



POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA

LES PRODUCTEURS UNIS DE POMMES DE TERRE DU CANADA

Crop Report July 13 2018

Prince Edward Island: The first half of June was colder and wetter than usual on PEI. In the last three weeks well above average temperatures allowed the accumulation of heat units so that early potato acres are catching up to normal. Many mid to late planted acres on PEI are still behind normal development (up to a week) for this time of year. Canopies range from just emerging to full row closure with most fields in the rapid vegetative growth stage. So far crop emergence is very even and the crop looks healthy. Any rain would be welcome soon. Western PEI experienced some isolated hail damage this week. Some early-planted potatoes with row cover have been harvested for the local fresh market. Commercial harvest is several weeks away. Last season's crop is getting cleaned up, with limited supply as prices continue to strengthen.

Nova Scotia: Potatoes, Blueberries, and Strawberries were all affected by severe frosts early this spring. Jury is still out on recovery.

New Brunswick: The crop has emerged well and stands look good with some fields starting to blossom and filling the rows. The heat has helped move the crop along but has also lowered the moisture level in the soil. The Woodstock – Florenceville area has received a little more rain than the Grand Falls area so the crop is not as moisture stressed. Unfortunately there is no rain in the forecast for the next seven days. Depending on the moisture received, early harvest will likely begin in early to mid August. National French Fry Day in Florenceville is on Fryday, July 13th.

Quebec: Things have been hot and dry in Quebec over the past three weeks. Plants are stressed as the heat has slowed down growth. Growers that can irrigate are obviously in a better position but even those are having a hard time keeping up. More normal temperatures are forecasted for the middle of the week but high temperatures are returning by weeks end with no precipitation in the forecast. Harvest of new crop started last week with one chain and now three are pulling small amounts. Demand has been slower on retail product due to the weather, but restaurant trade is in high demand and prices are strong.

Ontario: Despite the prolonged heat wave, chipstock fields are looking healthy and most of them are at the full bloom stage. No insects or diseases have been detected yet. Irrigation has been the order of the day in Ontario. Last week a few areas received some rain that ranged from 1-2.5 inches. The fresh market crop is looking healthy as well. In the Simcoe-Delhi area, some growers expect to have a marketable crop by the end of July. Harvest of the early chipping crop in the Leamington area is expected to start by the end of July. CTV News in Barrie did a story on the potato crop variety trials with potato specialist Eugenia Banks. Coverage of the crop can be viewed at <https://barrie.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1436247> The Ontario Potato Field Day will be held on August 23rd at HJV Equipment in Alliston.

Manitoba Processing: Emergence and health of stands are excellent. There was no replanting and very little rot. The province has been hot and dry and some heat runners have been observed. This may put some pressure on yield and quality. There is little disease pressure with fully enclosed canopies. Insects however are thriving in the heat and Colorado Potato Beetles are demanding attention. Tuber set looks normal with crop advancement close to normal.

One processor is considering moving harvest ahead of August 15th. Other crops are well ahead with corn tasselling and canola flowering diminishing.

Manitoba Fresh: The table crop is also progressing well and almost caught up to typical maturity. Hot weather though is hurting yield potential – crop could be below last year by 5-10%. There also seems to be a reduced or variable set as well.

Alberta: There was excellent emergence and stands have not seen disease pressure to date. Fields in the non-irrigated areas need a rain and a reprieve from the heat. The first Out of Field early harvest will be around August 20th. The Cavendish Farms plant expansion is slightly ahead of schedule with a June 2019 start up date. The Potato Growers of Alberta Summer Tour is Friday, August 17th, at the University of Lethbridge to view the new Potato Lab and Science Building set to open in the fall.

Saskatchewan: It was a dry spring and the crop is doing well but is now in need of some rain. There is not a drought yet but those who can irrigate are now beginning to do so. The earliest plantings (May 25) are at row closure. The six Tornados spotted in the southern part of the province this week did not cause any damage to the potato growing areas.

British Columbia: Experienced the driest May on record allowing the crop to be fully planted by the end of May. This is a big comparison to 2017 where planting could hardly begin until the end of May. Good weather has continued and the crop looks to be in good shape. Yields are expected to be better than average. There is no material inventory of 2017 crop potatoes left. New crop potatoes started shipping in June into a strong market.

Our next Crop Update will be on July 19, 2018 and will contain information on the potato planted acreage estimate in Canada.

For more information contact:

Kevin Maclsaac

Kevin@unitedpotatocanada.com



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Association des emballeurs
de pommes de terre du Québec

