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## Update on State National Harmonization Program for Seed Potatoes

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## History of SNHP

- Began as an initiative of National Potato Council and its seed certification and disease management subcommittee in early 2000s
- Concerns were raised that seed potato certification programs were state run and had different (but mostly similar) rules and regulations
- The U.S. model differed from other countries, where such programs are run by federal entities

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## History of SNHP, continued

- The National Plant Board became involved in the SNHP, as it was envisioned that developing a program which would provide federal oversight would best be accomplished through entering into Memoranda of Agreements (MOUs) with the states
- To help with the history of the issue – the following slides are from a presentation that Geir Friisoe delivered “many years ago”, with minor modifications

# National Harmonization Program for Seed Potatoes

Geir Friisoe – Minnesota

## Origin of the MOU Concept

- At a 2002 “Potato Summit” growers, government agencies and industry representatives formed a task force to address barriers to foreign markets
- Potato growers expressed an interest in expanded international market opportunities for potatoes, especially seed potatoes
- MOU concept developed over a series of meetings in 2003

## Purpose of the MOU

- Facilitate U.S. international negotiations on market access for potatoes by
  - Developing a minimum set of pest management and certification standards
  - Establishing a state commitment to those standards and establishing federal oversight over the implementation of the MOU



- ### Common Seed Potato Certification Procedures in the U.S.
- Planting approved seedstock. (Documentation & Trace Back)
  - Making visual inspections during growing season for disease and off-types, and submitting to winter test.
  - Observing tubers at harvest and/or storage time.
  - Grade (tuber quality) inspection made at time of shipping.

- ### Components of Certification Programs in the US
- Disease-tested starting material
  - Flush Through System
  - Tolerances in the field
  - Tolerances in the seed lot
  - Visual Inspections and Testing
  - Winter test for re-certification
  - Zero tolerance BRR

### Authority

AK, CA, ME, MI, MN, NY, WA, WI	<u>State Dep. of Agriculture</u>
ND	<u>ND State Seed Dep.</u>
CO	<u>State Agriculture Board</u>
OR, MT, ID, NE	<u>University</u>

- ### Authority, delegated to:
- CO from State Agr. Board to University
  - ID from University to Crop Impr. Association
  - CA from Dept of Ag. to Crop Impr. Association
  - NE, WY, MI from University to Potato Certification Association
  - NY, WI from State Dep. of Ag. to University

- ### US Seed Potato Certification Agencies
- State Departments (ND, MN, ME, PA, AK)
  - Land-grant universities (NY, WI, CO, MT, OR, WY)
  - Crop Improvement Association (ID, CA)
  - Independent growers association (MI, NE)

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**MOUs are Generally With...**

- The state's Department of Agriculture, which then recognizes the certification entity in that state
- If the certification entity is not the state's Department of Agriculture, the state Department of Agriculture agrees to ensure that the certification agency complies with certain provisions of the MOU (record keeping, testing protocols, etc.)

**NPB involvement with SNHP**

- Late summer 2006 Denver meeting
- USDA APHIS, SPROs (mostly seed potato states), Seed Potato Certification Officials, University Representatives, National Potato Council

**NPB involvement with SNHP**

- NPB Committee – Ken Rauscher, Terry Bourgoin, Mike Cooper, Geir Friisoe
- Ann Gibbs and Bob Mungari helped finalize
- Will Wise – USDA APHIS National Trade Director – Potato Programs
- Mike Ward – USDA APHIS National Accreditation Program Manager
- John Keeling and Craig Thorn – National Potato Council

**SNHP Key Provisions**

- Agreement between the State Agency and USDA APHIS PPQ
  - Establish minimum standards set by state authority for certification of seed potatoes
  - Cooperate in pest management

**Uniform requirements for seed potato certification in MOU**

- Must be produced from a) tissue culture potatoes, free of regulated pests or b) from other entry level material free of regulated pests
- Produced under a limited generation system
- Undergo at least two field inspections

