

**Potatoes USA
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 11, 2023
CSS Farms Boardroom
Bliss, NY**

Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions

Chairperson Mike Carter called the meeting to order at 9:42 AM ET.

Committee members present included Mike Carter, Jason Davenport, Shelley Olsen, Mike Larsen, Leah Halverson, and Trever Belnap. Dennis Wright was present via Zoom.

Staff members Blair Richardson and Chelsea Gray were present. Kim Breshears, Monica Heath, and John Lundeen from Potatoes USA attended via Zoom. Harrison Hodges was present via Zoom from USDA.

Antitrust Statement

The Antitrust Policy Statement was acknowledged and accepted by all attendees. Zoom attendees must accept the Antitrust Policy Statement when logging into the meeting platform. A copy of the Antitrust Policy Statement is also provided to attendees before meetings on BoardEffect.

Welcome

Chairman Mike Carter welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for joining.

Minutes Approval

A **MOTION** was made by Mike Larsen and seconded by Shelley Olsen to approve the minutes from the Executive Committee Meeting held on August 7, 2023.

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

Regional Reports

Each member of the Executive Committee gave the group an update on their region. There have been some delays in harvesting around the country due to heat or rain. This year's crop quality is looking average to above average.

CEO Report

Blair Richardson provided an overview of the New York and Pennsylvania grower outreach trip schedule for the week. Blair also reviewed some of the recent and upcoming industry events.

Recent Industry Events:

Aug 16	APRE Board Mtg	Virtual
Aug 28-31	IGSA Conference	Sun Valley, ID
Sep 5-8	Potato Europe & CNIPT	Tournai, Belgium
Sep 11-14	IFPA Conference	Washington, DC
Sep 18-22	State/Nat'l Workshop	Traverse City, MI
Sep 18-22	ICQC Conference	Italy (Bonnie)
Oct 10-14	NY/PA Outreach Trip	NY and PA

Future Industry Events:

Oct 30-Nov 3	Spud Sessions	Idaho
Nov 8-9	Montana Seed Seminar	Missoula, MT
Nov 6	APRE Board Mtg	TBD
Nov 7-9	PMANA Meeting	TBD
Nov 14-15	Idaho Harvest Meeting	Fort Hall, ID
Dec 1	IOC Pre-strategy	Virtual
Dec 4	ExCom Mtg	Denver/Virtual
Dec 4	Comp Committee Mtg	Denver
Dec 4	Finance Com Mtg	Virtual
Dec 5	Nutrition Pre-strategy	Virtual
Dec 5-6	National Chip Program	Chicago, IL
Dec 5	Domestic Pre-strategy	Virtual
Dec 7	Int'l Pre-strategy	Virtual
Dec 11-12	Washington Seminar	Spokane, WA
Jan 3-4	Maine Potato Conf	Presque Isle, ME
Jan 8-9	Potatoes USA Mtgs	Austin, TX
Jan 10-11	POTATO EXPO	Austin, TX
Jan 16-18	Idaho Potato Conf	Pocatello, ID
Jan 23-25	WA/OR Potato Conf	Kennewick, WA
Jan 24-25	Eastern Shore Ag Conf	The Shore, VA
Jan 31-Feb 1	Mid-Atlantic F&V Conf	Hershey, PA
Jan 31-Feb 1	Michigan Potato Conf	East Lansing, MI
Feb 6-8	So. Rocky Mtn Conf	Colorado
Feb 6-8	Wisconsin Potato Conf	Stevens Point, WI
Feb 21-22	Northland Potato Conf	Grand Forks, ND
Feb 26-Mar 1	NPC DC Summit	Washington, DC
Feb 26-28	<i>Potatoes USA AMS/FAS Meetings</i>	
Mar 5-6	Minnesota Area 2 Mtg	TBD
Mar 11-14	Potatoes USA Mtg	Denver, CO
Apr 8-12	Int'l Reps Meetings	_____, USA
May 5-16	CRCEO Mtg	Denver, CO
May ____	NC Grower Meeting	Elizabeth City, NC
May ____	All Agencies Meeting	Denver, CO
Jun 9	WA Potato Shippers	Leavenworth, WA
Jun 10-12	IFPA Conference	Washington, DC
Jun 17-21	Japan Market Visit	Japan
Jun 23-26	World Potato Conf	Adelaide, Australia
Jun 26-27	NPC Summer Meeting	Fort Collins, CO
Jul 9-11	PSA Conference	Chicago, IL
Jul 21-25	PAA Conference	Portland, OR
Jul ____	NFPT Summer Mtg	_____
Aug 5-7	Potatoes USA Summer	Vancouver, BC
Aug 9-15	China Market Visit	China
Aug ____	APRE Board Mtg	Virtual
Aug 28-30	IGSA Conference	Sun Valley, ID
Aug ____	PRAC Meeting	_____
Sep ____	State/Nat Workshop	_____
Oct ____	NFPT Field Day	E Grand Forks, MN
Oct ____	ExCom Outreach	ND/MN-?
Oct 17-19	IFPA Conference	Atlanta, GA
Oct ____	CRCEO Meeting	_____

Nov ____	APRE Board Meeting	_____
Nov 8/9	PMANA Meeting	_____
Nov ____	IPC Harvest Meeting	_____
Nov 24-26	INTERPOM'24	Kortrijk, BE
Dec 2	IOC Pre-strategy	Virtual
Dec 3	ExCom/Fin/Comp Mtgs	Denver, CO
Dec ____	NCP Variety Selections	Chicago, IL
Dec 4/5/6	Pre-strategy sessions	Virtual

Shelley Olsen recommended that the Executive Committee remain flexible and decide whether to host a June 2024 meeting at the National Potato Council Summer Meeting, cancel it, or host it virtually.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to approve Blair Richardson’s travel to the above events as needed.

