

POTATO CERTIFICATION IN OREGON

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It is a privilege to be here today to discuss with you Oregon Potato Certification procedures. I say privilege because the potato growers in this Central Washington area are more conscious of what constitutes "good" potato seed than many other general seed consuming areas. I feel that this is good and am pleased to have this opportunity.

Authority

Oregon law places the responsibilities of certification on the Dean of the School of Agriculture of Oregon State University. The Dean, in turn, established a Certification Board, which includes representatives of the following departments:

Farm Crops - Chairman
Extension Administration
Plant Pathology
Horticulture
Entomology
Seed Certification - Secretary

The Certification Board determines policies, approves certification of new varieties and is the final authority for the determination of standards. The Certification project is an Extension Service project, with personnel and offices located in the Farm Crops Department.

Certification of all crops and plants in Oregon is performed by this group, with the single exception of strawberries, which are handled by an Extension Plant Pathologist, in cooperation with the Certification project.

Areas

Oregon is divided into distinct areas of potato seed production, and I will describe them as follows:

Willamette Valley: Portland, Oregon City,
main cities in areas. About 1300 acres certified
in 1961.

Central Oregon: Redmond, Prineville. 650 acres
certified in 1961.

Klamath: Klamath Falls. 1900 acres certified
in 1961.

Eastern Oregon: Baker, La Grands, Vale. 150
acres certified in 1961

Tagging

Serially numbered tags are issued counties. The County Agent issues the tags to the grower. It is the grower's responsibility to see that the tags go on the right lot.

Shipping Point Inspection

In Oregon, certification is not complete until a shipping point inspection for grade has been performed. This inspection is carried out by the Oregon State Department of Agriculture inspectors, and the grower is charged by that department.

Interpreting

Our philosophy on selection of Oregon certified potato seed is this: We make actual counts (tallying disease) twice in the field and perform a greenhouse test on every lot of seed certified in the state. The results are published and are free for the asking. Therefore, any prospective buyer can select any seed lot in Oregon that meets his specifications, and can purchase that lot from the producer. It's as simple as that.

The Etc. that Nick Told Me I Could Talk About

You may have discerned by now that certification in Oregon involves a good deal of grower integrity and cooperation. I'm proud of the integrity of my growers, and will stand behind most of them all the way.

Since certification is a function of the Extension Service, we take every opportunity to consider grower suggestions for improvement of procedures.

The Potato Committee of the Oregon Seed League recently established an Advisory Committee to consider problems and make recommendations to the Certification Board. This committee is going to meet February 29, and I'll have to report verbally the results of that meeting. The prime objectives of this meeting are:

- Reconsider tagging procedure
- Evaluate seed grade standards
- Consider grade requirements for pre-cut seed

Recommendations by groups such as this, which represent each producing area in the state, are seriously considered by the Certification Board, and are one of the prime sources of improvement of our standards.

In conclusion, I would like to remind you that, as in any business, you are the prime source of your own protection. Learn what makes good seed. Then learn who grows it; the information is available, and only yourself is to blame if you buy something BEFORE finding out what it is. I am sure that, if you do the above, you will come to Oregon for some of your seed.