

NEWS FROM THE POTATO LAB



June, 2009

Dan Dyk and Roger Starkel Elected Directors

In the April MPIA elections, Manhattan grower Dan Dyk was elected to serve as Director for District 3C. Dan had the opportunity to contribute to his first board meeting on June 16-17. Roger Starkel from Ronan was re-elected to serve for District 1A. Steve Streich is serving as President and Jack Lake is Vice-President through March, 2010.

Highlights of the June 16-17 Board Meeting

Susie reported PCR method detection is working excellently for PVX and she is beginning to have good results for PVY. Using current methodology, the test would cost ~\$6/sample.

The lab has purchased a new Ford Expedition for the field picking crew. The lab has purchased new ELISA plate washers.

A mini-tuber experiment testing four different media and container types has been started in the plant growth center. Stop by and take a look if you are interested.

The 2009 Seed Seminar will be held at the Red Lion in Helena on November 3-4. Two speakers have been recruited to talk on aphid colonization of weeds and transmission of PVY, and control measures for PVY in seed production. If you have suggestions for speakers, please call Nina at the lab. Larry VanDyke is chairing the seminar committee and will be recruiting help for the sponsorships and the trade show.

On March 30, two members of a Taiwanese seed company visited Montana to explore the possibilities of importing potato seed for resale to their customers. The specific variety they are interested in is Kennebec which is not currently grown in MT. Mark

Bausch and Dennis Day are collaborating to produce some Kennebecs for this market.

The Potato Lab is exploring the capability of building a new single-hopper two-row planter with a Kverneland planting unit for the Hawaii Post-Harvest test. A new planter would be safer for the workers and enable the crew to plant two adjacent rows without having two separate sample bags. Nick Schutter has been helping develop the specifications based on a planter they have built for their farm.

MT Department of Ag representative Larry Krum reported that there will be funds available to sample ~1000 acres for PCN this fall. The department of Ag is also reviewing its rules on frost injury tolerances. The 2008 crop was inspected using a 1% fresh-pack tolerance. Returning to the former 3% tolerance was discussed. Larry will provide a comparison of the National and State Standards for grading seed potatoes at the November Meeting. Andy Grey (Commodity Section Program Manager) presented a proposal to raise shipping point inspection fees from 7.5¢ /cwt to 9.5¢ /cwt. The board asked the Department of Ag for more information and will revisit this topic in November.

MPIA Board Appoints Research Committee

The MPIA board has appointed a committee to assess the research needs of Montana Seed Potato Growers. Research committee members will be tasked with establishing research priorities and evaluating proposals which are submitted to the Montana Potato Research & Market Development Program. The first activity of the Research Committee will be to assess priorities for potato research. The research priorities will then be integrated into the request for proposals that is disseminated by Montana Potato Research and

Market Development Program. Committee members will review research proposals and make recommendations for funding to the Montana Potato Advisory Committee.

Research Committee:

Nominating Director	Research Committee Member
Roger Starkel	Justin Starkel
Jack Lake	Tim Lake
Steve Streich	Jolene Brush
Sid Schutter	Nick Schutter
Dan Dyk	Jack Meyer
John Venhuizen	Nick Venhuizen
Bill Cottom	Steve Cottom

2009 Potato Crop

The 2009 crop is all but planted with most growers either finished or putting in their nuclear seed plot. The spring weather cooperated quite well for most growers and planting was completed with few delays.

At this point, we have 8884 acres registered and we anticipate that total registrations will be very close to last year which totaled 10, 016 acres. At this point it appears that Russet Burbank acreage is steady with a slight decline in standard Russet Norkota and Colorado 3. There is a significant increase in the acreage of the Texas Norkota lines. If you don't have your registration in, please get it in as quickly as possible so that we can get you scheduled for picking and inspection.

2009 Lab Testing and Inspections

All of the pickers, laboratory crew and inspectors have been hired and are ready to go. Leaf picking will begin on June 29 and inspections will begin on July 6. If you have any G3's that need picking, please call Susie so she can get you on the picking schedule. She will be contacting nuclear and G1 growers to confirm picking dates. This year we will be testing all nuclear, G1 and G2 for PVY and PVA. G2 will be tested for PVX in addition to PVY and PVA.

This growing season you can expect to see veteran inspectors Lucy Cooke, Don Bradshaw, Eileen Carpenter, Billie Welty, and Leon Welty, and your new Director, Nina Zidack, come to your farm for inspections. If you have any fields that you would like us to look at earlier than July 6, please give us a

call at the lab. The inspection schedule will be distributed on June 29.

Washington Seed Trials

The Field Day for the Washington Seed Trial is June 26 from 8:30AM to 12:00 noon in Othello, Washington. Nina and Elaine attended the first reading on June 9 and Nina and all of the inspectors will participate in the second reading on June 23. It would be great to see you in WA for the field day so we can best represent MT and your seed.



Elaine Nichols at the first reading of the WA Seed Trial

Micro-tuber orders

While the deadline for micro-tuber orders has already passed, Elaine has indicated that you can still place an order for the 2010 crop year. Please do this as quickly as possible as propagation has already begun.