

Potato Certification Advisory Committee Meeting

January 28, 2014, Kennewick, Washington

MINUTES

Voting members present: Lon E Baley, Jim Carlson, Scott Cheyne, Philip Hamm, Greg Harris, Rob Lane, Mike Macy, George Rajnus Jr, Phil Rathbun, Ed Stastny Jr., Sagar Vidyasagar.

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

Members absent: Brian Charlton (represented by Nichole Baley), Ed Macy (represented by Richard Macy), Jim Cramer (represented by Nancy Osterbauer), Dan Curry, (represented by Dennis Lundeen).

Guests present: Andy Autisitn, Mary Beuthin, Jake Blauer, Terry Burr, Bill Brewer, Larry Davidson, Scott Fenters, Reagan Grabner, Oscar Gutbrod, Daniel Jepson, Mike Kirsch, Michele Krucker James Macy, Mike Peck, Darrin Walenta, Solomon Yilma.

A. Welcome and Introductions: Meeting commenced at 10:05 AM with a welcome by chair Greg Harris. Introductions were made. All present were asked to sign the sign-up sheet and verify accuracy of contact information. Meeting was recorded and is available upon request (*note VR boxes on right margin = minutes into voice recording*).

B. 2013 Minutes: The minutes for the 2013 meeting were included in the packets and had been emailed to members in advance. No changes were recommended. A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Lane/Hamm) to approve the 2013 minutes without changes or additions, unanimously **passed**.

D. Program Updates: Program updates were made by Oregon Department of Agriculture (Nancy Osterbauer), OSU - Crop Science & Seed Services Reports (Russ Karow), and Oregon Seed Certification Service/Seed Services (Dennis Lundeen). The Karow and Lundeen presentations pretty much followed the reports included in the Meeting Packets (or distributed).

Nancy Osterbauer noted that the **State National Seed Potato Harmonization Program** (aka "SNHP" or "MOU"), originally signed in 2007, had come up for renewal and this had been accomplished. As part of this process audits of 10% of both seed growers and commercial growers were conducted as per the MOU for compliance with the provisions of the program (mostly that all seed planted was certified and seed from out-of-state was inspected for the symptomatic presence of tuber necrotizing viruses). To date compliance by seed growers has been fair but compliance by commercial growers has been poor. Nancy asked if growers wanted to continue to be part of the SNHP. Not being part of the SNHP could have the effect of not allowing any out-of-state shipments of seed because participating states may not be able to recognize the seed as 'officially' certified by a participating state. Though the grower audit is a relatively small part of the MOU, poor compliance may mean the ODA must back out of the program. Discussion continued on ways this audit could be more effective, including having seed growers allow ODA to receive needed compliance documents directly from OSCS, and how to get more compliance from commercial growers. Part of the problem is that commercial growers were not involved in the MOU process and may not see the reason to turn over records to ODA for 'another audit'. Bill Brewer felt that most commercial growers are likely in compliance. More outreach to commercial growers is needed. Bill Brewer offered to make this part of his message at the OR/WA Meeting. It was also pointed out there were some misconceptions/concerns about the audit being overreaching, such as allowing ODA to do field visits whenever they wanted or to ask for information not actually needed. ODA needed to be very clear as to what the audit was for, and precisely what types of records are needed.

D. Review Of National Certification Meetings: This discussion was lead by Jeff McMorran with comments as needed by Bill Brewer and Mike Macy. It pretty much followed the bulleted items included in the packets with little additional group discussion. It included the following: VR=33 min

