

Practice makes perfect in potato peeling contest

Second annual contest proves ‘crowd favorite’

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

KENNEWICK, Wash. — Six teams turned out to compete for the title of fastest potato peelers in the Pacific Northwest.

The second annual potato peeling contest helped to build industry enthusiasm during the first day of the Washington-Oregon Potato Conference in Kennewick, Wash.

“It seems to be a crowd fa-



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Washington State Potato Commission executive director Chris Voigt showcases a finely peeled potato from the Washington-Oregon Potato Conference Potato Peeling Contest while competitors Kelvin Etterfield and Dave Zietz look on.

vorite,” said Ryan Holterhoff, director of marketing and indus-

try affairs for the Washington State Potato Commission. “You

Online

<http://www.potatoconference.com/potato-peel-off.html>

see a lot of people gathered around and even after they’re done peeling, they’re sticking around to see who’s going to win.”

Judges Debbie Graaff and Pam Nutter, sisters from Quincy, Wash., looked for the number of potatoes peeled and how much peel remained. All three teams in the final round had five perfectly peeled potatoes, they said.

Graaff and Nutter have judged potato peeling during

the Quincy Farmer Consumer Awareness Day for six to eight years. How fast are they themselves?

“Not,” Graaff said with a laugh. “I just judge, I’m not a peeler.”

Jarrod Bailey, service adviser for RDO Equipment Co., said his company sponsored two teams last year and this year.

“It was kind of a no-brainer that we were going to enter,” he said.

Bailey’s team, with teammates Jennifer Boyer and Kelvin Etterfield, emerged the big winners after two rounds and a championship round.

Teams paid a \$100 entry fee. The winners received \$25 gift

cards and plaques. Proceeds from the contest, roughly \$500, will support the SAGE Center in Boardman, Ore., an interactive visitor center that highlights sustainable agriculture and energy.

Bailey said the team watched some how-to videos on YouTube and practiced earlier in the day.

They “absolutely” plan to compete again next year.

“Have to defend the title,” Bailey said.

Advice to aspiring teams? Bailey says nope.

“Not as long as I’m competing,” he said.

The judges were more free with suggestions.

“Peel potatoes,” Nutter said.

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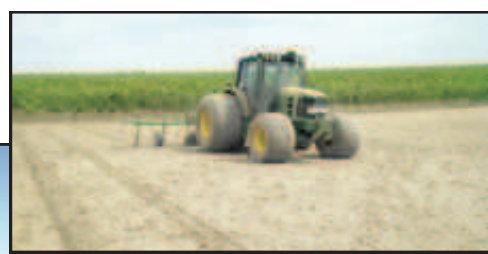


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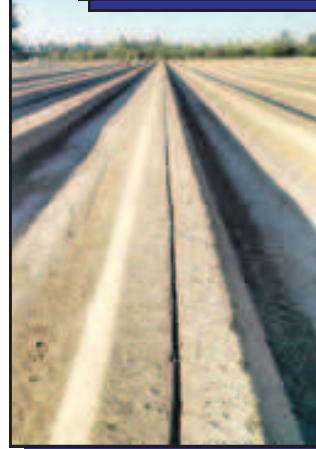
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