Blair Richardson provided an update on the KungFu.AI project, noting Potatoes USA shares all potato-related research, including Harvard research, to ensure the AI is unbiased. KungFu.AI will present the product to the Executive Committee in December. The program should be ready to launch by March 2024.

Potato Market Update

Kim Breshears shared the latest fiscal year-end potato sales data. Retail volume sales were down 2.7% compared to last year but up 3.1% compared to 2019. Foodservice volume sales were down 0.9% compared to the previous year and were down 10.6% compared to 2019. Exports were up 3.9% compared to last year and up 3.4% compared to 2019. Imports were down 0.5% compared to the previous year but compared to 2019, imports are up 29.3%, with frozen driving a majority of this volume. In FY21, the U.S. began to import more than export. Currently, U.S. potato imports are about 4% more than exports.

Department Updates

Domestic Marketing:

By mid-November, Potatoes USA will have three certified trainers on staff for the Health Meets Food curriculum.

Bonnie Johnson recently attended the International Carbohydrate Quality Coalition event in Italy. There was great dialogue surrounding the topic of carbohydrate quality. It was good that Potatoes USA was present at the event.

A press release featuring young farmers across the U.S. is currently running on social media. There have been 300 pickups from the press release.

At retail, USDA AMS just approved the first retail press release focused on the power of potatoes in the shopping cart. This will be distributed in the next week.

In December, Chefs RJ and Aurora will host eight operators in the spud lab for a culinary innovation session.

The team has just concluded their Strava challenge, "The Power of 3", which promoted the 3 grams of protein in a potato. The event had 89,000 registrants, and 88% of those registered completed the challenge. Strava's benchmark for finished challenges is at 60%. They are delighted with the engagement and broad reach of this event.

On Nov 7th, Potatoes USA will host a Fresh Working Group meeting at the office. There are a lot of exciting guest speakers on the agenda, with a focus on fresh sales. The group will discuss trends in food service and retail stores.

International Marketing:

Kim Breshears reported the team has submitted all Country Progress Reports and submitted them to FAS for review.

New federal grant funding will become available for international marketing, totaling about \$1.4 billion designated. If Potatoes USA receives some of this grant funding, the International Marketing Committee will meet to discuss where to focus the spending. Potatoes USA is now in its last year with ATP funding. Typically, staff will receive word at USAEDC in November about how much grant funding Potatoes USA will obtain.

Potatoes USA hosted three delegations, Japan, Taiwan, and Korea, in Washington State to conduct regional audits supporting the current work plans. They were pleased, and all audits were passed without concerns about quality.

In Japan, the U.S. has not made any progress to open fresh table stock access. Japan has a lot of pressure from local growers in Japan not to allow US Access. The team is working with Taiwan to change protocols to allow for more greening and sprouting on potatoes. Morocco is moving into the final stages of opening the market for seed exports. Upcoming market assessments include Thailand and China.

Industry Outreach:

The grower survey is finalized and will be sent out in early November.

Spud Lab TV aired its first episode in August, highlighting potato-based salad dressings from a viral TikTok video.

The Marketing team will head to eastern Idaho in late October for the annual Spud Sessions event. This will include a 4-hour session with growers.

Harvard continues to try to position potatoes as a less healthy vegetable with their latest study. One conclusion of the study stated starchy vegetable intake leads to higher weight gain. The timing of this study is thought to be a play to influence the dietary guidelines.

Potatoes USA staff are working with state managers to develop unified talking points regarding water stewardship.

Research:

John Lundeen shared that the neonic alternatives project was funded and should be formally announced in October. The soil health project did not win funding. The special funding request passed at the Summer Administrative Committee meeting was critical to keep the rotations moving forward.

A PRAC meeting will be held on October 12th to discuss CAP proposals (up to \$10MIL). Project proposals include Diploid Potatoes and Soil Health- re-application.

The group will also discuss S-REP Proposals (up to \$4MIL max). Project proposals include storage physiology and wound healing, and Polyploids.

They will vote and conclude which of these projects to put weight behind. A long-term goal of PRAC is to extend beyond just SCRI funding.

Finance and Policy:

Monica Heath shared that outstanding handler invoices total just under \$300. There were no concerns from the Executive Committee about writing these off based on the estimated additional cost to collect.

The finance team is still receiving some FY23 assessments for \$15,143,000. The final assessment value will likely be under budget by about \$200,000. The books for FY23 will close soon.

KC&M begins its audit on Monday, October 16th. USDA has approved policies from the 2023 Potatoes USA Summer Meeting.

Administrative:

Chelsea Gray shared board member nominations have been submitted and are in the hands of USDA-AMS. There were 33 total applications. Twenty-two new board members and eleven are applying for their 2nd term.

The schedule for the 2024 Annual Board meeting was reviewed. The 2024 Summer Administrative Committee Meeting will be held August 5-7 in Vancouver.

USDA Update

Harrison Hodges reported the nomination package is going through clearance at USDA.

Other Business

Blair Richardson shared the Mexico event previously proposed by NPC has been postponed.

The comment period on the federal register for the proposed board rulemaking changes has just ended. No significant comments were made.

Executive Session

At 12:20 PM, Shelley Olsen made a **MOTION** and was seconded by Mike Carter to go into Executive Session.

At 12:34 PM, Chairperson Mike Carter ended the closed session and returned the meeting to an open session. No action was taken during the closed session.

Adjourn

Chairperson Mike Carter adjourned the meeting at 12:34 PM.

Approved by:

DocuSigned by:
Jeffrey Jennings
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Secretary/Treasurer

12/12/2023

Date