



JULY 2009

United Potato Growers of America thanks growers for keeping 2009 acreage under control

In its July board of directors meeting, United Potato Growers of America announced that both fall and annual potato acreage is virtually unchanged from last year. This assessment is based upon data from the United States Department of Agriculture as well as the direct counting done by United chapters in California, Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin.

“United is pleased that growers heeded the call to plant for expected demand rather than basing their decisions on what the price was for potatoes several months ago,” said Lee Frankel, United president and chief executive officer. “United appreciates the strong efforts of the United co-op leaders and members to communicate to growers throughout the country about appropriate planting levels.”

Frankel and the board of directors believe that current acreage levels provide potato growers in most areas

an opportunity to achieve another year of profitability. Cautions Frankel, “It is still too early to know how the current fall crop will mature and produce. Growers should be aware that the work for the marketing of this crop is just beginning.”

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United advises growers to actively manage the flow to the market to ensure sustainable profitability. United members should stay involved with United for updated fall crop reports so that they can understand how growing conditions may produce more potatoes in total or more of a particular size profile or

fewer potatoes than expected with each situation requiring more active, strategic crop management.

Based on preliminary Nielsen data provided by the Perishables Group, the volume of fresh potatoes through traditional retail outlets excluding club stores, Walmart and convenience and small stores has increased in April and May of 2009 compared to last year. “This uptick in retail activity is another potential indicator that supply and demand have a good potential to be in balance at levels fair for consumers, retailers and growers,” said Frankel.

Beginning in the fall of 2008 United and its member co-ops conducted communication and education campaigns to inform potato growers of its acreage recommendations for the 2009 crop. A critical portion of the efforts was conducted at the United Potato Partners seminars that are held each year in major potato growing areas. 🌱

United calls for funds to support in-store testing, sell more potatoes

In the June issue of this newsletter we reported that the Fresh Demand Working Group has selected the Interger Group, a shopper marketing specialist agency, to create an in-store test campaign for selling more potatoes immediately. Growers at United meetings have identified stimulating short-term sales as a needed complement to the efforts of the national and state potato commissions and boards.

The Idaho Potato Commission has agreed to support the test campaign and will donate the time of senior level staff member Seth Pemsler, who is the head of IPC's retail promotions to help encourage the success of the in-store testing.

Leaders from all of the United chapter areas agreed to help raise funds through a combination of their United chapters, individual shippers, and/or individual growers. The United States Potato Board will also consider additional support for the campaign at their summer meetings if they see indication of broad support for the effort from many regions, as evidenced by money deposited into the FDWG fund.

"To demonstrate that growers are committed to this endeavor, it is imperative we have a solid amount of money in the bank prior to the USPB's August industry meetings," said Dave Warsh, vice chairman of United Potato Growers of America. 🌱

