

April 8, 2016

Compiled by CPAC Staff- (719) 852-3322 FAX 852-4684

Web Page: www.coloradopotato.org Email: jehrlich@coloradopotato.org

NEXT CPAC MEETING

The next meeting of the CPAC (area II) will be held April 21st, at **7:30pm**, in the CPAC office conference room.

CPAC IS RECRUITING AT-LARGE VOLUNTEERS

If you want to help contact the CPAC office. Sub-committees include marketing, research, industry & community, education, and governmental affairs.

LATE BLIGHT QUARANTINE

All potato seed being imported into the San Luis valley is subject to the requirements of the quarantine. The quarantine rules can be viewed on our website at www.coloradopotato.org. CO Potato News at this link: <https://www.coloradopotato.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Late-Blight-Quarantine-8-CCR-1203-13-eff-Jan-2014-w-SBP.pdf>

The quarantine also covers handling of cull potatoes. If you have questions you can contact Mike Singer with CDA at (719) 580-5507.

POLLINATOR HEALTH - IMIDACLOPRID COMMENTS TO EPA

The loss of pollinators has been shown by scientific studies to be a complex issue that is caused by a host of factors- loss of habitat, nutrition, parasites and disease, genetic diversity, pesticide exposure, etc. There are different classes of beekeepers today with many commercial beekeepers providing pollination services. They tend to be semi-nomadic, often trucking their hives long distances to service clients' crops during peak bloom periods. Several common migration routes include a stop in California to pollinate the almonds in early spring, between February and March. An estimated 60 to 75 percent of all U.S. commercial hives are employed for California's almond bloom, and apiarists bring hives from as far away as Florida and Texas. It is big business and very important to agricultural production for many crops.

Last June an interagency task force of the EPA and USDA was created to develop a strategy to promote the health of honey bees and other pollinators. Three goals were identified:

- Reduce honey bee colony losses to economically sustainable levels;
- Increase monarch butterfly numbers to protect the annual migration;
- Restore or enhance millions of acres of land for pollinators through combined public and private action.

The action plan was to provide money for more bee habitat, and more research into protecting bees from disease and pesticides. The E.P.A. was also charged with re-evaluating the class of insecticides known as neonicotinoids.

Neonics have become among the most widely used insecticides in the world with imidacloprid being the most popular neonic. Imidacloprid is efficacious at very low levels (nanogram and pictogram) and less toxic to mammals. For this reason it can be applied at lower concentrations than other insecticides. This favorable toxicity package, when compared to other insecticides, allowed the EPA to replace more toxic insecticides including some organophosphate compounds, and methylcarbamates, which was a big environmental benefit.

The E.P.A. released its preliminary pollinator risk assessment of imidacloprid in January. The findings of the risk assessment found that most uses of imidacloprid pose minimal risk to pollinators, but not for all crops or all uses. The E.P.A. is accepting public comments until April 14th concerning imidacloprid. I would encourage you to submit your comments. The link for providing comments is <https://www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0844>. Please contact Jim if you have questions or need a template to assist you with comments.

SOCIAL MEDIA

March was the Academy of Nutrition and Dietics' National Nutrition Month. To take part in that, much of our social media activity revolved around potato nutrition and all the benefits potatoes provide. March's featured grower was Jones Farms Organics. In addition to being featured on our brand new blog in the "Featured Grower/Shipper" section of our website, they were featured twice throughout the month on all of our social media platforms. If you would like to be featured in this section in future months, please contact Savannah at sschlaufman@coloradopotato.org.

Our featured recipes this month were an elegant mushroom tart with a potato crust and spicy sausage, and potato and kale soup. These were also featured on our blog in the "Recipe Spotlight" section and pushed out to our social media throughout the month. Last month, we gained 34 Facebook likes for our page. 2,888 people were reached on Facebook, which is up 210% from February. We also had 1,076 people engaged with our Facebook posts, which is up 44% from February. On Twitter, we earned 3,988 impressions, gained 11 followers, 10 retweets and 4 likes. If you have not already, please be sure to like our Facebook page and follow us on twitter (@CPAC2), pinterst (copotato), and LinkedIn to keep up to date with all things Colorado potato!

MARKETING

Potatoes USA presented some interesting information at their annual meeting in March 2016. This information came from the U.S. Potato Sales and Utilization study for 2015, results from the 2016 Attitude & Usage study, and U.S. trade statistics through 2015. Some interesting highlights follow:

- Utilization of U.S. grown potatoes showed a very slight decline in 2015 compared to 2014. However, this was caused by a change in the reporting for foodservice use of potato chips. This change, while more accurate, reduced this volume. Actual usage was probably slightly up or at least flat.
- Despite the problems caused by the west coast port slowdown exports were up four percent.
- Imports declined two percent and the positive trade balance in potatoes widened.
- Foodservice sales of potatoes increased, despite a slight decline in frozen. Most of the increase is in fresh usage.
- Retail sales of potatoes declined for all products except fresh cut potatoes. The declines in fresh sales were due to reductions in sales of russets and whites particularly in larger bag sizes.

