



POTATO MINUTE



July 2, 2019

Executive Director - Terence Hochstein



A Farmers Creed:
The older I get, the more I understand that it's okay to live a life that others don't necessarily understand.

The longest day of the year has passed us by, with the first six months of 2019 now behind us. With July, comes the summer heat, some occasional showers and the possibility of the 'white combine'. For all crops, the in-field crop management and the next 60 days are critical in determining whether or not there is a crop to harvest and fill the storages come September.

With the early seeded crops getting close to row closure, most growers in the south feel that we are about 7-10 days behind last year, but right on the long term average. All things being equal, July 1st row closure is usually a good indicator of a September 15th storage crop. Our seed growers have indicated that their crops are coming along nicely, with everyone hoping that they continue to receive some timely rains. Some areas have had very little since planting and some are very happy with their moisture situation. Even in the south there are large pockets that have had no precipitation other than what they are putting through the pivot. An inch of rain from Mother Nature goes way further than an inch through a sprinkler system.



PEI and New Brunswick have been able to finish up their planting due to some warmer, drier weather during June. Generally crops on the eastern half of the continent are going to have to hope for an open fall in order to have any sort of harvest. Indications from Manitoba are that they have a good crop coming but it is extremely dry in most of their growing areas. As is the case across North America, most areas feel that they are delayed compared to a normal year but most feel that with adequate weather and some

heat that the crop can make up a lot of ground in a hurry. Even the Columbia Basin being behind in planting by about a month has had almost perfect growing conditions the last 6 weeks and have made most of their delay up.



As I had indicated last month, the UCP government had promised to reach out to the Agricultural community to discuss Bill 6 and come up with a solution that works for everyone. On June 21, over 60 producers and representatives of the Agricultural Boards and Commissions had the opportunity to sit down in Innisfail with Minister Dreeschen and his staff to begin the conversation. As talks unfolds, you will hear more on this process.

Even though July is always a very hectic month for everyone in our industry, we always find time for two of our premier events. The APIA Burgers and Beans is scheduled for Wednesday July 10th at the Taber Legion Park from 4:30 – 8:00 pm. This is an excellent opportunity to bring the whole family out for the evening to spend time with fellow growers, their families and the entire potato industry.

The PGA Annual Golf Tournament will be held at Paradise Canyon Golf Resort in Lethbridge the following day. Please call the office for more information and to register.

Until next month

Terence

terence@albertapotatoes.ca
403.382.8382

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Washington Commercial Trials

I attended the Washington Commercial Trials in Othello on a cool, rainy day, June 27th. There were 20 Alberta seed samples submitted by Washington commercial growers and inspected by State Inspectors. I'm pleased to report very little virus or disease was expressed in the Alberta samples.



Alberta seed potato growers checking out their seed performance report card at the WSU trials

deb@albertapotatoes.ca
780.722.9395



Dr. Rick Knowles talking about physiology maturity in Clearwater

FarmSafe Workshop – CDCN, Edmonton

August 7 and 8 (choice of either day)
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (lunch provided)
Crop Diversification Centre North, Edmonton

The above one day course is being offered to any licenced grower who did not attend the workshop when offered in Taber. There is no cost and more details regarding registration and what you need to bring with you will be available in future Friday Facts. **The course will be led by AgSafe Alberta.**



AgSafe
Alberta Hotline
1-833-9AG-SAFE

Hotline for Incident Assistance for Alberta farmers and ranchers. This hotline is available 24/7, year-round and all calls are connected directly to AgSafe Alberta. Those in need of assistance will receive informed and compassionate support from an AgSafe Alberta employee.

Calling the Hotline is voluntary and information is kept confidential.

ALBERTA
OPEN
FARM DAYS
AUGUST 17 & 18

PERRY PRODUCE
PARTICIPATING
9am - 12:00 August 17th

We all eat...every day.
Let's Celebrate!



August 3rd

Let's show the world who makes our food.

Add #FoodDayCanada to your twitter posts and instagram

Summertime in the potato patch, is the time to look at field research trials. Recently, I toured the field trials at Oregon State University, in Hermiston Oregon, and in Othello Washington, hosted by Washington State University.

The research trials in Hermiston were very interesting, and relevant to the interests of the Alberta potato growers. The following is a short list of the trials that are going on at this research station:

- Variety trials with processing, chipper and fresh varieties
- Root-knot nematode resistance breeding
- Corky ringspot: study of disease and control methods
- Nutrient management and requirements of different potato varieties
- Evaluation of potassium requirements for different potato varieties
- Disease updates on PVY, Tobacco Rattle Virus, Black Leg / Soft Root/Verticillium
- Seed Quality and Health

Some key takeaways for me, were to think about all the disease inoculum transmission sources: insects, seed cutting, irrigation water and even weeds in the potato field.



