

President's Report

By Frank Muir

This Newsletter marks the next major step in rolling out our new Industry Relations role. Much has happened since November. Todd Cornelison was hired as Industry Relations Director. Three committees were formed with over 60 volunteers from our industry, which we greatly appreciate. One committee, Research & Education, had already been functioning for years but has been incorporated with the Industry Relations Director's role to facilitate. The other two committees, Ag Affairs and Marketing, have already met a few times and have addressed several key issues. The IPC commissioners have greatly appreciated their input and recommendations. A physical office has now been established in Idaho Falls ("IPC East"); the address and phone number is:

3002 W. Pancheri, Suite D
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
208-559-4792

Todd has been heavily involved in the major issues/changes facing our industry including GAP and Sustainability. He worked closely with Nora Olsen, U of I, to create a new electronic GAP manual. Todd is also playing a key role in developing a Sustainability strategy for not only Idaho but for the entire U.S.

The major purpose of this Newsletter is to keep Idaho growers, shippers and processors informed of industry issues including but not limited to legislative/regulatory issues, PVMI updates, research results, and agricultural best practices. This letter will not focus on advertising, promotion or publicity efforts. Those items will be better addressed in our quarterly Idaho Edge publication.

We will also keep you informed of major decisions made by the IPC commissioners. To that end, we announce that the

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commissioners voted unanimously at the 7/22/08 commission meeting to set the tax rate again at \$0.125 (same as last year). Also, the officers were voted on for next year as follows: Chairman: Shawn Walters; Vice Chairman, Mark Coombs. We express our appreciation to Randy Bauscher who served as chairman this past year and will be ending his second term as a commissioner in August.

In this Newsletter, called the "Idaho Potato Pulse," we will seek to keep our fingers metaphorically on the pulse of the industry and keep you informed of all critical/vital signs. We welcome your input to improve this Newsletter and to make sure we have everyone's email address.

We encourage you to participate in the upcoming annual IGSA Convention in Sun Valley 8/26 through 8/29. The IPC will present its annual marketing plan 8/28 at 7:30 a.m. (includes breakfast). We will also be previewing a new TV commercial featuring Denise Austin which was actually filmed in Idaho.... it is a powerful ad, displaying why Idaho grows the world's best potatoes!

Thank you for your support.

Government Affairs Report

By Pat Kole

Last week we hosted the new National Program Director for the Potato Cyst Nematode Program, Eileen Smith. She will be reporting directly to Osama El Lisy who will remain involved but have less of a direct day to day role in the program. We also welcomed the new USDA APHIS State Plant Health Director, Brian Marschman to Idaho and included him in a tour of potato operations around the State.

We also provided on-site information to two officials from Cuba about Idaho potatoes and, if all went well, Idaho will be permitted to ship both fresh and table stock potatoes to Cuba in the very near future. Potatoes are an important part of the Cuban diet, and remain the last food item that is rationed by the government.

This week, I am attending the US Potato Board Summer meeting in Moses Lake WA. There will be a bit of discussions about the "unannounced audit" language in the GAP agreement and we hope to forge a consensus view with other potato growing regions on how to respond to this issue.

Calendar

July

- 29-Aug 2 USPFB Summer Meeting, Moses Lake, WA
- 30-Aug 2 SpudFest, Driggs, ID

August

- 5 United of Idaho Board Meeting
- 13-14 United of America Board Meeting, SLC, UT
- 25 Potato Grower Magazine Golf Scramble, Idaho Falls Country Club, Idaho Falls, ID
- 26-29 **IGSA Sun Valley Convention**
To register call (208) 529-4400

September

- 10-11 United of America Crop Transition Conf. Pocatello, ID
- 11-13 National Female Press Writers Conference, Idaho Falls, ID
- 14-18 USPFB State / National Workshops, Key Largo, FL

October

- 7-8 Potato Commission Meeting, Eagle, ID
- 11-22 Governor's Trade Mission (Asia)
- 24-27 PMA, Orlando, FL

Industry Relations Report

By Todd Cornelison

USPB Delegates Nominated

I would like to thank everyone who attended the NPC summer meetings in Idaho Falls. I can't express how important it is to have an "Idaho" point of view in these meetings, and I am happy to report that Idaho was very well represented in every meeting I attended. During the week of meetings, we held a USPB delegates nomination meeting. I would like to welcome our six new delegates; Wyatt Penfold, Jared Gehring, Bryan Wada, Brett Jensen, Ryan Cranny and Kevin Searle. I would also like to thank our delegates who are leaving this committee for their time and service; Emma Atchley, Nic Behrend, Gary Hansen, Wayne Jensen, Jann Moss and Alan Taylor. Without people like you, who are willing to give of your time and talents, there would have been many goals that went unachieved; thank you all. I would also like to recognize our incumbents: Kent Bitter, Tom Church, Nick Cummins, Melanie Likes, Ron Lockwood and Shane Webster. Thank you for the work you continue to do.

Changes in Rules Regarding Fumigation

It is anticipated that the EPA will issue new rules regarding the application of soil fumigants by the first of September. We have been warned that the new rules will include a very large buffer zone but the buffer zones can be reduced by implementing certain mitigation methods. No details are available at this time. The Idaho Potato Commission wants to be ready to respond to these new rules by providing data to the EPA on how these new rules will impact our industry. We have prepared a fumigation survey that can be e-mailed, filled out and then sent back to us. To get a copy of the survey, please send a request to t.cornelison@potato.idaho.gov. All comments must be in by Aug 30th for us to have time to put them in comment form and send them back to the EPA. For those of you who would rather send your comments in yourselves, you can do so by going to: <http://www.regulations.gov/search/index.jsp#> and under comment or submission type in "metam sodium," follow the prompts from there to enter your comments. Remember, the potential loss or further regulations of the soil fumigants could have dramatic effects on your future ability to grow potatoes.