Potatoes USA
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 16, 2026
Potatoes USA Offices, Denver, CO
Recorded by: Caitlin Roberts

Welcome
Chairperson David Masser called the meeting to order at **8:01 AM** and thanked everyone for joining.

Antitrust Statement
All attendees acknowledged and accepted the antitrust policy statement. Zoom attendees must accept it when logging into the meeting platform. A copy of the Antitrust Policy Statement was also provided to attendees before meetings on BoardEffect.

Roll Call and Introductions
Chairperson David Masser was present. Executive Committee members present included Steve Elfering, Shelley Olsen, Cliff Shaw, Travis Meacham, Trever Belnap, Kathy Sponheim, Wendy Dykstra, and Shelley Olsen**.**

David Masser acknowledged a quorum was present.

Staff members Blair Richardson, Kim Breshears, Monica Heath, Marisa Stein, Martin von Ruden, Tim Rendall, Kayla Vogel, Riley Peterson, Annelise McAuliffe-Soares, Nick Bartelme, Chelsea Gray, and Caitlin Roberts were present.

Katie Cook was present via Zoom from USDA.

Minutes Approval
A **MOTION** was made by Cliff Shaw and seconded to approve the minutes from the Executive Committee Meeting held on **April 29, 2026.** There was no discussion, and the motion to approve the minutes from the Executive Committee Meeting passed.

Copies of the meeting minutes were emailed to attendees before the meeting and made available for Executive Committee members to view via BoardEffect.

Regional Reports
The Executive Committee members shared reports from their regions related to the current potato crop.

CEO Report
Blair Richardson shared his recent and upcoming travel schedule. A **MOTION** was made by Cliff Shaw and seconded to approve Blair's travel schedule as presented. There was no discussion, and the motion passed.

Mr. Richardson gave an update on Potatoes USA's travel suspension: travel to the Middle East remains suspended, and travel to Mexico will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Richardson notified the Executive Committee that he met with USDA on May 29 to discuss the development of an AI-assisted pre-submission tool.

Mr. Richardson shared an update on the Seed to Table project and potential office expansion. After discussion, the Executive Committee recommended placing the project on hold until additional information becomes available regarding similar initiatives. In the meantime, the Board will continue to gather proposals for a feasibility study to further evaluate the project's viability.

Mr. Richardson and Chairman, David Masser, gave an update on continued progress for fresh market access in Japan.

A **MOTION** was made by Shelley Olsen and seconded to elect Travis Meacham as First Vice Chair. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

David Masser suspended the meeting at 9:22AM.

David Masser reconvened the meeting at 9:32AM.

Program Reports

The following staff members provided reports to the Executive Committee:

Tim Rendall- Production Research
Riley Peterson- Nutrition and Health
Kim Breshears, Martin von Ruden, Marisa Stein- Market Development
Kayla Vogel- Market Development, Consumer
Nick Bartelme- Market Development, Retail
Annelise McAuliffe-Soares- Market Development, Foodservice
Kim Breshears- Communications

No action was taken during the above reports.

Monica Heath gave an update on Finance and Policy.

A **MOTION** was made by Travis Meacham and seconded to give Blair Richardson authority to sign bank documents on behalf of the board. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

Administrative Update

Caitlin Roberts gave an update on the Grower Outreach Schedule, Summer Meeting schedule, and Strategy Planning Meeting schedule.

Ms. Roberts notified the Executive Committee that she plans on sending out a survey to the board regarding BoardEffect.

Chelsea Gray reported that there has been external interest from non–potato industry organizations in utilizing the Spud Lab for meetings and events. She noted that current Board policy limits use of Potatoes USA facilities, including the Spud Lab, to potato industry groups or groups focused on potatoes.
The Executive Committee discussed the potential expansion of access and carefully considered associated implications, including:

- Liability and security risks related to non-industry use of the facility.
- Operational impact on Culinary staff and administrative support resources.
- Wear and tear on specialized equipment and facilities.
- Lack of a clear cost-recovery or revenue model.

Following discussion, the Executive Committee did not recommend any immediate change to the existing policy. Instead, the Committee agreed that broader external use of a culinary or event space may be more appropriately evaluated as part of any future facility expansion planning, where a purpose-built space and dedicated operational support structure could be designed to accommodate such demand.
The Executive Committee recommended that the concept of allowing external, non-industry use of culinary or event space be deferred and formally considered within the scope of a future building expansion project, including evaluation of staffing, operational management, and cost-recovery models.

Mrs. Gray announced 2027 Board Nominations are open and due by August 15th.

USDA Update
Katie Cook reported that AMS is working with Potatoes USA staff on contracts for the upcoming fiscal year.

Other Business
David Masser recommended that the board review the bylaws in order to alleviate confusion over delayed board member nominations.

A **MOTION** was made by Steve Elfering and seconded to have Potatoes USA Staff review the board bylaws and provide recommendations for situations in which board member appointments are not made before the Spring Meeting, as well as any other necessary bylaw revisions. The timeline for approval was discussed. Motion passed.

Closed Session
At 11:00 AM a MOTION was made by Cliff Shaw and was seconded to go into closed session at 11:10 AM. The motion passed and the Committee went into closed session.

The committee returned to open session. No action was taken during the closed session.

Adjourn
Chairperson David Masser adjourned the meeting at 12:07 PM.

Approved by:

Signed by:

David Masser

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7/28/2026

Committee Chair / Co-Chair

Date

Signed by:

Thomas Baker

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7/28/2026

Secretary/Treasurer

Date