

Subscribe to our weekly Idaho email newsletter at [CapitalPress.com/newsletters](http://CapitalPress.com/newsletters)

# Idaho

## Food service pros tour potato harvest

By JOHN O'CONNELL  
Capital Press

PINGREE, Idaho — Twice each week, Egan Click, with Sysco Corp. in Chicago, inspects 100,000-pound rail loads of Idaho potatoes to make certain they meet customers' size and quality specifications.

But Click acknowledges that prior to participating in an Idaho Potato Commission-sponsored harvest tour, he didn't fully appreciate the "unbelievable" process Idaho growers, packers and shippers follow to meet the standards associated with their state's seal.

Click was among the 28 professionals within the growing food service category IPC included in a Sept. 26-29 tour. Participants representing major potato markets such as Illinois, California, Texas and New York toured potato harvest, a fresh packing operation, a dehydrated potato plant and a frozen potato processing plant.

"My director wanted me to get a better sense of knowing what I'm looking for," said Click, who vowed to have more empathy when he encounters future spud defects.

Don Odiome, IPC's vice president of food service, said the food service professionals head home with photographs and stories about Idaho potato production to share with their staffs and may become "brand advocates."

"They are telling us, 'We need to be able to respond to our customers when they have questions about potatoes,' so this is a real good way to build loyalty among those who are buying Idaho potatoes and paying a premium for them," Odiome said.

During the past year, the volume of U.S. potatoes sold by the food service sector —

comprising food consumed outside the home — surpassed retail for the first time, Odiome said.

After leading the IPC group on a tour of his company's fresh packing facility in Pingree, Kevin Stanger, with Wada Farms, said more homes have two working parents, and there are fewer traditional households, where families routinely dine on home-cooked meals.

"It isn't a huge shift, but it's a continual shift of people who don't have time to cook at home," Stanger said.

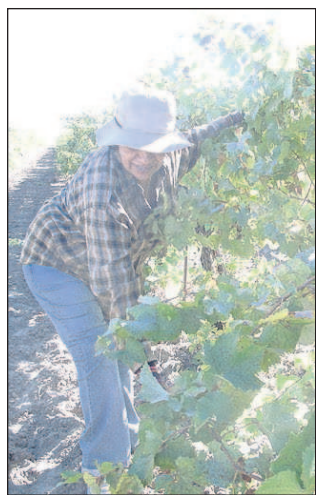
Odiome believes consumers are also demanding a broader variety of creative and ethnic foods that would often be too challenging, costly and time consuming to prepare at home.

To reach the food service sector, Odiome said IPC advertises in food service publications and sends a calendar featuring creative potato ideas by top chefs to 50,000 chefs each year.

Tour participant Maryanne Dinardo, a manager serving the Lake Erie area with U.S. Foods, said her company plans to organize an Idaho potato harvest promotion, including information about Idaho products on its literature and offering discounted rates on products to its customers.

"Idaho is still king," added Scott Mealwitz, produce manager with Sysco Cleveland. "That's what most of our customers want."

IPC spends under \$2,500 per domestic participant on its tours, and will invite food bloggers to visit Idaho next fall. A couple of weeks ago, Odiome said IPC hosted international buyers from the Pacific Rim on a similar tour, which has already resulted in a large purchase of dehydrated spuds by one of the participants.



Sean Ellis/Capital Press

A farmworker picks chardonnay wine grapes in a field near Caldwell, Idaho, on Sept. 28. Idaho's 2017 wine grape harvest will be significantly reduced due to damage caused by a bitter January cold snap.

## 2017 wine grape crop hit by frost

By SEAN ELLIS  
Capital Press

CALDWELL, Idaho — Idaho's wine grape crop will be significantly reduced this year due to severe damage caused by a bitter January cold snap.

But 2016 was a bumper year for wine grape production in Idaho and that will help lessen the impact, vintners and vineyard owners told Capital Press.

Wine grape harvest in this area recently kicked off and growers are expecting markedly reduced overall tonnage.

Dale Jeffers, manager of Skyline Vineyards, said the low temperature reached minus 26.9 degrees in his vineyards near Nampa on Jan. 7 and it reached minus 24.5 and minus 21 the two days before that.

Other growers reported low temperatures of between minus 20 and minus 23 on those days.

The result was a massive reduction in this year's wine grape crop in southwestern Idaho, where most of the state's wine grapes are grown.

