



Oregon Potato Commission

NewsLetter

OREGON LEGISLATORS SPEAK UP ON BEHALF OF POTATOES IN SCHOOLS

OPC was included with many other potato industry folks that helped encourage both houses of congress to influence legislation on continuing school lunch programs the choice of developing menus that provide healthy nutritious meals.

According to National Potato Council (NPC) clips, current nutrition standards for school lunches are based on federal dietary guidelines from 1989. After the guidelines were updated in 2005, the USDA asked the Institute of Medicine to evaluate how the school lunch program could be brought in line with them. The institute's report came out in 2009, and the USDA used it to develop a plan that includes cutting back on ingredients like salt and potatoes, reducing saturated fats and total calories, and boosting fresh fruits and vegetables. The goal was to improve nutrition and help stem the tide of childhood obesity. The USDA published its proposed recommendations in the Federal Register in January, and invited members of the public to comment on them.

One concern was that schoolchildren weren't getting enough fruits and vegetables in their lunches

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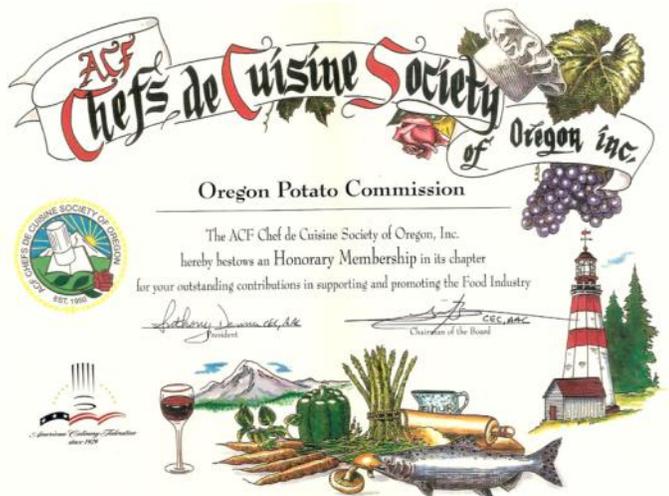


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OREGON POTATO COMMISSION JOINS OREGON CHEF'S SOCIETY

The Oregon Potato Commission was recently awarded an Honorary membership into the ACF Chefs de Cuisine Society of Oregon for its outstanding contributions and support of the food industry.



The Oregon Chefs organization, founded in 1950 and is part of the National American Culinary Federation, has long been a group of professional chefs that work in their communities and within many of the best hotels, restaurants and culinary schools throughout the state.

“We are very pleased to have the OPC as an Honorary Member of our organization and we hope to work with other state commodity commissions in the future promoting the best of Oregon products”, said Chef Anthony Dana CEC, AAC President of the Chef’s organization.

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and that the variety was too limited. USDA officials proposed separating fruits and vegetables into separate categories to increase the total amount and the variety offered to kids. Further, they specified that once a week, lunches offer at least one half-cup serving of each of the following items: dark green vegetables (such as spinach or broccoli), orange vegetables (carrots, squash), legumes (chickpeas, kidney beans), starchy vegetables (white potatoes, corn) and "other" vegetables, including tomatoes. (The USDA's definition of a "vegetable" is in line with how people use and think of them rather than strictly botanically accurate.)

The idea was that by limiting servings of white potatoes — whether baked, mashed, French-fried, hash-browned or tater-totted — as well as corn, lima beans and green peas, students would be encouraged to try a wider array of vegetables, including those in the dark green and orange groups that contain essential nutrients such as folate and beta carotene.

The NPC estimates the rule would have cost U.S. schools \$6.8 billion over the next five years because other vegetables would be costlier to meet nutritional requirements. It was also determined after national surveys were conducted that the plate waste would increase dramatically. The potato industry message to USDA and elected officials was the proposed rules would increase costs, increase food waste while reducing choices to schools.

In a letter sent to US Agriculture Secretary Vilsack, Oregon Senator Merkley stated: While we applaud your agency's work to improve nutrition in schools, we are concerned that the proposed limitations on these vegetables may ignore some of the opportunities to gain from their nutritional benefits in ways that also add vegetable variety in children's diets. For example, potatoes, when they are baked instead of fried and are prepared with healthy toppings such as broccoli, can be part of a balanced meal that is high in potassium and dietary fiber.

Senator Wyden co-sponsored an amendment that prohibits the use of U.S. Department of Agriculture funds to implement rules that would set maximum serving limits on vegetables - including potatoes - in school meal programs.

OPC applauds our elected officials that helped send a message to the administration that will keep potatoes in the school lunch program.

Recently the Oregon Potato Commission and the chefs teamed up to develop a sensory panel, conducting the first ever culinary competition to pick Oregon's Gold Medal award based on taste, smell, texture and appearance. Potatoes were submitted by Oregon growers, the variety categories included Russets, Red, Yellow and Specialty. Chef Leif Eric Benson CEC, AAC (also an OPC commissioner) prepared the potato entries for the judging panel.