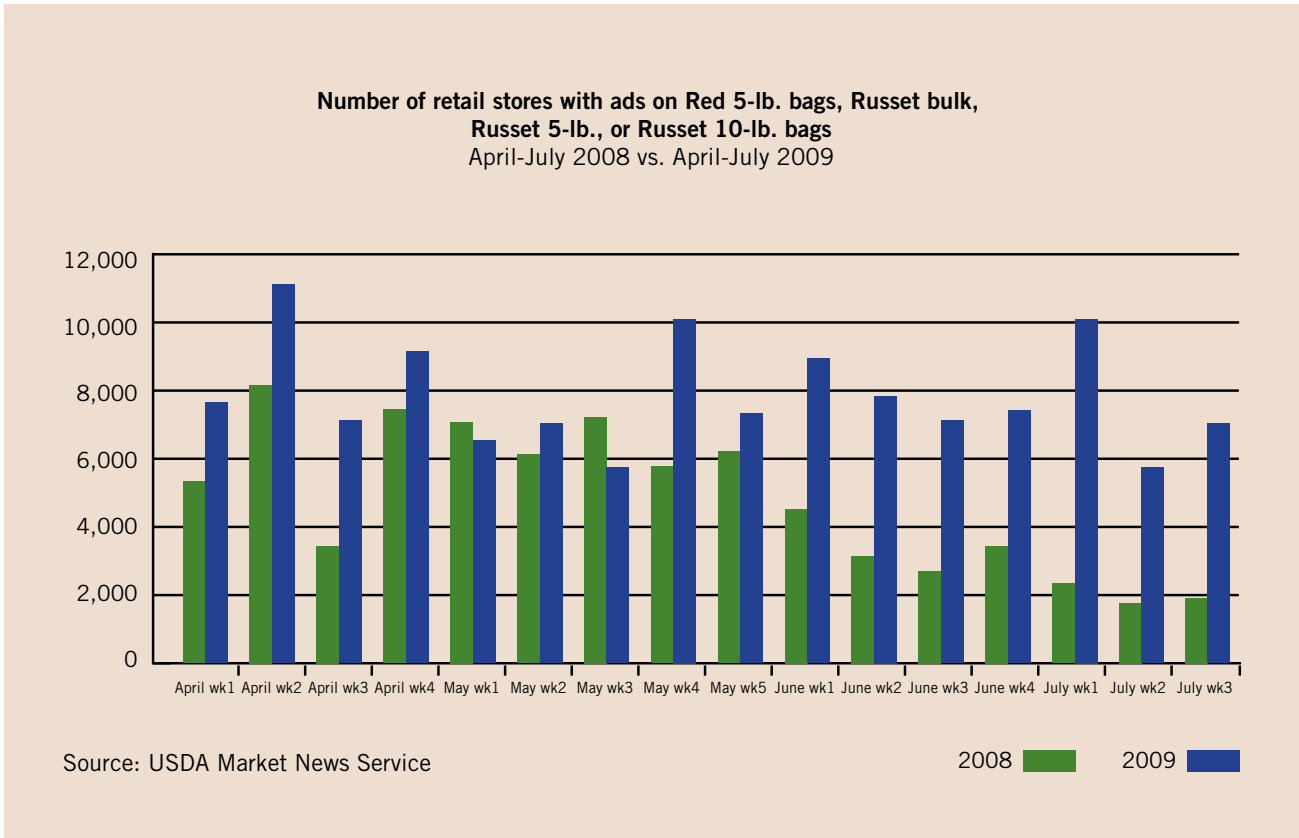
Seed Division discusses successful coordination

The United Seed Division held its mid-summer conference call with members in July to discuss United's acreage counting project, the National Agricultural Statistics Service acreage survey and the seed acres submitted for certification. Seed growers use this data to help predict future demand for potatoes in order to make sure the right quantities and varieties of potato seed are available to meet this demand.

On the call, the growers discussed the value they and their loyal customers gained from the coordination to accommodate the significant and late shifts of contracts for processing potatoes. Certain process growers who had their commitments cancelled by processors no longer needed seed while the growers with increased contracts needed that seed potato. By establishing an informal clearing house for United seed growers, the seed potatoes found new homes with significantly less disruption than in similar circumstances in past years.

The division will hold pre- and post-harvest conference calls for members. The annual Seed Division meeting will be January 6 with a luncheon at noon followed by the meeting from 1 to 5 p.m. This meeting and all United annual meetings will be held at the Loews Royal Pacific Resort, Orlando, Florida. The Potato Expo will also be held that week at the resort. 🌱





Overview: Shippers have maintained an excellent rate of promotions with retailers around the country over the last few months. Supply gaps from traditional potato sales organizations last year meant that activities with retailers diminished in the months leading to the fall harvest. Continued close communication with retailers should lead to greater momentum for the balance of the storage crop and the new crop that is starting to be harvested. 🌱

Ewing wins July United Photo Contest Next round photos due Oct. 15

Brenda Ewing, office manager of Ewing Farms, has won the July phase of the United Photo Contest. Her winning photo appears in cropped form in this newsletter. On pages one and four is her daughter, Mckayla, 6, in front of a field. On page four are family members teaching her son, Nathan, 15, to drive tractor in the same field.

She was awarded a \$100 Cabela's gift certificate. All United members and their spouses and children as

well as member co-op staff are eligible to enter the contest. Photos should be of any phase of production. Harvest photos are especially encouraged. Set your camera to the large or fine setting. This will ensure that we receive the highest resolution.

The last phase of the 2009 contest ends October 15. Submit high-resolution photos to barb@unitedpotatousa.com. 🌱



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SAVE THE DATES

Board of Directors and Marketing Meetings

August 19-20
Salt Lake City, UT

September 16-17
Salt Lake City, UT

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