**Uniform requirements for seed potato certification in MOU**

- Subjected to post-harvest testing for re-certification
- Produced and stored in a cooperating state under the SNHP
- Interstate shipments and exports departing from the state are inspected by state designated officials at the shipping point to verify lot identity and ensure compliance with phyto requirements

## State Responsibilities in MOU

- Ensure conformance with SNHP standards
- Require retention of records by the seed certification entity
- Provide APHIS a quality manual describing seed certification procedures, tolerances and methods
- Implement potato pest management plans specified in the annex (Golden Nematode, Potato Virus Management)

## Timelines

- Early September – National release of the SNHP and a quality manual template
- November 1 target to achieve 70% of potato acreage or seed potato states have committed to the MOU or submitted letters of intent
- Some states may need to amend statutes or regulations. It is hoped that these changes can be achieved within 3 years

## Final Points

- The MOU is an industry driven initiative
- MOU is based on existing current state practices
- Is an efficient alternative to pursuing federal legislation
- These minimum standards could also be applied to imports
- All seed-producing and states with significant commercial potato production will need to sign for maximum beneficial effect

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## From 2006 to 2012

- States began to enter into MOUs with PPQ
- States began to develop Quality Manuals
- PPQ reviewed Quality Manuals and began conducting site visits to “audit” programs (led by Mike Ward)

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## In 2012...

- APHIS's budget experienced another cut
- APHIS prepares for a potential cut in 2013 budget
- APHIS offers Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority programs
- Mike Ward retires! Terry Bourgojn asked to finish work of SNHP

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## Since Early May...

- Held several calls to become familiar with status of program
- Issued letter recognizing NE's certification program as meeting requirements of SNHP (and WY's, as is conducted by NE) based on audit performed by a group from the Western “hub”
- Reviewed New York state's Quality Manual and will provide comments

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## Since Early May, Continued...

- Conducted audit of ME's seed potato certification program, prepared audit report, and issued letter recognizing certification program as meeting requirements of SNHP
- Met with NPC's Legislative and Government Affairs Committee on 7/12/12 at the NPC's summer meeting in Maine to brief them on the status of the SNHP and obtain feedback on the industry's view of the program

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## Current Status of SNHP

State	MOU Signed	QM Audited and Approved
Alabama	X	
Alaska	X	
California	X	
Colorado	X	X
Idaho	X	X
Maine	X	X
Michigan	X	
Minnesota	X	X
Montana	X	X
Nebraska/Wyoming	X	X
New York	X	
North Dakota	?	X
Oregon	X	X
Pennsylvania	X	
Washington	X	X
Wisconsin	X	
West Virginia	X	
Any other seed potato states?		

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## Yet to do...

- Provide feedback to NY on its Quality Manual
- Conduct audit of MI's and WI's seed potato certification program and provide feedback
- When NY's Quality Manual is finalized, conduct audit of it seed potato certification program and provide feedback
- Once these efforts are done, other than AK, CA, and PA (only 1-2 growers), all seed certification programs will have approved MOUs and Quality Manuals audited and approved

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## Yet to do, continued...

- Hope to conduct site visit to complete audit of MI's and WI's certification programs in August
- Hope to conduct site visit and audit of NY's certification programs once any modifications of Quality Manual are completed (hopefully by the end of September)
- Determine how to conduct audits of CA's, AK's and PA's (?) certification programs (use local program staff and trade specialists?)

## FUTURE OF SNHP

Once this program is implemented we will have a national seed certification program that will support the US in trade negotiations for seed/commercial potatoes

It will provide a standardized program for seed potatoes based on state programs

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## Long Term Future

- Renew MOUs that are expiring and determine whether any changes in programs have occurred which would necessitate new audits (phone only)
- Work with the NPC, seed certification agencies, PPQ staff and the NPB to determine where to go with the SNHP

