



POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA

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Canadian Potato Crop Report July 17, 2019

Prince Edward Island Old crop is getting cleaned up. One of the main customers is still bringing in potatoes to reach the start of new crop. Acreage on the island is expected to be similar to last year. The spring was later, but Growing Degree Days really moved ahead in June with crop growth ahead of, same time last year.

Growing conditions have been good with moisture conditions, above last year and above the 10-year average. Some excess rain at planting has created a few drown outs, but overall the crop just needs heat and sunshine to keep moving along.

New Brunswick There is not a lot of old crop left and both French fry plants will take the opportunity to shut down for maintenance and fryer upgrades this summer. 2019 acreage is expected to be up 1,500 acres to meet the needs of eastern fry plants. Fresh prices continue to be good. Seed was tight this spring due to crop issues from 2018, but some imported seed allowed growers to reach their target acreages. Growing conditions are good with adequate moisture although the crop is 7-10 days behind.

Quebec Old crop is winding down with very good prices and chip stock being imported as the pipeline empties. All of the available seed supply was sold this spring. The 2019 crop is probably 5 days later than average. Irrigation has started on the crop, as more and more growers have invested in this practice. Overall the crop is growing well with the exception of a few seed related issues. Acreage has increased by about 2,000 to supply the needs of the local processing plant.

Ontario The province experienced one of their most challenging planting seasons ever with the time frame going from mid-April to mid-June. The earlier planted fields look the best with some early harvest ready to start shortly. Some of the later crop looks a bit more inconsistent from some of the drown outs encountered earlier on in the season. Ontario is looking forward to a good average crop although very high temperatures in recent days have caused concern for some growers. The crop is about a week behind in maturity – early chip harvest that normally starts on July 23, will likely begin around August 1.

Manitoba Processing Old crop should get cleaned up by July 30th. Imported potatoes will need to supplement supply from then on. The province has needed to import 2,000,000 plus hundredweight to meet customer needs this year. It has been extremely dry since planting with weather records for Winnipeg showing that it is the driest January to June period, going back to 1951. Water levels in the Assiniboine River are very low. Fortunately, some areas have just received up to 2 inches of rain in the last few days. Although the crop is behind, it looks very good. Acreage has increased by 6,000 acres to meet the needs of the new JR Simplot plant opening in January.

Manitoba Table Old crop should wind up by July 31 with new crop coming on by the second week of August. Could be one of the best crops ever, with timely rains of 4 to 6.5 inches since planting.

Saskatchewan The province had only received 1/10 of an inch of rain since planting, however that all changed with some areas receiving 10 inches of rain or the whole season's allotment all at once. Some fields needed to have the water pumped off. Currently the crop looks above average.

Alberta The northern seed growing area of the province had been very dry, however in recent days growers have had to deal with excess water – up to 2-3 inches on some fields. Growers are working diligently to prevent disease from entering their crop in these moist conditions. The southern part of the province is very dry but almost entirely irrigated so the crop looks good. Crop maturity is 7-10 days behind. Some industry people note that the russet crop has set a bit lighter this year. Acreage has increased by 5,500 this year for the new Cavendish Farms plant opening this fall.

British Columbia At this time, BC has potential for a very nice crop. Although no potatoes were planted as early as February this year, the early Warbas' did well, are now harvested, and sold out. Skin set reds and yellows are now available for the market. Some russets have also been killed. The seed crop in the province is experiencing good growing conditions as well.

The above information was obtained from the summer meeting of CPC and PMANA held in Quebec City.

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