

**POTATOES USA**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, August 3, 2022**  
**Marriott Laguna Cliffs**  
**Dana Point, CA**

**Welcome**

Chairperson Jason Davenport officially called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. PT. Jason welcomed everyone to California and Dana Point. He acknowledged all the sponsors who made the Summer Meeting possible in such a beautiful location.

**Antitrust Statement**

The Antitrust Statement was displayed for all attendees. A copy of this was also provided for attendees in their meeting binders.

**Roll Call and Introductions**

Roll call was conducted, and Board members present included Jennifer Gogan, Travis Meacham, Jaren Raybould, Jason Davenport, Mike Carter, Jared Smith, Shelley Olsen, Leah Halverson, Mike Larsen, Kevin Schleicher, Jennifer Gogan, Jennifer Borowicz, Brian Mahany, Ben Zechmann, Wendy Dykstra, Dan Gundersen, Tom Enander, Braden Lake, Dennis Wright, Ed Staunton, Sammy Stahl, Marvin Wollman, Norbert Bomm, Jeff VanOrden, Ryan Moss, Kyle Michael, Jason Tillman, Eric Searle, Tyler Tschirky, Tyler Backemeyer, Rhonda Kleyn, Kevin Thaemert and Taylor Grant.

Guests present included Alex Caryl with USDA/AMS, Travis Blacker with the Idaho Potato Commission, Kelly Turner with Michigan Potato Industry Commission, Chris Voigt with Washington State Potato Commission, Mark Klompfen with UPGA, Mike Wenkel with National Potato Council.

Also present were Potatoes USA staff members Blair Richardson, Kim Breshears, Natalia Cervantes, Erena Connon, Kayla Dome, Jane Foreman, Chelsea Gray, RJ Harvey, Monica Heath, John Lundeen, Jill Rittenberg, Mary Kate McCandlish, Caitlin Roberts, Bonnie Johnson, Marisa Stein, Alyssa Green, Tiffany Thompson, and Dinah Tobey.

Board members present via Zoom included Jess Blatchford, Kevin Hachey, and Kevin Searle. Brandy Tucker with Washington State Potato Commission was also present via Zoom. Staff members present via Zoom included Pamela Lee, Robert King, and Nicole Field.

**Announcements and Sponsors**

Jason thanked the 2022-2023 Board Meeting Sponsors for their continued support: Sklarczyk Seed Farm, LLC, Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association, Teton West, Hillenby, North by Northwest, Webolutions, Foodminds, Rabo Agrifinance, Idaho Potato Commission, and Vectrabank Colorado.

Jason also thanked the 2022 Potatoes USA Summer Meeting Sponsors: Frost Sales, Key Equipment Finance, Fallgatter Rhodes Insurance Services, American Produce and Repack, Christo Farm Contracting, Potandon, Rabobank, SnackCO, Spudnik Equipment Company LLC, Sealand Americas, Daniels, Phillips, Vaughan, & Bock, Washington State Potato Commission, Pik-Nik (Great American Foods), Pepper Equipment, Christensen, Thaemert Farms LLC, Vantreo Insurance, Simplot, RDO Equipment, Broekema Beltway USA Inc, Stones Farm Supply, Simplot Grower Solutions, Wolf Spirit Distillery LLC, and Real Potatoes LTD.

### **Call for Proxies**

Chairman Jason Davenport called for any proxies. There were none.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chairperson Jason Davenport requested the approval of the minutes from the January 4, 2022 Administrative Committee Meeting. The minutes were emailed to the Administrative Committee before this meeting and included in the binder materials.

A **MOTION** was made by Shelley Olsen and seconded by Travis Meacham to approve the meeting minutes.

### **Executive Committee Report**

Chairman Jason Davenport made a few comments regarding John Toaspern's retirement mentioning that he left behind a great legacy, but the Executive Committee is excited to see what the new staff members bring to the table.

Mr. Davenport presented the Third-Party Meeting procedure previously approved by the Executive Committee. The procedure would make the Potatoes USA office available to host meetings and events to groups within the potato industry for a \$25 per person per day cost to cover space overhead, including utilities, cleaning, drinks, and snacks. There will be a designated general ledger code to track expenditures. Potatoes USA will not make a profit off the funds. A **MOTION** was made by Steve Elfering and seconded by Taylor Grant to approve the proposed procedure.

### **Working Committee Reports**

#### **Domestic Marketing Committee Report**

Co-Chair Steve Elfering thanked the staff and welcomed the three new staff members on the marketing team. He Congratulated Kim Breshears on her new position and a successful Summer Meeting. Co-Chair Travis Meacham expressed his excitement about the new space for the Spud Lab.

Mr. Elfering reported highlights from the Domestic market updates the Potatoes USA team shared during the Domestic Marketing Committee meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. He shared that food spending is shifting back to pre-pandemic levels. 51% of food is now eaten away from home. Potatoes are the #1 vegetable sold at retail. In the Foodservice sector, potatoes remain on 83% of restaurant menus. Mr. Elfering reminded everyone to mark their calendars for December 5 and 6th to be in Denver for the planning meeting.

The target audience for the consumer program is changing. Efforts are now focused on Gen Z. The goal is to capture young consumers, so they develop a love for potatoes and understand their nutritional value. The team will launch new social media ads using the slogan "Potatoes': The best of both worlds."

Kayla Dome is focused on meeting with underperforming retailers to enhance their merchandising and improve sales.

Jane Foreman continues to meet with food service operators to get more potatoes on menus. She works closely with RJ and Vince to accomplish this goal. Potato University will also be heavily promoted since it's a master class on potatoes and very valuable to operators.

