



POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA

LES PRODUCTEURS UNIS DE POMMES DE TERRE DU CANADA

Potato Crop Report September 5 2018

Prince Edward Island: The summer has been extremely dry, however the province did experience two significant rain events in August. Unfortunately the area in the extreme western part of PEI received much smaller amounts. Overall some fields are starting to show their age. Tuber set is down and current digs show the crop to be almost 2 weeks behind normal. The crop will need an open fall to size up and another good rain is needed although there is none in the current forecast. Dry soil also seems to have increased issues with off-types, wireworm damage, and scab on susceptible varieties. Last year's yield came in at 284cwt./acre which industry reps feel could be an early estimate for the PEI crop at this time. So much hinges on rainfall in the next couple of weeks and delayed maturity, that the yield estimate is extremely tentative. Limited shipping of new crop is occurring and prices have been holding their own.

New Brunswick: The crop looks decent although some growers have been reporting that the set may be down, probably related to very dry conditions at tuber initiation. In a reverse pattern this year the lower St John River Valley had received better moisture levels than the Grand Falls area. Last year's yield came in at 294cwt./acre – this year's could be less.

Quebec: The potato crop in Quebec has experienced a hot and dry summer. Although some rain has been received in the last couple of days, it has come too late for varieties like Goldrush resulting in a

smaller size profile. Growers with irrigation may be able to achieve an average crop while some non-irrigated regions have now experienced two dry seasons. It is too early to accurately predict yield but for certain there will be no bumper crop. Last year's yield was 306cwt./acre. A best guess at this time could be 285cwt./acre. Large volume buyers seem somewhat nervous as the crop approaches maturity.

Ontario: A hot and dry summer was also par for the course in Ontario. The crop did receive rains recently, but many feel it came to late for heat stressed fields resulting in secondary growth and new stolons. Recent rains and high temperatures also provided growing conditions conducive to late blight. Early fresh crop has been cleaning up in an orderly manner. Early chip harvest is also moving on schedule. Last year's yield in Ontario averaged 225cwt./acre. Yield for this crop could be similar or slightly less.

Manitoba: The province has experienced a very dry, stressful summer with a record number of days over 30 degrees Celsius. The table crop is being harvested now and the Winkler area was fortunate to receive an inch of rain in recent days, which has helped smoothen the harvest process. Growers south of the border in North Dakota were not as fortunate and are being challenged with dry clods in the harvest operations. Excessive temperatures creating heat runners from the tubers have also pressured the processing crop in Manitoba. In addition some reservoirs have run out of water in recent weeks due to excessive water withdrawals. Early harvest has also begun with Rangers going out of field into processing plant lines. Last year's yield was record breaking at 350cwt./acre. This year's harvest appears lighter with a preliminary estimate of 320 cwt./acre as a guess with only limited harvesting done.

Saskatchewan: It has been a dry summer in Saskatchewan with some producers receiving only on quarter inches of natural rain in the last month. The volume of potatoes will be down but size will be excellent for a seed-producing province like Saskatchewan. A killing frost occurred on Tuesday night (September 4th) with low temperatures reaching -2.3 degrees to -5.0 degrees in the valley. Yields last year were 250 cwt./acre. An estimate for this year could be 240cwt./acre.

Alberta: The province has been dry but early harvest on the Chippers and Rangers has been surprisingly good. There appears to be less early dying in the crop this year. The seed crop may be off a bit due to dryness. Frost also occurred on Tuesday night (September 4th) province wide with temperatures down around 0 degrees Celsius. Long season varieties like Burbank's have sat for the last 3 weeks with very little bulking, possibly due to the smoke from various fires burning in Western Canada and the US. Yield at this time is virtually impossible to predict however it could be very similar to last year's 391 cwt./acre.

British Columbia: The crop got an excellent start in May with planting in a timely manner, in comparison to a very late 2017. June was a little damp but then turned very dry. Irrigated fields look good but some non-irrigated fields tend to have a large set of smaller sized potatoes. Smoke from the fires also hampered photosynthesis over several weeks. Given the early maturity of the crop, growers have been harvesting aggressively and keeping stores well supplied with local spuds. This will translate to a crop that will run out earlier on the other end. Current harvest is focussed on yellows, whites, and some russets, with reds ready to start. In terms of yield, this year's crop looks similar to the 2016 crop (of 310cwt./acre) and above the 2017 crop of 285 cwt./acre.

Crop Developments in Other Regions:

Europe: The potato crop in Europe has struggled with hot, dry growing conditions this summer. Latest information shows significant reductions in some of the top producing countries.

Belgium has received recent rainfall but is still too late for much of the crop resulting in some of the lowest yields ever recorded.

Production could be off by 14%.

Germany, a country that grows 437,000 acres is expecting a reduction of 25%.

Netherlands is projecting yields down by 20%.

Great Britain, in addition to reducing planted acres, could be down in production by 16%.

France, the final country in the top 5 of Northwestern Europe is experiencing lower yields as well.

United States:

Big Lake, Minnesota and Wisconsin: Extremely wet conditions and excess rainfall are currently affecting these two major producers of red potatoes. Reduced supply from these key areas in the current marketplace is expected to raise red prices from \$12-\$14 US FOB to \$18-\$22 US FOB as the market reacts to this weather issue.

For more information contact:

Kevin MacIsaac

Kevin@unitedpotatocanada.com

