

Potatoes USA
2026 Winter Board Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2026
The Gaylord Texan, Grapevine, Texas
Recorded by: Chelsea Gray

Welcome

Chairman Steve Elfering called the meeting to order at 12:19 PM CT.

Antitrust Statement

Steve Elfering acknowledged the antitrust policy statement that Zoom attendees must accept when logging in to the meeting platform. A copy of the Antitrust Policy Statement was also provided to attendees before meetings on BoardEffect.

Roll Call

Board Members present online included James Baker, Thomas Baker, Steven Barrett, Trever Belnap, Nathan Bender, Jess Blatchford, Norbert Bomm, Jennifer Bunger, Sander Dagen, Jason Davenport, Adam DeGroot, Ben DeJonge, Danny Deprey, Aron Derbidge, Kathy deVries-Ruehs (virtual), Wendy Dykstra, Steve Elfering, Hunter Gibbs, Jennifer Gogan, Charlie Husnick, Jeff Irving (virtual), Jace Jensen, Ben Josephson, Jaclyn Johnston Green (virtual), Sanjiv Kakkar, Matthew Linehan, Brian Mahany (virtual), Juan Martinez, David Masser, Tara May, Nathan McBride, Travis Meacham, Andrew Moquist (virtual), Ryan Moss, Shelley Olsen, Derek Peterson, Mike Pink, Andrew Price, Elizabeth Rachut, Jaren Raybould, Bruce Richardson, Trevor Searle (virtual), Cliff Shaw, Camburn Shephard, Alison Sklarczyk, Clifton Smith, Kathy Sponheim, Jonathon Springstead, Diane Szawlowski Mullins, Jordan Thomas, and Dennis Wright.

Proxies were received from Rhonda Kleyn and Blake Underwood.

With over 50% of the board in attendance, Chairman Steve Elfering acknowledged a quorum was present.

Potatoes USA Staff members present include Blair Richardson, Kim Breshears, John Lundeen, Monica Heath, Chelsea Gray, Caitlin Roberts, Megan Mulcahy, RJ Harvey, Tim Rendall, Robert King, Lucy Gabrielse, Kayla Vogel, Nick Bartelme, Dinah Tobey, Aurora Hollenbeck, Katarina Ivanovic, Marisa Stein, Martin von Ruden, Madison Mayle (virtual), Nicole Field (virtual), Heather Campbell (virtual), and Michelle Binns (virtual).

Guests present included Katie Cook from USDA-AMS, Tara Artho from Colorado Potato Administrative Committee, Darren Bitter and Travis Blacker from Idaho Potato Commission, Gary Shields from Northland Potatoes, Gary Roth and Marcy Parker from Oregon Potato Commission, Joe Kertzman and Tamas Houlihan from Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association, Chris Voigt and Brandy Tucker, Washington State Potato Commission, Jang Sangha from Sangha Group, Tricia Psota and Michelle Kijek from the Alliance for Potato Research and Education, Steven Corder and Emma Bodine from Kundinger, Corder and Montoya, Cedric

Porter from World Potato Market News, Kelly Turner, Jordan Huhn (virtual), Zeke Jennings (virtual), Micah Long (virtual) and Sheila Andring (virtual) from Michigan Potato Industry Commission (virtual), Chris Olsen, Heidi Alsum-Randall.

Minutes Approval

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

A **MOTION** was made by David Mundt and seconded to approve the minutes from the Summer board meeting held on August 8, 2025. There was no discussion, and the motion passed.

Market Development Committee Report

Kim Breshears, CMO at Potatoes USA, shared details on previous and upcoming USDA and TRUMP Trade Missions as well as an update on the America First Trade Promotion Program grant application.

Market Development Foodservice Subcommittee Report

Travis Meacham, chair of the Foodservice Subcommittee, and Marisa Stein, Marketing Director for Potatoes USA, shared recent innovation sessions, participation in Foodservice industry events, and international Foodservice program activities.

Market Development Consumer Subcommittee Report

Hunter Gibbs, chair of the Consumer Subcommittee, and Kayla Vogel, Community Engagement Manager for Potatoes USA, shared recent social media, public relations, and international consumer activities.

Market Development Retail Subcommittee Report

David Masser, chair of the Retail Subcommittee, and Nick Bartelme, Global Retail Development Manager, shared recent Retail program activities domestically and internationally.