The new PotatoGoodness.com website is performing very well and is now ranking much higher for recipe searches.

Steve Elfering reported that the culinary team has been very busy. RJ Harvey and Vince Armada continue creating new dishes for the consumer and food service programs as they support all efforts of the organization – food service, retail, and consumer programs. The connection to the nutrition research conducted by APRE through our culinary programs was noted as important and helpful.

### **Research Committee Report**

Co-Chair Jennifer Gogan thanked the members of the Research Committee for their active involvement in the research programs this year. She recapped the Research Committee meeting held on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, stating that the projects they are working on benefit a broad range of growers in the industry.

Jennifer shared that the National Chip Program's upcoming meeting will be held in December in Chicago, IL, and thanked John Lundeen and Alyssa Green for their hard work.

### **Industry Outreach Committee Report**

Co-Chairs Shelley Olsen and Leah Halverson thanked Kim and the staff for their innovative approaches to representing the potato industry. After multiple years of trying to engage the Culinary Institute of America and Dr. Willet at Harvard university, Potatoes USA recently received two responses to potato-industry-generated work. An in-person meeting with the CIA and Dr. Willet has been requested to discuss differences. The staff is optimistic this will occur very soon. The goal of the meeting is to have the CIA change its current guidance to limit potatoes.

A grower survey will be sent in November this year to help inform the committee's strategic planning meeting in December. Shelley and Leah encouraged everyone to take the survey and share their thoughts. There is a lot of grower outreach scheduled to take place in the upcoming months, including an Executive Committee grower outreach trip to Maine and Massachusetts in October. The Potatoes USA office is getting much usage. They thanked RJ and Vince for all their work making the spud lab such a highlight.

Plans for an industry outreach effort to better convey the marketing programs' depth have been initiated, with a whole-team seminar scheduled in Wisconsin for November. This will be a trial event focused on better communicating the Potatoes USA programs and activities with the industry. The concept will be expanded to other regions based on learnings from this initial effort.

### **International Marketing Committee Report**

Co-Chair Mike Carter reported that the team is focused on opening Japan for fresh potato exports. Getting a chipping protocol in place for Taiwan is also a top priority. As is getting chipping potatoes to China. While the market is open, there are barriers to entry due to the classification of potatoes.

The Seed RTM to Maine looked like a big success, and he looks forward to hearing what comes out of it.

The food service program is well planned again this year, with many great activities, including culinary school training, seminars, and promotions. This spring, there will be a joint food service and retail Reverse Trade Mission (RTM), and the staff will need growers to help with the event. Mike asked the board members to offer to help if they come to your area.

The international retail program will focus on training and promotions. In addition, Kayla is working closely with Japan on new retail research since that market differs greatly from retail in other areas. The retail RTM will be the first in many years.

The consumer program will continue working with the countries to develop new recipes and promote them at events and on social media. Nutrition is also a key area of focus for the program as our Team Potato athletic events.

Mike Carter closed by sharing his excitement that the Potatoes USA staff will begin traveling internationally again this coming year.

### **Finance and Policy**

Finance and Policy Committee member Wendy Dykstra shared the FY23 Budget Amendment Monica Heath presented during the Finance and Policy Committee meeting the day prior. The proposed changes include overall an additional \$520,000 in expenses. The proposed changes will bring the ending balance to \$646,500 in revenue under expenses. Monica Heath estimates having \$5.9M remaining in unrestricted funding at the end of FY23.

Wendy Dykstra made a **MOTION** to approve the FY23 budget amendment as presented. Shelley Olsen seconded.

Wendy also shared the proposed compliance policy updates to include updating the Handler Report section based on the newest report, removing draft and money orders from the payment section, and adding an electronic payment to this section. Wendy Dykstra made a **MOTION** to approve the updated Compliance Policies, and Travis Meacham seconded the motion.

### **Building Trust in Nutrition Research**

Dr. David B. Allison, Ph.D. presented the details of two APRE-funded research studies: "French-fried potatoes consumption and energy balance: a randomized controlled trial" and "Good Plants, Bad Plants: Potatoes and cardiometabolic health".

### **APRE Nutrition Marketing Update**

Howard Goldstein explained the issues impacting potato perceptions and outcomes of the latest APRE research.

### **CEO Update**

Blair Richardson expressed his gratitude for APRE and how impactful the studies can be in changing the perceptions and challenging negative press related to potatoes.

Potatoes USA does not sell potatoes. Potatoes USA sells the experience people have with potatoes. Potatoes USA is fighting and challenging misinformation in the media. APRE research has allowed us to "poke the bear". Blair explained the importance of reaching out to get other countries to fight the fight with Potatoes USA, and there has been some success in these efforts. As a result of presentations and discussions at the World Potato Congress, Polish Potato Congress has reached out to use some of Potatoes USA's performance messaging.

There has also been great success in collaborating with state potato organizations leveraging similar marketing efforts.

Mr. Richardson thanked the growers for their continued support.

**Closing Comments**

Jason Davenport thanked the staff for all their hard work planning the meetings in California. He announced that the Winter Meeting would be held January 2-3, 2023, in Aurora, Colorado, at the Gaylord Rockies, and the 2023 Annual Meeting will be held March 13-15 in Denver, Colorado, at the Four Seasons.

**Closed Session**

Chairperson Jason Davenport asked the committee if there was a need for a closed session. It was determined that there was no need for a closed session.

**Other Business**

There was no other business to report.

**Adjourn**

Chairperson Jason Davenport adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m. PT.

Approved by:

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Secretary/Treasurer

1/10/2023  
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Date