 acres and above: 1,260 tubers**”.

2. Proposal to Treat Powdery Scab and Rhizoctonia as Grade Only Issues {Klamath District}

Jeff brought the groups attention to the second and third pages of the “Additional Reference Material” that summarized exactly where these two diseases are mentioned in the current Standards, as well as summarizing how other state’s certification agencies treat Powdery Scab. An extract from the ‘US Seed Potato Grade Standards’ mentioning these two diseases is also included on these pages.

Ed Stastny presented information on the reasons this proposal was put forth, what it would entail, and why it was worth supporting (as shown program packet). Ed emphasized that it is up to the grower to be sure a lot was sorted properly to bring it up to US#1 Seed Grade standards (“blue tag”) if called for in the contract. He also mentioned that having a blue tag is very important for some shipments, especially shipments going out of state and overseas. Ed presented a booklet of Certification Standards from many states for those interested. He pointed out that the omission of sections C & D from the Standards would put Oregon on par with Washington and Idaho in regards to how PS and Rhizoctonia are handled, except that Idaho does require a full shipping point inspection of all seed.

Jeff clarified the difference between ‘grade’ and ‘class’ noting that grade standards are based on the physical (observable) condition of the tubers, whereas the ‘class’ of a lot is reference to it meeting specific tolerances for tuber-borne diseases and variety purity, as well as, meeting specified criteria such as field history and isolation requirements. He stressed that potato seed certification in Oregon is concerned with determining the class of a seed lot, not the grade. Other diseases and conditions listed in the US Seed Grade Standards such as scurf, dry rots, common scab, growth cracks (etc) are commonly observed during Harvest Inspections, but do not result in a ‘yellow tag only’ declaration by OSCS regardless of their severity. For these diseases/conditions no additional action is taken other than recording on the inspection report if severe enough to potentially impede inspector's ability to inspect the lots for scored conditions/diseases. He said that certification’s function in regards to diseases is limited to seed-born diseases that are important enough to affect the subsequent crop and are those that have

tolerances included in the Oregon Potato Standards for each class. No tolerances for PS or Rhizoctonia (by class) have been set.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Carlson/Rathbun), **passed** unanimously to change the Standards to remove Sections XVI c & XVI d from the Potato Standards (see page 17 of the Standards under “Sorting Regulations”). This change would in effect then treat both of these disease as solely grade issues.

After the vote Phil Hamm pointed out that both of these diseases can be seed-born and cannot be totally removed by sorting. Though he understood the grade issue, growers should be aware that both are serious seed-born diseases. Seed-borne Rhizoctonia has been shown to reduce the yield in subsequent crops, and Powdery Scab has been the cause of rejections by the processors or packing sheds in non-russeted varieties.

D. ISSUES and UPDATES FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION

Review of Appeals Granted in 2010

Jeff reviewed the process upon which appeals are made and handled by OSCS. He explained that initially OSCS staff determines if a grower’s request can fall within the tolerances or practices permitted in the Standards (phase 1) then if not, the appeal is turned over to the director of Seed Service, Dan Curry, for further action (phase 2). Dan generally selects a group of 3 seed growers and one or more Extension or OSU potato experts who review the material presented by the grower and OSCS staff. This panel then makes a decision to approve or deny the appeal. If approved, the granted appeal is considered a ‘special case exemption’. All such appeals that are approved are later presented to the full Advisory Committee for a chance to comment upon them and to decide if the ‘special case exemption’ should be considered basis for a permanent change in the Standards (and thus allowing for the practice to continue in subsequent years), or by taking no further action consider the approval a one time only unique special case.

