



POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA

LES PRODUCTEURS UNIS DE POMMES DE TERRE DU CANADA

Crop Report August 28 2017

Prince Edward Island

July was dry and temperatures were above normal for most areas of PEI. So far this month, rainfall has been close to normal for eastern areas of PEI but still below normal in western areas. Overall most fields are looking relatively good despite the dry season. So far, dry conditions have negatively impacted the yield of early maturing varieties and the yield potential of many varieties in western areas of the province. Hopefully recent and future rains will be enough to achieve an average crop overall. Disease and insect pressures are low. It is still early to make an accurate yield projection but industry officials are leaning toward an average yield of 280cwt./ acre at this time. PEI's average yield last year came in at 290cwt./acre. It is also important to note that PEI growers reduced their acreage by 1,000 this year.

Limited new crop harvest has occurred to date. Quality is good. Limited shipments for tablestock and processing markets have occurred to Atlantic Canada, New England and Puerto Rico. Volume and price year to date are better than last year. Some of the latest seasonal packers have finished old crop this week. NAPMN reports that the Island's largest processor is watching the crop closely and is hoping to find extra potatoes in New Brunswick.

New Brunswick

Potatoes New Brunswick feels their acreage is up 8% over 2016. The additional 4,000 acres will be needed to support processing capacity expansion, which will be coming online. In keeping with tradition, the southern part of the province has been drier than some growers would have liked, however the Grand Falls area has seen timely rains with some producers expecting their best crop ever. Yields at this time are estimated at 300cwt./acre, but could reach last year's 305cwt./acre. The crop will

need the full growing season, something to keep in mind as temperatures lowered to 7 Celsius overnight this week.

Quebec

Québec estimates yields could be around 280 cwt./acre this year, which would be down from last year's 287cwt./acre. That is the five-year average yield, but it is lower than the 2015 record of 301 cwt. per acre. Quebec growers are likely to harvest about 500 acres more potatoes this year than they did in 2016. However, that is not likely to offset the lower yield. They expect growers to product 11.8 million cwt. of potatoes in 2017. That is 114,000 cwt. less than they produced in 2016, a 1.0% decline

Growing conditions have been mixed and variable throughout the season. Crops went in the ground late, and development is about 10 days behind normal. Farmers have let potatoes grow later than usual, in order to allow for bulking, with mixed results. Provincial growing areas are widely scattered, resulting in a great deal of variability for this year's crop.

Growing areas south of Montreal have had good moisture. Reports indicate that tuber counts in that region may be below normal, which has resulted in large tubers. Yields appear to be above average. On the other hand, it has been extremely dry along the St. Lawrence River. Crops in that area are reported to have large tuber counts, but size is an issue. Yields could be down significantly, relative to normal. The small size profile also could create problems for French Fry production, though it might work to the advantage of potato chip manufacturers.

Harvest is progressing and early varieties, particularly round whites are disappearing at a regular pace. Quality has been good so far with the exception of smaller tuber sizes in some areas. The Federation recommended price has been at \$3.25/10lbs. for reds and \$3.75/10lbs. for yellows.

On the processing side, processors are active and demand is good for new crop.

Ontario

Potato fields observed in Ontario last week looked very green with good yield potential compared to a year ago when they experienced a severe drought. Growers harvesting early spuds for processing chips are happy with yields and quality. A similar story for fresh growers – there will be lots of product to get moved off field for those without storage. Yields at this time are estimated to average 230 cwt./acre. Last year's dry growing season yielded only 190cwt./acre. Conversations with some growers, however, indicated a potential 400+ hundredweight crop. The big unknown is storability of the crop. Some acres south of Alliston have been drowned out due to excessive rainfall and other fields in that area are now experiencing water soak issues. Late blight control has been a challenge as well. Temperatures in parts of Ontario lowered to 2 degrees last night.

Manitoba

Yield could match or break last year's record-breaking 350cwt./acre. The fresh area is not fully irrigated and could see potential decreases but higher yielding fresh varieties continue to be used, particularly yellow varieties.

Processing

The fully irrigated processing crop looks as promising as last year with a larger set and has potential to out yield last year.

Harvest is just starting with early Ranger yields at 380 cwt./acre. Quality is good with uniform sizing. There could be interest in opens from the state of North Dakota, considering their issues with late blight.

Fresh

Crop looks very similar to last year with the exception that there are fewer "B" size tubers in the profile. Season has been dry but for those who could irrigate, crop looks good. There are no losses due to excessive moisture as seen in the 2016 crop.

Red prices have been good and continue to strengthen out of Big Lake, Minnesota. This is essential for pricing of the Canadian Red crop as we enter the marketing window. Fresh pricing should continue strong as long as growers work together.

Saskatchewan

The growing season as been very dry. Yields are expected to come in at 250cwt./acre. Some irrigation has been mitigated tonnage reduction, but the rainfall pattern has been variable with some growers receiving rainfall

that others did not. Planted acreage was also down this spring. Growers are desiccating the crop and hope to begin harvest in 2 weeks time.

Alberta

Due to the extreme heat that Alberta has experienced over the last 30 days yield will be off somewhat from last year. A number of russet fields have been going down for the last two weeks. Seed areas are also in need of some moisture for harvest, with most already having been top killed. Yields are estimated at 385cwt./acre. Last year was record setting at 388cwt./acre. This year growing conditions have been very dry. The irrigation has been able to keep up for the most part but the plus 35-degree heat for over a month is taking its toll. It has not cooled off enough at night to make a difference. Harvest for early field run has begun, with yields all over the place depending on soil type. Sandy soil is the poorest. Quality has been good so far, although there is some fear of sugar ends in the russet crop. In terms of open buying, processors seem comfortable with contracted amount at this time.

British Columbia

Growing conditions this year dictate that there will be no repeat of last year's bumper yields of 307cwt./acre. Yields are estimated at 285cwt./acre. Reduction is expected to be 10-30% depending on whether growers could irrigate or not. This year's crop lost a month of growing time this spring and has had extremely dry growing conditions ever since (3/8 of an inch of rain since June 1). Thankfully the province's worst forest fire season does not affect potato function. Size profile is a bit small, but with perfect type. Demand currently exceeds supply as indicated by the following prices per 50 pound carton: Whites \$20.70, Kennebec \$21.85, Reds \$26.45, Russet \$25.00, and Yellow \$24.15.

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