Sensory panel pick winners based on taste, smell, texture and appearance.

The six judges were impressed by the differences in taste within the same categories. Later learning they were grown in different soils throughout the state. The chefs noted that this was a very educational demonstration as they were able to compare the differences in flavor that the different soils and terroir produced in potatoes.

The first ever "Goodness Unearthed" award for the 2011 Oregon's Gold Medal award will be announced during the WA/OR Annual Conference in Kennewick WA 10:15

TRADE MISSION UPDATE

October 31 through November 12 2011 Oregon Potato Commission in conjunction with the Washington State Potato Commission represented the Pacific Northwest Potato Industry. Jim Carlson, Chef Leif Eric Benson, Jeff Urbach and Bill Brewer represented OPC..

Mr. Carlson said it was his first experience of participating on a trade mission. There appeared to be interest from buyers/importers to purchase West Coast products. He thought the Vietnamese market should prove to be successful. Mr. Carlson said the group participated very well together and the schedule was well developed and followed for the entire trip. He also

said there seemed to be a lot of interest to continue future trade missions with Washington among the participants.

Chef Benson thought the mission was well received. He said there was a lot of work involved in presenting cooking demonstrations and many of the chefs showed special interest. The Hyatt Hotel Chef in Singapore changed his entire presentation to include one of Chef Benson's purple potato salad dishes for a cooking contest that was to take place the following day after seeing the presentation.



Students at the Vocational Training Council demonstration in Hong Kong

Mr. Brewer said OPC was filing updates to ODA for reimbursement of the project through a Specialty State Block Grant Program. He also suggested the next work on trade to SE Asia should include a Reverse Trade Mission (RTM) and was communicating with ODA the possibility for funding a RTM for Vietnamese business and government officials to visit Oregon.

2012 ASSESSMENT AUDITS

During the December Quarterly Commission meeting, the Oregon Potato Commission (OPC) requested to begin a statewide audit of production reports by OPC Staff. Under the authority of Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 576 and Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 658, OPC has the authority to conduct audits of First Purchasers, Handlers and Producers who are required to pay assessments.

It was determined, the most efficient process would be to conduct audits of all grower's district by district. Beginning in Spring of 2012, each grower will be notified of the dates OPC Staff will be conducting the required audits to schedule times and locations. Audits will begin in the Klamath District, second will include growers in Central Oregon, third will include Malheur County, Baker County and Union County, and fourth will be the remainder of Blue Mountain District before finish-

ing in the Willamette Valley. The information requested will include acreage and production for the years 2009 through 2011.

Sections of OAR 658 that are frequently overlooked are: 658-010-0020 Assessments (1) (a) In all cases where a first purchaser lives or has the office of the first purchaser in another state, it is the duty of the producer to report all sales made to such first purchaser on forms approved by, and pay the assessment moneys directly to the Oregon Potato Commission, unless such first purchaser voluntarily makes the proper deduction and remits the proceeds to the commission.

658-010-0040 outlines Penalties that could be applied if transmittal of funds are delayed, but the commission may waive the penalty and interest upon showing of good cause.

658-010-0050 Records of person required to pay assessment (1) Pursuant to ORS 576.351, the first purchaser or handler shall keep accurate records sufficient to enable the Oregon Potato Commission to determine by inspection and audit the accuracy of assessments paid or due to the commission and of reports made or due to the commission.

(2) The commission or a person authorized by the commission may inspect and audit the records referred to in subsection (1) of this section for the purpose of determining the accuracy of assessments paid or due to the commission.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, the commission or a person authorized by the commission may also inspect and audit the records of a producer who sells potatoes to a first purchaser if such inspection and audit are necessary for the purpose referred to in subsection (1) of this section. No person shall refuse to permit an inspection and audit under subsection (2) of this section during business hours.

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Upcoming Events

February 7-9, 2012	NAPPO Potato Panel Meeting New Orleans, LA
February 26-29, 2012	NPC Public Policy Meetings Washington DC
March 8-9, 2012	OPC Quarterly Meeting Portland, OR
March 13-16, 2012	USPB Annual Meetings Colorado Springs, CO
June 7-8, 2012	OPC Quarterly Meeting Bend, OR

Oregon Potato Commission Members:

*Chairman Dan Walchli, Hermiston
Vice Chairman Marty Myers, Boardman
Tony Amstad, Hermiston
Lon Baley, Malin
Leif Eric Benson, Public Member
Jim Carlson, Culver
Dan Chin, Klamath Falls
Nels Iverson, Jefferson
Jerry Strickland, Huntington
Richard Wagstaff, Nyssa*

Staff:

*Bill Brewer, President and CEO
Jennifer Fletcher, Administrative Director
Judy Schwartz, Administrative Assistant*

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