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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Institute of Medicine Recommends Fresh, White Potatoes Be Added for WIC Purchase

The Oregon Potato Commission (OPC) is pleased to announce that in a report released Tuesday, February 3, 2015 the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommends that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) allow fresh, white potatoes to be eligible for purchase under the USDA Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), consistent with the most current 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommendations. The white potato had been the only vegetable or fruit excluded from the WIC program.

"This is good news for the potato industry and the mothers who have previously not been able to procure white potatoes with a WIC voucher," said Bill Brewer, OPC CEO. "The potato industry of the U.S. along with OPC has urged USDA to use current scientific information regarding the special nutritional needs of low-income pregnant, breast feeding, non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and infants and children up to five years of age who are at nutritional risk. The announcement confirms what we have said for years."

The OPC thanks all of the Oregon congressional delegation for their continued support at the national level. In particular we want to thank Senator Merkley for his continued support of the science and Congressmen Walden and Schrader for their leadership by authoring congressional letters. During this seven year project all of the Oregon delegation has signed letters of support and helped as needed.

"It took many people from congress, nutritionists and growers with the same goal to achieve this change", said Brewer. "It shows if you have the science and enough patience to keep fighting the battle, change can happen at the national level".

[Link to IOM Review of WIC Food Packages: An Evaluation of White Potatoes in the Cash Value Voucher: Letter Report](#)

### **About the Oregon Potato Commission**

The Oregon Potato Commission was formed in 1949 to represent the state's five potato growing regions (Blue Mountain, Central Oregon, Klamath, Malheur and Willamette Valley) in educational, trade development, research, legislative affairs and public relations activities. Development of sales and markets for Oregon's potato crop is one of the Commission's roles. Programs are designed to improve Oregon's market share in-



state and in other prominent West Coast markets. Export markets for processed potato products and, increasingly, fresh potatoes and raw product are also included in market development and promotional programs in the Pacific Rim and other market areas. The Commission's largest focus is on a series of ongoing research programs in cooperation with Oregon State University. The results of these programs place Oregon among the top in the United States in potato production volume and yield per acre. For more information, visit [www.OregonSpuds.com](http://www.OregonSpuds.com)

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