

Potato Certification Advisory Committee Meeting

January 24, 2012, Kennewick, Washington

MINUTES

Voting members present: Lon E Baley, Jim Carlson, Brian Charlton, Scott Cheyne, Philip Hamm, Greg Harris, Rob Lane, Mike Macy, Richard Macy (representing Ed Macy), George Rajnus Jr, Ed Stastny Jr.,

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

Members absent: Jim Cramer, Dan Curry, Dennis Lundeen, Ed Macy (represented by Richard Macy), Phil Rathbun

Guests present: Terry Burr, Bill Brewer, Jeanne Debons, James Macy, Iraj Motazedian, Dan Walchli, Solomon Yilma

- A. Welcome and Introductions:** Meeting commenced at 10:10 AM with a welcome by chair Scott Cheyne. Introductions were made. All present were asked to sign the signup sheet and verify accuracy of contact information. Jeff pointed out that he had adjusted the 'Voting Members' terms so that all were current for this meeting, but several would have terms expiring at the end of today's meeting so replacements or re-affirmations are needed for next year.
- B. 2011 Minutes:** The minutes for the 2011 meeting were included in the packets and had been emailed to members in advance. No changes were recommended. A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Hamm/Lane) to approve the 2011 minutes without changes or additions, unanimously **passed**.
- C. Proposals Requiring Committee Action:** None had been brought forth prior to the meeting and none were brought forth during this meeting. Thus there will be no 'action items' to present to the Certification Board this year.

D. ISSUES and UPDATES FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION

Review of Appeals Granted in 2012

Jeff reviewed the two formal appeals made in 2011, both of which were approved (see meeting packet). He noted that the largest issue faced in 2011 was receiving application for lots for which no Winter Grow-out had been done, or in some cases no evidence that a Post Harvest Test of any kind. In special cases, lots for which the PHT consist of only an ELISA can be accepted, but not for lots of which no PHT was conducted. Special cases are only allowed for a single year however, not repeated purchases from the same source. Phil Hamm asked if the lots accepted without a PHT (such as discussed in the appeals) were found to be acceptable in the field later on. Jeff answered that he couldn't discuss individual lots, but such the experiences (in general) have shown the value of post harvest test, especially for mosaic.

E. OTHER UPDATES:

Review of Items Discussed at the National Certification Meetings – highlights of the items discussed at the national PAA/NPC Certification Sections meetings held in San Antonio in December 2011, and Orlando in January 2012, were reviewed by Jeff McMorran & Jim Carlson

with comments added by others present where appropriate. Minutes of all three meetings are available and have been summarized separately (see 'Attachment A').

Winter Grow-Out Report – Terry Burr reviewed the results of the 2011-2012 WGO with the aid of a table showing number of lots by mosaic % for 2012. A total of 119 samples were received, versus 108 last year. Much of the increase was due to lots being evaluated solely to make them eligible for recertification in Oregon, mostly from Canada. As of 1/19/12 there were still 32 lots yet to complete. Jim Carlson asked why so many lots were still unfinished, was it a lack of space? Terry answered all lots were planted as they 'peeped' and the lateness of many of the lots is due to them being received in December. Testing went well with no major problems, generally mosaic levels were lower than previous years, and some scattered chemical symptoms present. Jeff noted that the rule adopted in 2011, that set the requirement for all lots between 1 and 20 acres to have a sample size of 420 tubers was not widely adhered to for the lots between 1 and 10 acres. In many cases it appeared that the growers had followed the old rule of 220 tubers plus 20 tubers per acre for these size lots. Terry noted that of the 42 lots that were less than 10 acres, only 12 had 400 tubers to evaluate. The 'error' was not caught until fairly well into the WGO process, so OSCS decided to simply accept these lots as submitted, but will not be able to do so in 2012. Richard Macy asked if we really felt it was necessary for a small lot, say of only 2 acres, to submit a 420-tuber sample. Jeff replied that the reason for the 420 tuber sample was basically 2 fold, (1) to allow Oregon to meet the national norms for WGO lot size, and (2) because studies have shown that the margin of error for samples less than 400 tubers is unacceptably high relative to the tolerance required for G1-G4 seed. He also pointed out that smaller sample size greatly increases the impact of finding a single mosaic plant in a sample.

ODA Update: No one was present from ODA to present a report.

Oregon Potato Variety Development Project Review: Solomon Yilma referred to a report that had been handed out earlier at the Growers Meeting, commenting on several of the varieties listed. Jeanne Debons noted that several of the new PVMI lines or varieties were produced and certified this year in Klamath Falls and are available for seed growers interested in certified Nuclear class seed. These are listed on the back of the handout. The Klamath increase is a new program implemented to assure certified seed of the new PVMI varieties is available. Expansion of this program in Klamath will require augmenting the current facilities in Klamath and finding suitable land for production. The replacement of the OSU Foundation Project minitubers with the Idaho source seems to be going well, the minitubers being produced, and now available from the University of Idaho lab, are also listed on the last page of the handout. Solomon is currently working on the PVP for several of the new PVMI soon-to-be-released varieties.