Jeffers, who has been farming in the area for 30 years, said, "I certainly don't remember anything colder than that. It's pretty devastating."

He said he will end up harvesting only about 54 of the 470 acres of wine grapes he has in production.

Temperatures reached minus 20 degrees near vineyards owned by Williamson Orchards and Vineyards in Caldwell, said manager Mike Williamson.

"Our harvest is way, way down," he said. "I'd say we will not be picking about 95 percent of our crop this year."

Winemaker Martin Fujishin, who owns Fujishin Family Cellars in Caldwell, started picking wine grapes Sept. 27.

"We still don't know what the full impact is going to be but I can tell the crop is quite a bit lighter," he said. "We're probably looking at about 40 to 50 percent of a normal crop."

Fujishin was more fortunate than some other vintners in the area in that he sources many of his grapes from older, higher-elevation vineyards, which "actually weathered through pretty well compared with the lower-elevation vineyards," he said.

Huston Vineyards owner Gregg Alger said he will harvest about 15 tons of wine grapes this year, down from the normal 120 tons. But he said last year's large crop will help lessen the pain.

"We were blessed with the 2016 harvest being so beautiful," he said. "A lot of folks last year had to find extra tanks and barrels. They had a little extra that can carry them through this year."

The blanket of snow on the ground that reached two to three feet deep for an extended period helped insulate some of the vines.



Food service professionals tour Wada Farms in Pingree, Idaho on Sept. 27 during a tour sponsored by the Idaho Potato Commission.

John O'Connell/Capital Press

# GROWING BUSINESSES FROM THE GROUND UP.

Our local experts don't just know your industry, they live it.

With years of real-world experience, they understand the details and demands of your unique business. And they're always ready to roll up their sleeves and lend a hand. See how good your relationship with a bank can be. Visit [ColumbiaBank.com](http://ColumbiaBank.com).



Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender

WHERE RELATIONSHIPS RULE

40-1/102



## LET US BE YOUR AG & HEAVY-DUTY PARTS SUPPLIER



### FARM AND IMPLEMENT PAINT

Delivers long-lasting quality with durability and protection for your toughest projects.

- Corrosion resistant
- Direct to metal application
- High gloss finish
- Fast dry time

- KRY 1962** Gloss Black Gallon
- KRY 1963** Gloss White Gallon
- KRY 1964** International Harvester Red Gallon
- KRY 1966** John Deere Green Gallon

Additional colors available

### CATALYST HARDENER

- Accelerates dry time
- Adds extra protection

**KRY 2046** 8 oz.

### REDUCER

- Reduces and thins
- Provides optimal spray consistency
- VOC compliant

**KRY 2045** 16 oz.

50-STATE COMPLIANT

50-STATE COMPLIANT



### ORIGINAL FUEL POWER

Contains the most effective combination of ingredients to absorb water from fuel. Prevents damage, wear, and premature fuel pump failure. Also helps improve combustion and mileage, stabilizes fuel and prevents sludge. Concentrated formula treats 240 gallons with only 8 ounces.

**FPP 00100** 8 oz.  
**FPP 01300** 16 oz.

### PREMIUM POLAR POWER DIESEL ANTI-GEL

Combines all the benefits of Fuel Power with the most advanced diesel fuel cold flow improver available today. Provides superior protection in cold weather, with improved low temperature handling characteristics.

**FPP 00106** 32 oz.

### PREMIUM BIO-DIESEL WINTER TREATMENT

Formulated specifically for use in all biodiesel fuels including B-20 (typically 20% soy or vegetable oil and 80% #2 diesel fuel.) Prevents wax formation in cold weather that can plug filters and fuel lines causing the engine to shut down.

**FPP 00603** 32 oz.

**\$14.99** Gallon

SAVE \$10 After Mail-In Rebate

Shell Rotella Synthetic Blend

Acuile de mezcla sintética de alto rendimiento  
SHE T5-15-40-1  
T5-10-30-1  
Limit 12 units

Limit 2 rebates per household.



Sale Price \$19.99  
Mail-In Rebate \$5.00  
Cost After Rebate \$14.99

**\$14.99** Gallon

Shell Rotella Heavy Duty Motor Oil

Acuile de alto rendimiento  
SHE T15-40-1  
T10-30-1  
T40-1  
Limit 12 units



SAVE \$4

Prices effective September 27 - October 24



OReillyAuto.com

40-1/102