1. Canadian Seed Potato Quality Management Program (D-06-04) *: (see supplement in the Meeting Packet). Bill Brewer announced that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has suspended the SPTQMP for one year, meaning that all potato seed for recertification will be inspected by CFIA officials at shipping point. There was concern that this program, which involves grower inspected and graded loads, is still to be practiced for *commercial* lots, leaving open the possibility of material with serious disease/nematode issues from being shipped into the US from Canada.
2. Bacterial Ring Rot Testing (see handout included in meeting packet). This issue had been discussed extensively in the previous growers meeting so discussion here was limited for the most part to issues directly related to seed certification. Bill Brewer summarized the situation in Baker Valley this year and the large cost to commercial growers there. No change in OSCS Standards in regards to testing of tubers was suggested and this will be left to buyer-seller agreements. It was asked if BRR testing done at official labs could be included in OSCS Final Reports; Answer; Yes but the statement would clearly indicate that the sample was grower-drawn, note the number of tubers sampled, and list the testing lab involved. An official document from the testing lab would be needed (letter/email/fax). A list of 'approved' testing labs in the western US had previously been emailed to the seed growers. The very large tuber sample numbers required were discussed (4,400). The reason for this large of a sample were summarized (essentially 0 tolerance with a very low margin of error). The suggestion by the PAA/NPC BRR task force that growers be allowed to conduct stem samples in advance of harvest was discussed, however it was noted that the BRR testing requirement was a processor driven requirement (not seed certification) thus the processors would also have to buy into the idea of stem sampling for it to be accepted in lieu of tubers.
3. Necrotic Virus Management Plan: The newly revised/proposed plan was made available. This version does away with the G2 testing requirement (which no state still requires) and will still allow inspection for symptoms of necrosing viruses (PVYntn, PMTV, TRV, and AMV) at shipping point but not require grade inspections (aka Shipping Point Inspections). Question: Is the detection of these 'necrosing viruses' based solely on symptoms or by lab testing; Answer: Symptoms, though any samples showing internal symptoms are then confirmed with lab testing as to type of virus causing the symptoms (based on two 200-tubers samples). ODA is responsible for this inspection and any follow-up testing. Please see the newly revised plan for specific information. APHIS is soliciting comment on this plan before approaching the Canadians. At this point the plan is to be considered a unilateral plan (US only) to act as an effective tool in managing the spread of these virus rather than as an implement to avoid quarantine requirements.
4. WGO vs. Virus testing (visual vs. lab): Jeff warned that the trend nationally has been towards more lab testing of WGO material, mostly due to the difficulty of picking out the 'new' strains of PVY in some varieties. Currently Idaho and Washington require PVY testing of all material for recertification. Other states may follow suit. Under the current WGO practices sampling all lots for PVY would be difficult because the plants within a lot emerge at different times but must be 'read' before they are too large (which involves removing the healthy plants). No change to OSCS testing requirements or practices was suggested.

5. PCN testing options (supplemental material included in the meeting packet): Option 2, allowing for a respite from Potato Cyst Nematode testing after three consecutive negative tests, was the favored option. Under this system, for example, if a field was tested 3 times in a three year rotation scheme, and no nematodes were found, it would not have to be retested for three more potato production cycles (9 years). Nancy O. noted that this is the accepted practice in regards to issuing phytosanitary certificates. The time length is relative to the crop rotation thereafter.
6. Shipping Point Inspections (revisited) – Oregon is currently OK with our not requiring SPI of out-of-state seed as long as seed is inspected as directed in the MOU, however there is constant pressure from other states to change this so US can require the same for Canadian shipments. VR=50 min
7. Zebra Chip: Was found in one Oregon seed lot this year. Still not an actual disease issue in seed, but a real issue in regards to export of seed. Trading partners are asking how US can assure their potato shipments are free of this disease if we don't test for it (routinely). Bill Brewer also commented that the real trade related issue is the redirection of potatoes imported for processing but ending up being used as seed potatoes. Additional published reports of how Zebra Chip is not a seed-borne issue (under normal commercial conditions) would be helpful.
8. Sale of 'back yard' potatoes: This was an issue in Montana where back yard potatoes are a real threat to their industry as a potential source of PVY. How do states tell if seed sold in nurseries or by mail order is actually certified, or to assure that certified seed is low virus content was their concern. Montana has published a potatoes buyers' guide for backyard growers (similar to one used by seed/commercial growers to select seed potatoes). Giving away clean seed potatoes to the local backyard growers is also an option (except perhaps for specialty potatoes).

E. Proposals Requiring Committee Action:

VR=60 min

1. **New Early Generation Line Selection Program (EGLSP)**: Extensive amount of material was included in the meeting packets on this program which allows for field-grown lines, selected from disease-tested tissue culture stock of multiple genetic lines from a single mother plant, to be entered into the certification program as Nuclear Class stock (FY1). The overall reasons this program is needed are (1) to allow for a seed grower to cooperate in such a program without jeopardizing the certified status of their other lots; (2) meet the provisions of the Certified Seed law in regards to planting of potato material on the farm; (3) to allow for the eventual certification of disease-tested tissue culture material, of multiple genetic sources, as long as this material was tested and handled in a manner equivalent to 'standard' Nuclear Class material.