Jeff then reviewed the two appeals granted in 2010 (see packet for details). In regard to the Teeter appeal, Ed Macy asked if the original planting violated the rules of the Control District? Jeff replied that it may have been because, as he recalled, all lots planted were supposed to be signed up {note: Bill Brewer later clarified this, ... “*All potato seed planted in the control area for the purpose of producing commercial or seed quality potatoes shall meet the minimum requirements of the Oregon State University potato seed certification standards for Generation II (field year 3) Stock and must be eligible for recertification in the growing area*” 603-052-0000 Part 2b and thus need not actually be signed up for certification}. Jeff noted that ODA is not out looking for violations to the Control District, and that action will only be taken if a local seed grower brings a complaint of a violation. There was no further discussion on either appeal.

Inspection of Large G-1 Class Fields

Referring to several graphs included in the ‘Additional Reference Material’ section, Jeff discussed the revised inspection protocol for large G1 class fields larger than 2 acres, along with the reasons for needing to revise the previous practice of inspecting 100% of the G1 class fields. As the size of these fields continues to rise, OSCS does not have enough staff to inspect the very large fields at a 100% level (even if growers were willing to pay more for such inspections). He also pointed out that the Standards do not stipulate how a field is to be inspected, but only how many times during the season they must be inspected and the tolerance that must be met for each class. The current protocol for these fields should satisfy both requirements. He also noted that

the protocol outlines the minimum amount of the field to be inspected and that in some cases, such as long narrow fields or if many inspectors are available, a larger amount of the field might be inspected. Q: Does OSCS always inspect the side rows of G1 fields? A: The beginning of the inspection would start on row 1-4, but the other side of the field might end up in the un-inspected area and thus not be looked at in the 'count' (to keep the scoring of the field unbiased). However because the field edges are the most likely locations to have current season virus infected plants show up (Mosaic and Calico) we would always at least look over these border rows and flag plants observed (but would not 'score' them). Phil Hamm was surprised that OSCS scores for Calico in-as-much as it is not nearly as much of a concern as viruses like PVY or PLRV and does spread in a potato field like these viruses do. Q: How is Calico scored? A: As part of 'Other Visible Virus' and that there have been fields that have been downgraded due to the presence of Calico. In one instance a high Calico field was later found to have tubers with necrotic arcs.

PVY Survey - Plans for 2011 (discussion only)

Jeff reviewed the material presented in the packet for this item. Phil Hamm commented on work done by his lab on the commercial seed lot trials at Hermiston and Othello, WA, in which strains were being monitored with an aim to directly assist the growers who receive lots with necrotic strains. Jeff confirmed that the commercial seed lot trials are the best place to look for changes in virus strains (having the most virus and coming from many source states/provinces) but not all states across the US conduct these trials.

Review of Out-of-State Requirements for Seed Shipped at Harvest

Jeff reviewed the material presented in the packet for this item. He emphasized item 3, that all seed leaving the state needs to be accompanied by either a tag or shipping certificate to be considered certified, even when shipped at harvest. Also emphasized was item 5 that notes that some states like Colorado, Nebraska, and Idaho have specific requirements for testing requirements additional to those required by Oregon Certification so the shipper should contact the state agency receiving the seed to determine if additional tests are needed beyond Oregon's requirements. He is happy to help with this if contact information is needed.

E. OTHER UPDATES:

Review of Items Discussed at the National Certification Meetings - Bill Brewer reviewed a few highlights of the NPC certification related meetings in Las Vegas, January 2011. Of most significance were discussions related to the MOU. He noted that the MOU is not official until 70% of the states sign on and have their Quality Manuals accepted. It is expected to be in affect by March of this year. One motion that was made and passed was to accept 400 tubers as a standard sample size for Winter Grow-Outs, and that a Winter Grow-Out be required on all lots crossing state lines (not just those for re-certification). Bill stressed (to the NPC group) that the MOU agreement signed says there can be NO changes to the MOU, or the attachments, without unanimous consent. This came up in relation to the inspections for arcs at shipping point. Nancy O. defined these inspections as examining 200 tubers for internal arcs at the point of shipment after storage. If any arcs are found an additional 200 tubers are cut to determine a % for the lot. The inspection is actually part of the Necrotic Virus Management Plan, but it is an appendix to the MOU. Bill pointed out that some groups were pushing strongly for full grade inspections, but the current MOU neither specifies this, nor is it so specified in the Oregon Quality Manual. Jim Carlson noted Oregon must be diligent to prevent any such change from occurring.