Washington Test Plots with a great showing of Alberta Seed



Hemiston Variety Disease Test Plots

On day two, the Washington - Oregon potato field trials were held in Othello, which I attended last year, and was extremely impressed how well the seed from Alberta potato seed growers performed. The first day was for the Seed Inspectors to walk through the trials, inspect all the variety trials, identify the variety and to flag all diseased plants or variety off types. We were not given any information regarding the variety or from which seed farm the seed potatoes came from. It was clear to me during the first day of last year's event, that some of the varieties had a distinct absence of disease marker flags.



During day two when I re-walked the seed variety plots, I was pleasantly surprised to see that virtually all of the Alberta seed varieties in the trial were consistently graded as the most disease free seed in the plots this year. They contained seed from all of the Western Canadian provinces, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

I was, again pleased to see that the Alberta grown seed performed exceptionally well in Othello this year. Walking through all the variety trials, there was again a distinct absence of disease flags throughout the plots.

This is a very well attended event by potato growers and industry representatives throughout the Columbia Basin. It is the venue in which it pays to stand out. Once again, the Alberta seed growers have delivered.

thomas@albertapotatoes.ca

403.892.7184

Prairie Gold Produce Looking Forward To Future

The former Vauxhall Foods potato granule plant has seen many changes in the past 50 years. Local farmers opened the business under the umbrella of Pak-Wel Produce in 1970. Stan Kanegawa Sr., Richard Kanegawa, Kaz Horzey, Tom Tajiri, Kaz Okuma, Sammy Tashiro, Yas and Nobby Yamashita were all the original owners. In the fall of 2012, Bill Delanoy and his children Luc and Anne, purchased both the fresh packing plant and dehy plant and renamed it Prairie Gold Produce. The Delanoy family have worked hard to create a successful business.

Due to international food safety standards that were announced in 2017, the facility needed to be upgraded and the work began. After two years, with help from the Alberta Government and other financial players, the facility's water system is nearing completion.

On June 10th, 2019, Prairie Gold Produce, in partnership with the Vauxhall & District Regional Water Services Commission (VDRWSC), M.D. of Taber and Bow River Irrigation District, celebrated its Grand Opening of a major water supply project. This venture consists of a 7.2 km raw water supply pipeline and a pumping facility from a Bow River Irrigation



Prairie Gold Produce facility located four kilometres east of the Town of Vauxhall

District reservoir near the PGP plant to the VDRWSC water treatment plant. It also includes a four km treated water pipeline to the PGP plant, a new pump-house and water storage tank at the plant site. It was built to provide potable water to not only the PGP plant but the Town of Vauxhall and the M.D. of Taber as well. The facility is now SQF (Safe Quality Food) approved, which is critical for export markets.

PGP is only one of three plants in North America (the others in PEI and Idaho) that manufacture potato granules from #2 grade potatoes. "We turn those #2 potatoes into something spectacular", Anne Zalik. Each year, the plant takes in around 60 million pounds of raw product producing about 10 million pounds of finished product. Their market is mainly to the United States and it is used as healthy food additives for other products.

"We are proud of where we are...and where we are going", -Anne Zalik



Left: Anne Zalik, PGP General Manager giving welcome and opening speech. Right: L-R Angela Lum AARD - Gov of AB, Ed Unser - PGP Operations Manager, Bill Delanoy PGP President-Owner, Dwight Tolton - Former MD of Taber Councillor involved in project

PICTURE A FARMER - A DOCUMENTARY

Picture a Farmer is a documentary that challenges the conventional perceptions of women's roles on the farm.

Women have always been a critical part of farm life, yet they are often not seen as Farmers. Women on farms raise children, cook meals, maybe tend to a garden. But they also do so much more: From driving the tractors and combines to tending the animals, fixing equipment, and toiling in the office noting yields and prices and ensuring the business runs efficiently.

They are Farmers. Picture a Farmer follows three farmers in Alberta who are taking ownership of the title Farmer; shedding light on women in agriculture and fostering representation for future generations.

Video visit <https://youtu.be/sdGhzGZvzJk>
 Website: www.pictureafarmer.com



ROCK BOTTOM POTATOES - "FARM DAYS"

Wayne and Anita Unrau, along with their family and staff hosted 'farm days' out at their potato farm north of Taber on June 13th. Mrs. La Valley, Miss Sergo and Mrs. Gross brought their grade four St. Patrick Elementary class out for a full day of education and fun. The goal was to teach students all about agriculture, and the many components that take place to grow and harvest potatoes and run a farming operation.