Though this program was developed based on a request from Simplot to allow for field-based selection of their Innate material (see <http://www.simplotplantsciences.com/>), it could be used in any program where multiple lines from one mother plant were being evaluated for selection purposes. The program is not directly related to the introduction of GMO type material into Oregon, or allowing for the certification of GMO material in the OSCS program. Discussion on the pros and cons of GMO potato production in Oregon were largely discussed in the earlier Growers' meeting.

Question: How is this different from the current pre-nuclear to nuclear production scheme?

Answer: The 'lots' would be comprised of multiple genotypes. For example one 'lot' may consist of 100 lines of which, say 5 or 10 would be selected for production of G1 material the subsequent year. Currently all material in a potato lot is genetically identical. The certifying agency in the source state (Idaho) is required to be involved in inspecting the lab and GH to be sure they meet the expectations of regularly certified pre-nuclear lots, however it is not required that official tags would be issued.

Question: Isn't this just the same a certifying breeder material, why is certification needed?

Not really, breeder lines are genetically diverse, this material would be almost identical genetically simply varying plasmid placement in the genome and all from the same 'mother plant'. The plants should be true to type (i.e. resemble the mother plant and meet the basic variety description for the mother plant). The reason for involving OSCS in these plots is avoid the seed grower from jeopardizing the certification status of this other lots on the farm, and in some cases, help comply with local 'Seed Control Districts' and the States Certified Seed Only law.

Question: What would keep any grower from putting all their nuclear lots into one lot in this program?

Answer: Under this program all the components of a 'lot' would have to come from the same mother plant.

Question: Is this program designed primarily to save the grower the cost of certifying all the lines individually?

Answer: Certainly the cost of certifying the hundreds or thousands of individual 'events' that may comprise a single lot may be cost prohibitive at \$60/lot (minimum fee). However, it would also not be possible for OSCS to process the thousands of individual variety acceptance forms, individual lot applications, and reports, under the current system. Most of individual 'events' (or clones) may be only 10-20 plants.

Question: Would these lots appear in the Directory? Answer: Probably not because they would not actually be considered 'certified' but only *eligible* for G1 production (in Oregon) the following year. They would be classed "N-ELSP". Also the Directory list lots by variety so not sure just where these would fit in. Jake (Simplot rep.) noted that, in the case of their program, this material is only experimental and even the 2nd year material will not be carried forward for sale or further production. They could place this material on a separate experimental farm, but wanted to work with seed growers to get fair evaluations of the material under normal agronomic conditions.

Additional comments: Though this program is not directly linked to the production of GMO potatoes in Oregon, concern was raised about this issue. Some felt this program would help 'open the door' for GMO production in Oregon, however it was pointed out by Jake that this type of material is already being evaluated with commercial growers in several states including Oregon. He also mentioned that permits for domestic commercial production are in process as well as those for importation into Canada, Korea, and Japan. Several growers voiced concern about the effect that any GMO potato production in Oregon could have on ability to sell seed to those concerned about the GMO/non-GMO status, one grower saying he is already being asked about this. The opinion was expressed that, though individual growers should have the choice of whether to accept GMO material or not on their farm, the decision of one grower in this regards can have an impact on all the growers in a region or even the whole state.

A **motion**, duly made and seconded (Hamm/Lane), to approve the EGLSP program as trial program for one year, **passed** with 6 votes for and one vote against. The name of the program was changed to “**Experimental Line Selection Program**” to emphasize that this program deals exclusively with ‘experimental’ material that is not actually considered ‘certified’ in regards to tagging and final reports but would be eligible for use (in Oregon) as Nuclear planting stock for G1 fields.

{ post meeting note: It has since been learned that the Simplot material coming into Oregon from Idaho will be tagged as Pre-Nuclear, with variety names on tags reflecting the variety of the mother plants (i.e. Ranger Russet, Russet Burbank, etc). As such, the genetic diversity of this material would likely be no greater than other open pollinated crops OSCS currently certifies as a ‘variety’. Thus, upon further clarification, OSCS is considering if material in this program may be eligible for our conventional Nuclear-class status (i.e. Certified as Nuclear) with a “-ELSP” subclass for clarity.}

VR=1:54

2. **Isolation requirements for Early Generation Seed:** Information presented in the meeting packet was discussed in regards to the: (1) the vagueness of ‘*an approved location*’ for Nuclear and G1 class seed; and (2) whether close proximity to material from the Oregon Variety Program constitutes an exception to the “*300 feet from fields planted with seed higher than certified G4 class*” rule (being non-certified).

