



Potato Progress

Research and Extension for Washington's Potato Industry

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Andrew Jensen, Editor. Submit articles and/or notes to: ajensen@potatoes.com

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Late Blight Expected in 2001

Dennis A. Johnson, Plant Pathologist, Washington State University

The Columbia Basin Late Blight Forecasting Model has indicated that late blight will again be a problem in the Columbia Basin in 2001. Disease severity will depend on frequency of rainfall and whether control practices are implemented. Cut off lows with rain, which will favor late blight, are expected about May 24 – 25 and the first week of June. Warm and dry weather is then expected after about June 6. (Tom Donkley with The Weather Center in Seattle supplied the weather forecasts).

Protectant fungicides should be applied **before** these wet weather systems if the canopy has closed between rows. Stay in touch with the Late Blight Information Line (**1-800-984-7400**) for modifications in the fungicide application schedule, and the current late blight situation.

Refuse tubers and tuber pieces (cull piles) are currently exposed in various locations in the Basin. These are potential sources of disease inoculum and should be covered with at least 18 inches of soil before the arrival of wet weather.

The following should also be done to manage late blight:

1. Avoid growing or watering potatoes within 80 to 100 ft of the pivot center.
2. Use a MZ seed treatment such as Tops MZ, Maxim MZ, Bark MZ or Evolve.
3. Plant seed tubers within 24 hours of cutting.
4. Avoid over watering and irrigation overlaps.
5. Destroy potato volunteers and refuse tubers.

The web site, <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~djohnsn/> has photos and additional information on managing late blight and other potato diseases.

On-Farm Testing

Andrew McGuire, Grant/Adams Extension

On-farm testing is a good way to evaluate new practices and products only if it is done correctly. Generally this means using replication and randomization. A single side-by-side com-

affect the results. Replication or repeating the comparison in more than one location, allows you to make the comparison under different conditions. If the results of three or four comparisons (replications) are the same, you have much better information than if you only had one comparison. Randomization keeps you fair by setting the location and arrangement of the replications without any knowledge of the differing conditions in the field. Each practice being compared has the same odds of being placed in any certain spot in the test. In comparisons where the results are not likely to differ by much, replication and randomization are a must. See the following web page for more information:

<http://grant-adams.wsu.edu/agriculture/resources.htm>

Starane Section 18 Approved

Based on a request by the Washington State Potato Commission, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has approved an emergency exemption (Section 18) for the use of Starane for the control of volunteer potatoes in sweet corn and field corn in Washington. This is a regional specific exemption which included both Oregon and Washington.

Please call Andy Jensen or Pat Boss at 509-765-8845 with questions or comments about this Section 18.

WSPC Seeks Three New Research Council Members

The Washington State Potato Commission funds a large amount of potato-related research each year in the Pacific Northwest. The Commission uses an established procedure for solicitation of research proposals. Proposals are reviewed and funding recommendations made by the Research Council. Research Council members are drawn from the WSPC Research Committee, interested growers, potato processing companies, ag/chem companies, other potato companies, and includes three at large positions. Due to scheduled rotation of membership, there are currently three vacant slots among the seventeen voting members on the Council. The Commission is seeking volunteers and/or nominations of interested individuals from the Washington potato industry, including growers, who would like to serve on the WSPC Research Council. Membership on the Council entails about four meetings per year, all in the late fall and winter months. Please send nominations to Andrew Jensen, Director of Research and Technical Affairs, Washington State Potato Commission, 108 Interlake Rd., Moses Lake, WA 98837; ajensen@potatoes.com; (509) 765-8845.

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parison may be easy to conduct, but when you get done you will not know if your observations were the result of the practices you were comparing or the result of other conditions. Variations in soil type, fertility, pest pressure, tillage, past field operations, planting or weather can all