The day began with an introduction from Wayne and a fun game of Bossy Bingo, which the kids had a blast, before heading into the field. Students learned about the science and technology of producing potato plants through a local agronomist. Damian Unrau shared his experience of raising pheasants through 4-H and the Alberta Conservation Association. This group also spoke about agriculture and wildlife.

One of the highlights of the day was grading potatoes on the grading table with Wayne and his son Ryder. Each student was able to have a hands on experience sorting through a bunch of spuds! They also learned the nutritional value of potatoes and why they are an important part of a healthy diet from our staff at the PGA.



Wayne and son Ryder show fellow students how the grading table works



After lunch, Wayne took the group outside to show them all the farm equipment used and what their specific roles are in the field. With the temperature very warm outside, it was nice to go inside and do a tour of the potato storage afterwards.

"Some of the questions these kids were asking throughout the end of the day were amazing. You know that they were absorbing something solid with the information given".
-Wayne Unrau



All in all, it was a jam packed day of agricultural based education, which is very important for not only students, but adults, as well, to know where and how their food is produced and the many life on a farm.

Mandatory Entry-Level Training (M.E.L.T) Extension Class 1 & 2 Driver's Licences

Previously the application period to apply for an extension was November 30, 2019. Successful applicants who were granted the extension had until March 1, 2020 to comply with the MELT requirements (through testing).

The extension will extend the application period to November 30, 2020 and the MELT compliance period to March 1, 2021. *The intention expressed by the Ministry is to allow farmers obtaining a new Class 1 more time to become compliant without creating obstacles during pivotal times throughout the growing season.*

<https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=641353A2E8A46-EBE9-DA02-844C12A590D045DB>

For more information click [here](#)





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The voice of Canadian fruit and vegetable growers

FOR MY COMMUNITY

We have just published the latest video in our Heartbeat international farm workers awareness campaign: "For my community."

Did you know that the equivalent of one Canadian paycheck is equal to 8.5 pay checks in Jamaica (and many surrounding countries)?

Workers often send their paychecks back home to support their families by paying for school and supplies, providing financial support for day-to-day activities, or investing in local businesses. In that same token, international farm workers



share their skills inspiring others to contribute to consider starting a business and potentially provide employment to those who do not participate in the program.

Source: hortcouncil.ca

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH VIDEO](#)

Government of Canada consults with Canadians on important changes to Canada's food labelling system From: Canadian Food Inspection Agency



News release

June 21, 2019—Ottawa, Ontario – Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Canadians rely on food labels to make informed decisions on what they buy and eat. As the Government of Canada moves to provide consumers with more useful information and support innovation by food businesses, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, and the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health, today announced that the Government is consulting with Canadians on proposed changes to food labels in Canada.

The proposed changes to labelling requirements in the Food and Drug Regulations and the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations were pre-published today in the Canada Gazette, Part I, and are available for consultation. Consumers, industry, and other stakeholders are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed changes by September 4, 2019.

The proposed changes would make information on food labels clearer. They would improve consumers' ability to compare products, read and understand labels, and obtain useful product information, such as where imported food comes from, what the food contains, and how long the quality of the food will last.

The changes would also amend outdated and unnecessary regulations and provide Canada's food industry with some flexibility in how the regulations apply to certain requirements. This is necessary in an evolving food environment and helps promote innovation and facilitate market access for Canadian food businesses. The changes better align Canada's labelling requirements with international standards, as well as the requirements of key trading partners, which would facilitate trade for Canada's food industry. [Read more...](#)

TWO DAYS LEFT!! 2019 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

JULY 11 Paradise Canyon Golf Resort

DEADLINE IS JULY 4th

Register [here](#)

*If anyone would like to pay by cheque, they should contact Patti directly (patti@albertapotatoes.ca) with their info & she will register & invoice them!



DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO WIN THE APIA "HOLE IN ONE" PRIZE OF \$50,000 CASH (MULTIPLE WINNERS) POSSIBLE!




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+
Seed & Fresh Levies**



**Burgers ' N Beans
July 10
4:30-8:00pm
Taber Legion
Park**



**HAPPY
Retirement**

*Dave McLean from the
CIBC & APIA*

"Growing Healthy Potatoes Together"

6008 46 Avenue Taber, AB T1G 2B1
Phone: 403-223-2262
E-mail: pga@albertapotatoes.ca

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Staff Editor:
Deb Brewin

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