

We need your stock on hand survey information as soon as possible.

Taken from Rabobank; Global Potato Sector

On going productivity improvements within the potato sector are likely as farmers continue to look for the ideal potato that grows faster, matures earlier and yields better. Technological developments in the future will need to be focused on meeting the needs of consumers rather than producers. This could assist in promoting the benefits of potatoes and therefore indirectly balancing supply and demand.

The fresh potato industry needs to address the image of the potato, continue to innovate with new producers, educate consumers regarding which varieties are most suitable for particular uses, create interest/excitement with new varieties and address packaging issues (include information, smaller sizes, and convenience). An initiative undertaken by a number of potato marketing boards has been to promote potatoes as a low fat, healthy food choice and this will hopefully lead to increased consumption of fresh potatoes.

Suppliers of fresh potatoes will need to continue working with retailers and undertake category management and development. Initiatives related to packaging, new varieties and new products will not necessarily create value if the retailers continue selling potatoes via traditional methods.

[UNITED of America released the October/November newsletter. If you did not receive a copy, please contact Dwight or Lyla for your issue.](#)

#### **November Board of Directors Meeting Summary**

- Efforts to finalize value added programs with benefits exclusive to UPGA members continues. The Board voted to accept Agriliance's proposal of a light truck fleet discount program, discount on crop products and fertilizers. Watch for an announcement with more details in the National Office newsletter, December/January issue. Discussions continue with: Syngenta, Case-IH, UAP, and Bayer.
- Madhu Jamallamudi, Data Analyst, demonstrated a new phone calling system available for use at no charge by our member co-ops. He also discussed next steps for a secure website with member only access. He presented his priorities for the next 30 days:
  - Install and configure new software and database programs
  - Train the co-ops and sheds to provide price data in a new format
  - Revise the pack plan and grower return model
  - Configure the new calling system so that growers from each co-op can call in, enter a code, and listen to the price advisory for their area
  - Program the secure website to include price advisory, supply, demand data
  - Assess technical requirements and improve existing computer and data systems
- The Board decided that Jim Knutson and I should head up an industry-wide executive leadership effort to work collaboratively with the United States Potato Board and other potato promotion organizations on demand creation.
- Bruce Huffaker, Industry Consultant, presented the November US Department of Agriculture crop production report. We agreed that it is critical to update the Stocks on Hand from each member by December 1.
- Buzz Shahan, Chief Operating Officer, met with growers and Tom Franconi, Co-op Director, in Kern County, California last month. One grower has joined as a result of the meeting. Buzz and Albert Wada, Chairman, met recently with Montana seed growers. The growers have indicated much interest in joining. Buzz is speaking this month at a Red River Valley grower meeting in North Dakota. In December, he will travel to Skagit Valley in Washington to talk with interested growers.
- Tanner and Company has nearly completed the independent audit of our financials. They reported that the books are substantially in order and only small process adjustments will be needed going forward.

- Randon Wilson, our legal counsel, requested that all member co-ops ensure that their IRS 521 filings are completed and accurate.
- Board members will discuss the 2007 acreage planting program in more detail with their local co-op members.
- The Board again emphasized the importance of the organization's focus on member retention and recruitment, value creation, and communications.
- United members are encouraged to attend Board meetings.