Due to time constraints, vagueness of ‘*an approved location*’ could not be discussed and a committee consisting of Jeff McMorrان, Phil Hamm and Rob Lane (?) will develop more precise guidelines for what constitutes ‘an approved location’ and report back to the Advisory Committee next year. In the meantime, the “*300 feet from fields planted with seed higher than certified G4 class*” provision for G2/G3 will also be applied to Nuclear and G1 class seed lots.

The group felt that the material in the Oregon Variety Development Project did constitute a significant risk to Nuclear and G1 class material and should not be exempt from the 300 foot rule. A **motion** to this effect was made (Carlson/Lane) and was **unanimously approved**. No changes to the Standards are required, however this motion reaffirms and clarifies the requirement for OSCS should the situation arise again in further years.

VR=2.02

3. **Seed Directory: What lots to include (withdrawn, OUO):** The purpose and use of the Oregon Seed Growers Directory was discussed with emphasis on the appropriateness of including Own Use Only lots (that cannot be sold) and lots that are withdrawn. The group felt it was important that these lots continue to be included in the Directory to prevent a grower from hiding a find of Bacterial Ring rot in a lot by simply withdrawing the lot or declaring it OUO.

During the discussion it was pointed out that the current wording of the Standards is a bit unclear in regards to listing of lots withdrawn prior to second inspection but for which BRR has been detected in the required 2nd inspection. Part V Pg. 9 says “*Lots withdrawn prior to completion of field inspection portion of the OSCS program are not included*” however in reference to BRR Part VII-A #5 (Pg. 14) says “*Fields withdrawn after a 1st inspection but prior to 2nd inspection (and not destroyed) must be inspected for BRR where conditions allow (even if grower’s own seed)*” furthermore Part V Page 9 also says the Directory will “*show the results of the field inspections, including bacterial ring rot*”. The group felt the intent of requiring a BRR inspection on all lots withdrawn prior to the 2nd inspection was to report any finds of BRR in these lots in the Directory (no vote taken, no objection raised however). There was some concern that lots withdrawn for reason *other* than BRR (i.e. chemical

damage, variety issues, etc.) might be construed to have been withdrawn because of BRR, however Jeff noted that he does include the reason lots are withdrawn (if known and verifiable) using a *# that refers to a note at the end of the lots table. The text of Part V Pg 9 will be amended as follows (bold underline text added):

Part IV. PUBLISHING DIRECTORY OF CERTIFIED SEED POTATO GROWERS (page 9)

Seed Potato Growers Lists will be published annually after final field inspection. The report will show the results of the field inspections, including bacterial ring rot. The Directory will include all lots that have completed the field inspection portion of the OSCS program (including the “Do Not Publish” varieties with variety names blacked out). Lots withdrawn prior to completion of field inspection portion of the OSCS program are not included **unless Bacterial Ring Rot found during the required inspection for BRR.** Fields that normally would be required to have a Winter Test, but final approval cannot be made at last inspection, will have a ‘*pending*’ under classification which means the seed lot is held for Winter Test, or other tests were not completed at the time of publication.

F. **OTHER BUSINESS** – Due to time constraints the items listed under “**OSCS ISSUES & UPDATES FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION**” could not be discussed. Jeff advised those present to simply read through the meeting packets for this information, and he will do a supplemental mailing of any additions. Any items on this list that would merit further group discussion will be included on next year’s agenda.

G. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Reagan Grabner of CSS Farms (to be a new grower in the Ione area) agreed to serve as vice chair. **A motion** (Lane/Carlson), to nominate Reagan Grabner to fill the vice chair position, **unanimously passed.**

{Post-meeting note: Reagan Grabner is not currently a member of the PCAC, but Phil Rathburn agreed to turn over his position to him so he could qualify as vice chair}.

H. **ADJOURN** - Meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM

Submitted 2-12-14 by Jeff McMorran



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