Jeff McMorran passed out a single page summary of items discussed at the PAA & NPC Certification meeting that had happened in San Diego in December. He noted that the NPC meeting included only US Potato Certification reps and some grower reps provided by John Keeling, while the PAA meeting included US and Canadian certification reps but no growers. The PAA meeting allows agencies to keep track of what other states/provinces are doing certification-wise, help educate agency officials, and gives some credence to 'recommendations' made in regard to uniformity among states. The NPC meeting is an advisory committee that passes motions that are then passed on the NPC certification committee that meets in conjunction with the National NPC meetings each year. At the Annual NPC meeting they are officially voted on. The NPC motions seem to have more 'teeth' in regards to actually changing national certification policies because it seems to have more political pull than the PAA motions. Jeff pointed out that regardless of what is voted on in either of these meetings, Oregon Certification rules are not changed until voted on by the Potato Certification Advisory Committee and approved by the Certification Board. See the handout for more information of what was discussed at the PAA/NPC certification meetings.

Some discussion followed on the particulars of virus testing all WGO lots (lab testing) such as Idaho does now and New Brunswick is initiating this year. It is felt that certification may be missing +PVY plants in doing a visual inspection only. Jeff noted virus testing may be useful if growers can afford the cost, but he felt it would be in error to do away with a visual inspection for mosaics which may detect new virus strains not picked up with the current lab-based testing systems.

Winter Grow-Out Report – Terry Burr reviewed the results of the 2010-2011 WGO with the aid of a table showing number of lots by mosaic % for 2011. At this date all but three lots were completed. Testing went well with no major problems. A total of 95 lots were received, with 56 having no visual virus, 14 having 0-1% mosaic, 6 with 1-2% mosaic, 3 with 2-5%, and 12 with greater than 5%. PVX was observed again this year in one lot.

Terry noted that there had been a 25% increase in GH rents this year, going from \$7,600 to \$9,250 for 4 houses for 6 months rent. Rent includes water, heat, pest control, and maintenance. Rather than increasing fees OSCS is considering relinquishing one house. The Filbert Project, that uses one house in the summer, is pulling out of one house and if another user cannot be found for this house (with a dirt floor) OSCS would be assessed for a full year of rent (about \$4,000). Due to the cap of 1,200 tubers for a WGO, and the stepped increase in the lot sizes, OSCS has only been using about 3 houses a year anyway. OSCS can accommodate any increases (such as a requirement that all lots be winter tested) by replanting one or two houses. Dyed seed pieces are used in replants to help prevent erroneous readings. Once a house is relinquished, it could probably not be reclaimed at a later date because the new user would most likely concrete the floor, however, we have discussed having the OSU Variety Development program use the relinquished house and keeping the house as it is with dirt floors. Some decision on OSCS's future use needs to be made by June of this year. **Jim Carlson suggested OSCS relinquish one house. This seemed to be the general agreement of the group.** {Post minutes note: GH Operations was informed of the decision to relinquish one house on 2-4-11}

ODA Update: Nancy Osterbauer reviewed the results of nematode sampling at Powell Butte noting that the cyst nematode found is evidently a new species of Globodera not previously described. Work is currently being done at OSU and Beltsville, MD, to characterize this nematode. Samples from Powell Butte are still in progress, but so far the nematode was only found in two small fields at Powell Butte. Trace back and trace forward sampling at other locations receiving seed from

Powell Butte were negative for this nematode. Nancy also summarized the results of the general Oregon potato cyst nematode survey. All samples were negative for *Globodera* sp.

In regards to the MOU, 4 states still have their Quality Manual's 'pending' and once they are complete the MOU will be in effect. This is expected to take place by this year's shipping season in March/April. Oregon was the first state to have its Quality Manual approved, and so far APHIS has not asked for any changes in our practices or policies.