Russ Karow then asked for input on how to promote new releases, especially of fresh market varieties. A lengthy discussion followed, which has been summarized separately (see 'Attachment B').

OSU and Crops Science: Russ Karow referred to a CSS update included in packets. He noted that the College of Ag budget is in a state of flux and is uncertain at this time, but in dire straits due to budget cutbacks that could total up to 21% of previous funding levels. On the bright side, student enrolment is up 5,000 students (to 25,000) which results in a well funded teaching options for OSU. New hires at OSU will have stronger teaching components as part of their support FTE. On

the potato side, only 2 of the 6 vacant positions will be filled, one at HAREC (which will be to head up the Oregon Potato Variety Development Project) and one in Malheur (Field Cropping Systems for all crops, with an emphasis on completing Special Local Needs Labels for needed pesticides). Interview for the position at HAREC are complete and the search committee will decide shortly whether to proceed with the candidate. Interviews for the position in Malheur will be Feb 13 & 14th. Malheur growers are hoping to create a special taxing district to assist this position with research funding.

OSCS/Seed Service: Dennis Lundeen was absent but Jeff referred those present to the handout in the packet, noting that most of the update referred to items related to the grass seed part of OSCS, which makes up the bulk of our program. Overall acreage had increased this year, with the bulk of that increase being in certified Annual Ryegrass. OSCS is moving towards a system where growers will deal more directly with the OSCS office and may bi-pass the county offices if desired.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

Zebra Chip: Jim Carlson asked how Seed Certification is handling Zebra Chip, which has had such a major impact on commercial production in the Columbia Basin this year. Jeff answered that there are no tolerances for Zebra Chip in the Standards so a confirmed find of Zebra Chip in a seed lot would be noted in the remarks section, but not scored. Zebra chip is not listed in the Potato Standards because: (1) It's a new disease for the PNW, and (2) It is not believed to be seed-borne. Phil Hamm noted that there was a difference of opinion on the second point. Though most observations and studies confirm that tubers from infected plants either fail to germinate or produce weak plants that are usually free of *Liberibacter* pathogen (making it a self-limiting disease), they have found young plants in the seed lot trials that tested positive for this pathogen. He said studies are continuing to assess the importance of seed lots as a source of inoculum. Jim Carlson felt it would be better to recognize that seed is not the issue, and to concentrate research efforts on commercial fields. Phil Hamm replied that seed is generally the initial focus of new potato diseases because it is a vegetatively propagated crop. Jeff noted that the PAA Certification Section will be asking that a 'position paper' be published showing that seed is not a significant source of inoculum for this disease; something that could be used to convince our trading partners that seed from the western states is safe, despite Zebra Chip occurring in our commercial areas. There was also some discussion about the overwintering of the Potato-tomato Psyllid in the Columbia basin. It appears they can overwinter here (despite earlier beliefs) but it is not known if the overwintering psyllid are infective. It is also not known why overwintering psyllid take so long to buildup during the summer months. New pheromone traps might help with this study.

G. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A **motion**, made and seconded (R.Macy/Lane) that the terms of the current chair and vice chair (Cheyne, Harris) be extended another year, **unanimously passed**.

H. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 PM

Submitted 2-1-12 by Jeff McMorran

('Attachment A & 'Attachment B', to follow at a later date).

Potato Certification Advisory Committee Meeting 1-24-12

Attachment A - Review of Items Discussed at the National Certification Meetings¹*1

Some of the topic discussed at the 3 national meetings included the following

NAPPO (North American Plant Protection Organization see <http://www.nappo.org/en/>)

- **Sprout inhibitors:** Discussion on use and effectiveness of sprout inhibitors to keep ‘commercial’ potatoes shipped to Mexico from being used as seed. Potatoes imports are limited to the 25 km northern border region and intended only for processing. Mexico maintains that up to 10% of these ‘commercial’ potatoes end up used as seed anyway, a threat to the health of their potato crops.
- **PVY:** Protocols used for the detection of PVY strains
- **Pest list harmonization: (1)** Appendix vs. Annex of diseases mentioned (seems to make a difference). **(2)** Mediation on diseases/pest listed, Mexico has a vast list used to exclude imports. US came back with a list of 30, mediation resulted in list of 6 pests of importance: *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sedonicus*, *Epitrix tuberis*, *Melodogyne chitwoodi*, *Ditylenchus destructor*, *Globodera rostochiensis*, and *G. pallida*. US pushing for ‘clearance to import’ based on testing; Mexico is pushing a ‘pest-free area’ approach.
- **Ralstonia sp.:** Mexico continues to find *Ralstonia* sp (Bacterial wilt) on potato shipments. This blocks shipments into Mexico. They evidently have very good, state-of-the-art labs so this seems to be a real concern (vs. just a embargo via disease).
- **Meetings:** NAPPO wants to have a PVY strain meeting and a Zebra Chip Seminar.