- Attitudes towards potatoes improved from a taste, usefulness, nutrition and ease of preparation perspective. However, consumers are still stuck in preparation ruts and this limits growth in usage.

This information from Potatoes USA is very encouraging for the fresh market segment. These insights provide opportunity for Colorado potatoes and will be useful going forward.

USDA ANNOUNCES GROUPGAP

GroupGAP is a new food safety certification option designed to help small and mid-sized growers and cooperatives meet retailers' on-farm food safety requirements. This robust certification process addresses certain challenges in complying with food safety audits, and meets the demands of the retail, food service, and institutional buying community. Under Group GAP, farmers can now work together through farm coops or food hubs to obtain certification as an entire group, thereby reducing their individual costs significantly. The GroupGAP Audit Program began on April 4, 2016. To learn more this link: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing/groupgap> and contact Bryan Pauley at the inspection service at 852-4749.

GMO LABELING UPDATE

On March 16th the Senate failed to advance the legislation that would have preempted individual state labeling laws essentially stalling the issue. Several major companies have already decided to voluntarily label their products with GMO ingredients including Campbell's, General Mills, Kellogg's, and Mars. One of the issues around GMO labeling is that food companies will quit using biotech ingredients which would lead to higher consumer food costs. But Kelly Johnston, Campbell's top lobbyist, says Campbell's has no plans to reformulate its products. Johnston said "When 75 percent of your products have one or two GM ingredients, reformulation gets to be real expensive."

Randy Russell, the lead lobbyist for the Coalition for Safe and Affordable Food, which includes the NPC, said "Clearly there is growing pressure for the Senate to find a compromise. ... Thousands of food companies have to make decisions right now with how to comply - with no flexibility, no options, and with absolutely no certainty that other states won't pass laws with different rules, exemptions and exceptions."

While I believe the science is clear that GMO food is safe there are many consumers who do not. Why don't they believe the science? According to the Center for Food Integrity their consumer research indicates that "GMO" has become an icon for what is perceived as an industrialized food system. The concerns expressed are often less about GM technology and more about other issues tied to today's food system. Many consumers believe that our food system is not what it should be and there is a general lack of trust of "Big Ag", whatever that means.

This is why GMO labeling has become a partisan issue in Congress and they are unable or unwilling to find a solution. Looks to me like "Big Ag" is going to do it without them 😊

IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION TO AGRICULTURE

An interesting article on new research to boost photosynthetic efficiency of food crops using genetic engineering. <http://news.aces.illinois.edu/news/one-crop-breeding-cycle-starvation>

CALENDAR

4-21 CPAC meeting 7:30pm
 5-19 CPAC meeting
 6-15 CPAC Golf and Dinner
 7-13/15 NPC Summer Meet UT

MARCH SPUD FACTS

		<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Shipments	480 cwt equivalent	3364	3474	2965	3330	4102
Reds	percentage of crop	5.8	5.8	6.9	3.9	2.9
All Russet Varieties	percentage of crop	76.6	73.9	76.8	82.7	84.7
Yellows	percentage of crop	12.9	15.9	12.2	8.1	8.7
Other Varieties	percentage of crop	4.7	4.5	4.0	5.3	3.8
U.S. No. 1	percentage of crop	53.5	52.6	55.1	58.2	52.0
U.S. No. 2	percentage of crop	9.5	5.9	7.1	7.1	7.9
U.S. Commercial Grade	percentage of crop	18.8	25.0	24.8	20.6	24.1
Seed	percentage of crop	18.2	16.5	6.7	14.0	16.0
Bulk	percentage of crop	48.4	46.9	42.2	41.0	46.1
Total rail shipments		128	146	166	35	27
Total truck shipments (fresh)		2926	3068	2564	3101	3481
Total truck shipments (processing)		310	260	235	194	674
Total shipments for the year to date		20368	19980	19124	21069	22754

Average F.O.B. prices for March (per 50 lb. carton or bale unless noted)

		<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Yellows	5# packages	12.11	10.50	11.56	13.43	13.25
All Russets	U.S. #1size A	5.75	3.94	7.40	4.81	8.52
All Russets	U.S. #2 10# pack	4.58	3.48	6.20	3.56	5.49
Bulk Russets	U.S. Commercial Grade 100 lbs	6.70	6.12	10.50	4.87	10.97