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# Idaho

## Progress reported toward restoring Idaho chipping potato access to Japan

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

IDAHO FALLS — A source with the Idaho Potato Commission said progress was made toward restoring access for fresh Idaho chipping potatoes to Japan during a recent meeting between Japanese governmental leaders and USDA officials.

Leaders with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries met in Idaho Falls June 1-2 for their annual bilateral plant health negotiations.

In conjunction with the meeting, leaders from both



John O'Connell/Capital Press

Potatoes are harvested in Pingree, Idaho, in 2013 in this file photo. Progress was reportedly made toward restoring access to ship fresh Idaho chipping potatoes to Japan during a recent meeting between Japanese governmental leaders and USDA officials.

countries also visited an East-ern Idaho seed potato farm, a

local packing shed and USDA's pale cyst nematode pro-

gram facility in Idaho Falls. Japan imports no fresh U.S. table potatoes and has restricted access to Idaho chipping potatoes due to the 2006 discovery of pale cyst nematode in Eastern Idaho.

PCN is known to exist in the U.S. only within a 7.5-mile radius in Idaho's Bonneville and Bingham counties. USDA is treating 2,897 infested acres and has placed special sanitation requirements on another 7,032 acres with known associations with infested fields, with the goal of eradicating the pest.

Pat Kole, IPC's vice president of legal and governmental affairs, said Japanese officials visited the PCN program in

November 2015, and during the recent meeting they "discussed a path forward to permit chipping potatoes from approved Idaho counties."

The sides also discussed a U.S. proposal to expand the current shipping window for U.S. chipping potatoes from February through July to year-round, as well as the process of seeking approval for additional inland facilities in Japan to receive U.S. chipping spuds.

"Official communication between both sides in the coming weeks is expected to further advance the progress made during the bilateral," Kole said.

The most current trade numbers, supplied by Potatoes USA from Global Trade

Atlas, show Japan increased its fresh U.S. chipping potato shipments by 75.59 percent from July 2015 through January 2016, importing nearly 7,000 metric tons.

Japan also increased U.S. dehydrated imports by 59 percent during the first half of the marketing year to nearly 20,000 metric tons, and its frozen U.S. potato imports increased by 4.5 percent to about 133,000 metric tons.

Potatoes USA Chief Marketing Officer John Toasperm said his organization offers Japan "a full marketing program for food service and ingredients for frozen and dehydrated products."

## Idaho sees 250% gain in mustard acres

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

AMERICAN FALLS, Idaho — Seth Woodland saw no reason to start out small in his first season of raising mustard.

The Lincoln County, Idaho, grower planted 450 acres of the specialty crop this spring, and based on current pricing, he wishes he'd planted 1,000 acres.

Mountain States Oilseeds founder Bill Meadows said mustard prices, at 33.1 cents per pound delivered, are up about 2.5 cents per pound from last year, making it one of the few crops to have increased in value in 2016. Idaho growers have seized the opportunity to plant a profitable crop, leading Meadows to increase his contracted acreage by 250 percent from last season, when he contracted for about 3,000 acres.

"Grain is worthless. What more needs to be said?" Woodland said. "We want to grow something we can make money at."

Meadows said Woodland, who farms under irrigation, and first-year mustard grower Ryan Cranney, of Oakley,



John O'Connell/Capital Press

Martin Sanchez seals a bag of mustard on June 9 at Mountain States Oilseeds in American Falls, Idaho. Owner Bill Meadows says his decision to give Sanchez, a bilingual employee, marketing responsibilities for Mexico and South America has helped his company ramp up mustard production.

have two of the best looking mustard fields he's ever seen for the date.

Meadows contracts for mustard acres throughout the Snake River Plain, from Ashton to Twin Falls. He said 15 of his 36 mustard growers are new this season, and most of the longstanding growers have increased their acres. About

40 percent of his company's mustard is raised without irrigation. He's optimistic dryland mustard will yield more than 1,000 pounds per acre this season, while irrigated will yield between 2,200 and 2,500 pounds.

Though Meadows believes growers have a good feel for meeting nutrient needs of mustard, he anticipates additional yield gains as they get a better handle on irrigation practices.

He said U.S. prices have been strong due to acreage reductions in Canada. Nationwide, growers produced 55,000 mustard acres in 2015, compared with 15,000 acres in 2013. U.S. statistics for the current season aren't available.

Meadows anticipates another large increase in his own contracted mustard acres for the 2017 season, based on his recent successes in finding new buyers in Mexico and South America. He said attending trade missions organized by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and giving bilingual employees more marketing responsibilities have helped spur his recent growth.