Oregon Foundation Potato Seed Project: Solomon Yilma referred to a report that was included in the packets. Due to budget constraints OSU terminated in Potato Foundation program and will rely on Lorie Ewing's lab at University of Idaho as the primary source of certified university-produced minitubers of Tri-state releases. OSU will maintain a backup tissue culture collection in Corvallis, 20 lines of which will be kept in an active state requiring transfer about once a month; The remainder will be kept on a high manatose media for long term storage. Some uncertified minitubers of these varieties may still be produced to supply the variety development trialing needs, but no certified material will be produced. Brian Charlton agreed to supply Lori with a list of all Oregon Seed growers and their contact information so any information on material available, price lists, and ordering information (etc.) can be sent to Oregon growers as well as Idaho growers. This item was discussed more intensively at the preceding grower's meeting.

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 to deal with a possible 25% cut in operational funds with minimum 15% reduction. This is on top of reductions that have already occurred over the last 2 years and have put a severe strain on the programs. There has been a 40% reduction in OSU faculty FTE over this period. The state continues to divest in Extension and Research Support and OSU must accommodate to this decrease in funding, partially by reducing size, increasing/charging some fees, and relying more on grants and contracts for faculty & facility support. Some counties are considering 'Service Districts' for continued support of critical Extension and Research efforts, but have been told the two functions cannot be linked in one district. The recent death of Lynn Jensen in Malheur County will result in a long term unfilled vacancy in the crops areas for this county leaving a single crops agent in this area (Steve Norburg). In addition to declining state support, Federal support for many programs have either declined or become less certain. Specialty Crops Grants (i.e. those used for the Variety Development Program) were moved to a line item position in the budget, thus offering some protection from cuts, but these SCG may be returned to 2008 support level. USDA-ARS money is adequate but uncertain.

OSU Variety Development Program changes were summarized. These had been more extensively discussed at the preceding grower's meeting. The potato program has lost the position of Steve James, Dan Hane and Isabel Vales. Operations at Powell Butte will cease with Fahrettin Goktepe being transferred to the Hermiston location to continue in the role previous filled by Dan Hane, with an additional 25% statewide Extension responsibility. Seed increase that had previously been done at Powell Butte will be transferred to Klamath Falls. Corvallis will continue to produce the initial tubers from true seed that supplies the rest of the program but possibly at a reduced level from previous years. A small amount of work on some specific projects will also be done in Malheur.

The **merger of the Dept of Crop and Soils and the Department of Horticulture** into a new 'school', larger than many OSU Colleges, was discussed. The hope is for there to be some positive synergies in this merger. Both departments have strong ties to the County Extension programs and Research Stations and already cooperate on many classes.

OSCS/Seed Service: Dennis Lundeen thanked all for their participation in the meeting and for their ongoing support of Seed Certification in Oregon. He referred the group to the insert in the packets. Overall acreage is down, but some crops like Annual and Perennial Ryegrass have seen large increases. Dennis outlined several new projects started in 2010, like the Early Tagging Program for OECD Annual Ryegrass, and continued acceptance of on-line signup for most crops. A special project at the OSU Seed lab may be able to reduce the time need to complete testing on ARG varieties by 7 days (from 14). Dennis also noted OSCS is looking into a fee increase for 2011 or 2012, which would be the first fee increase since 2003. Plaques of appreciation for service rendered were given to Greg Harris, Phil Rathbun, and Brian Charlton.

F. OTHER BUSINESS – none

G. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Greg Harris was unanimously elected as vice chair for 2011 (I/II - Phil H./Rob L) and Scott Cheyne was unanimously confirmed as chair for 2011 (I/II – Ed Macy/?).

H. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM

Submitted 2-4-2011 by Jeff McMorran

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**These minutes will also available at: <http://seedcert.oregonstate.edu/potatoes>**