Nutrition and Health Committee Report

Kathy Sponheim, Chair of the Nutrition and Health Committee, and Riley Peterson, Director of Nutrition, shared ongoing activities, including a Teaching Kitchen Symposium, on-campus Nutrition education, and APRE research studies. Riley also shared that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans were expected to be released later that week.

Alliance for Potato Research and Education Report

Michelle Kijek and Tricia Psota shared the annual request-for-proposal strategy for APRE. Research priorities include cardiometabolic health, dietary patterns, and healthy lifestyles.

Production Research Committee Report

Tim Rendall, Associate Director of Research; John Lundeen, Director of Research for Potatoes USA; and Nathan Bender and Jess Blatchford, Co-chairs of the Production

Research Committee, shared updates on PRAC, NFPT, and NCP. They also reported that the seed export program is planning a reverse trade mission in Fall 2026.

Culinary Committee Report

Cliff Shaw, Chairman of the Culinary Committee, and RJ Harvey, Culinary Director at Potatoes USA, shared recent culinary activities, including participation at culinary industry events and the recent International Chef reverse trade mission.

BREAK

At 2:05 PM, the meeting was suspended. At 2:15 PM, Chairman Steve Elfering reconvened the meeting.

Communications Committee Report

Trever Belnap, chair of the Communications Committee, and Megan Mulcahy, Director of Communications for Potatoes USA, shared key themes from the 2025 Grower Survey. They also shared a reputation management update.

Kundinger, Corder & Montoya, P.C. Audit Report

Steven Corder and Emma Bodine shared the 2025 Audit Report, noting it was an unmodified "clean" opinion with no findings, and that the total net position for the board was \$12,701,634. Wendy Dykstra made a **MOTION** to approve the 2025 audit as presented. The motion was seconded, there was no discussion, and the motion passed.

Finance and Policy Committee Report

Monica Heath, CFO at Potatoes USA, and Wendy Dykstra, Chair of the Finance and Policy Committee, shared the draft FY27 Budget. Robert King, General Accountant for Potatoes USA shared

Jaclyn Johnston made a **MOTION** to approve FY26 budget amendment #1 as presented. The motion was seconded, there was no discussion, and the motion passed.

India Potato Market Overview

Jang Bahadur Singh Sangha gave insight into the rapidly expanding Indian Potato Market, citing new export markets, competitive prices, and large investments in processing capacity.

Global Market Review

Cedric Porter from World Potato Markets shared insights into the global potato trade and production.

USDA Report

Katie Cook with USDA-AMS shared that the nomination package for 2026 is currently moving through approvals at USDA, but was not aware of a timeline for completion.

CEO Report

Potatoes USA CEO Blair Richardson introduced the concept of "From Seed to Table", a state-of-the-art hub designed to link genetic discovery, production research, and culinary applications in one coordinated ecosystem. Blair mentioned that the initial idea for the project arose at the 2025 Potato Industry Leaders Forum in September, as industry leaders raised concerns about the lack of resources allocated to potato research at universities, ongoing layoffs at USDA research centers, and a lag in variety development compared to other parts of the globe. Blair Richardson presented the projected cost, timeline, and scope of a feasibility study. Conducting a feasibility study would refine program requirements, evaluate real estate options, and develop complete project and operating cost models to support future Board decisions.

Executive Committee Report

A **MOTION** was made by Trever Belnap to recommend that the board approve funding the "From Seed to Table" feasibility study up to \$175,000, utilizing special project funds from reserves.

Steve Elfering, Chairman of the board, shared Executive Committee activities from his time as Chairman over the past 10 months and stressed the importance of the board's work in strengthening demand for potatoes.

Monica Heath presented a summary of FY26 Budget Amendment #2 and undesignated funds.

A **MOTION** was made by Trever Belnap and seconded to approve the FY26 budget amendment, adding \$100,000 to Administrative costs to cover a portion of the "From Seed to Table" feasibility study costs.

Closed Session

There was no need for a closed session.

Adjourn

Chairman Steve Elfering adjourned the meeting at 4:35 PM CT.


Approved by:

Signed by:

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Chairperson

4/28/2026

Date

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Secretary/Treasurer

4/28/2026

Date