## Filer youth chosen as Fuel Up to Play 60 ambassador

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

The Idaho Dairy Council has selected Caitlin Colver, a 17-year-old Filer High School junior, as the Fuel Up to Play 60 state ambassador for the 2016-2017 school year.

Fuel Up to Play 60 encourages students to eat healthful food, be active and make positive, wholesome changes in their schools and communities. The National Dairy Council and National Football League founded the initiative in 2010 in collaboration with USDA. More than 73,000 schools nationwide participate.

As state ambassador, Colver will lead Idaho's FUTP 60 program, which engages youth directly as grassroots leaders to increase access to nutrient-rich foods and 60 minutes of physical activity at school.

Active in many extracurricular activities, Colver has been involved in FUTP 60 since her freshman year.

"What I love about the program is that it makes our school a more fun environment and it causes everyone to see how eating and being active will help us stay healthy and happy throughout our lives," Colver said in a press release from United Dairywomen of Idaho.



Courtesy of Caitlin Colver

Caitlin Colver, a 17-year-old Filer High School junior, bottom row fourth from left, poses with the Filer High School Fuel Up to Play 60 chapter.

"As an aspiring doctor, I think that's really important," she said.

Colver plans to pursue a career as a neurosurgeon and hopes to attend Yale School of Medicine or Stanford University School of Medicine.

Selected after a statewide search and extensive application process, Colver will attend the national FUTP 60 Student Ambassador Summit at Purdue University this summer. The event provides state ambassadors with an opportunity to meet their fellow leaders and help sculpt the program, which relies on input and participation from students to evolve.

The ambassadors will also meet NFL players, participate in unique physical activities and visit the agritourism attraction Fair Oaks Farms.

strated such impressive leadership skills, and we can't wait for her to play a more important role on our team," Crystal Wilson, UDI vice president of health and wellness and a registered dietitian, said in the release.

"She's an incredible student who's shown a great passion for Fuel Up to Play 60, and we're delighted she continues to inspire her peers and community to eat healthy and get active," she said.

In addition to national support for FUTP 60, the Idaho Dairy Council provides dozens of grants each semester to participating schools in Idaho to help them jumpstart and sustain healthy nutrition and physical activity improvements — a total of \$730,000 since the initiative launched six years ago, according to UDI.

## Boise Project Board of Control irrigators will have good water year

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

BOISE — Farmers who get their irrigation water from the Boise Project Board of Control will have a plentiful supply this year.

The project uses 1,500 miles of canals and drains to supply water to four irrigation districts in Southwestern Idaho and one in Eastern Oregon. Together, those five districts provide water for 167,000 irrigated acres.

The project has set its annual allotment for water users at 2.6 acre-feet. That's how much water irrigators will receive from the system's reservoirs.

The BPBC has already provided 1.06 acre-feet of

water to irrigators through natural flow from the Boise River. That means project patrons will receive 3.66 acre-feet this year.

"That is a pretty good water year," said BPBC Manager Tim Page.

He said snowpack was good this winter and snowmelt occurred at an ideal pace.

River in-flow levels going into the system's reservoirs exceeded 5,000 cubic feet per second two days last year, Page said. This year, flows were above that level almost the entire spring and they exceeded 7,000 cfs some days.

The project starts the year providing irrigators with all of their water from the Boise River. Once the amount of

water leaving the reservoirs exceeds the amount going in, the project starts using water stored in its reservoirs.

That happened on June 15 this year. The allotment is then set based on how much water is left in the reservoirs.

Last year, BPBC patrons received a total of 2.95 acre-feet of water during the entire year.

"It's been a couple of years since we had this kind of water year," Lauren Boelhke, secretary-treasurer of the Boise-Kuna Irrigation District, said. "It is a really good water year."

Diane Paulsen, secretary-treasurer of the Wilder Irrigation District, said it's been three years since the district's patrons had this much water.

"When you have an ample water supply, you don't need to hunt for excess water to purchase," she said. "It's going to be a good water year."

The board also supplies water to the Big Bend Irrigation District, a small district that provides water to 1,800 acres near Adrian in Eastern Oregon.

Ben Witty, a farmer who gets his water from Big Bend, said soils in that area are lighter than in other areas in the region and water goes down faster and the soil dries out quicker there. That means he and other farmers who furrow irrigate usually need to purchase extra water from somewhere else, even in good years.

"It's a good year, but a good year is adequate at best for this area," he said.

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