National PVY Survey & Specialty Crop Grant

- National results presented, involvement of seed certification agencies in this effort critical (winter grow-out samples submitted). Results available at www.potatovirus.com .
- Work being carried out on variety-strain interactions. Pictures of symptoms in leaves & tubers posted. Some varieties like Yukon Gold always had tuber symptoms. Ranger Russet was susceptible to tuber necrosis when infected with the PVYn:o strain which is generally symptomless in tubers of other varieties. Thus knowing the type PVY strain in a seed lot is very important.
- PVY tuber symptoms tended to increase in storage, especially as storage temperatures were increased.

Othello Seed Lot Trial

- Overall less PVY being found in seed lots. It is believed that the switch to PVY testing (in Idaho) has resulted in fewer lots being rejected for excessive PVY (better flush out system now in place).
- Relative merits of PHT using ELISA vs. visual for mosaic/PVY detection discussed.

MOU / SNHP

- Should be ‘in effect’ by March. List of states participating, or in progress of approval, was given.
- The role of **Disease Management Plans** in the MOU discussed (static vs. flexible). APHIS feels that the plans can be modified as needed, the fact that they appear in the MOU’s appendix means states must follow modified versions, many Seed Certification agencies disagreed with this feeling that any significant change to a Management Plan changed the MOU and must be approved by the states. It

¹ Minutes of the meetings mentioned are available upon request (PAA/NPC Certification Section Meetings, San Antonio, TX 11-30/12-1, 2011)

was noted the number of 'appendix' items has increased over the years, sometimes *after* a state had signed the MOU.

- **National Seed Export Tag** was discussed. It would signify that requirements of the SNHP had been met and the seed was up to US Export grade. States would still use their domestic tags for US shipments. Blue vs. white tag color was discussed, in the OECD scheme blue is the lowest class, white is used for 'registered class' level seed stock, and white with a purple slash used for the highest class.

Potato Cyst Nematode

- **Samples:** Many samples taken, very few new + finds (all associated with previous finds). Overall in the US 18 states sampled with 18,000 soil samples, 12 fields confirmed + for PCN (1,467 acres). Canada has taken 54,211 samples (38,000 analyzed) or 70% of the seed acreage.
- Reregulation Areas: Based on the survey results, some areas of Canada and US are being taken out of quarantine areas, including areas of New York that have been under quarantine for over 50 years.
- **Tare Dirt:** Use of tare dirt vs. soil samples discussed. Many present (certification and growers) felt tare dirt should be used for survey purposes again due to the widespread negative test results and limited funds; APHIS disagreed, citing the scientific panel that recommended soil samples as being the best (most accurate) method of detection. APHIS has been paying for this sampling but no longer has the funds. The testing needs to be more economically sustainable and tare dirt samples may offer this possibility.
- **Export Issue:** Currently PCN is an only an Export issue, not an agronomic/disease issue. Disease caused by PCN (yield loss or tuber symptoms) has not been found in the US outside Long Island. Though PCN can cause disease in potato crops, under the current rotations used in most states (3 years out of potatoes) this is not likely.
- **Cost burden:** Seed growers may end up bearing the bulk of the cost of future testing (if APHIS no longer funds the program). This was felt to be unfair by the seed growers present because the testing benefits the entire potato industry in allowing for continued international trade in commercial 'ware' potatoes. John Keeling felt there was federal money for testing available but it would have to be lobbied for. Group voted to ask the NPC to: (1) push for a more risk-based model of sampling & testing, and (2) To urge APHIS to find funding for future PCN sampling.

UNECE

- **Cut Seed:** Discussion on grades used for international export. Currently UNEEC does not allow cut seed (count it as a defect) but moves are about to change this if tubers healed.
- **Meetings:** Future meetings of UNECE announced. Willem Schrage will represent the US. Will turn over the role of US rep to Rob Davidson upon retirement.

Zebra Chip

- **Publication needed:** Not a seed-borne issue but a published position paper needed to help demonstrate this 'fact' to our trading partners. Rob Davidson agreed to head up this effort.

Meeting location/timing

- John Keeling (again) urged the group to meet in conjunction with the Potato Expo in January, and representatives from several of the key seed producing states (Idaho, Wisconsin, N. Dakota, Montana) said this was just not possible due to the need to read their Winter Grow-out plots at this time.