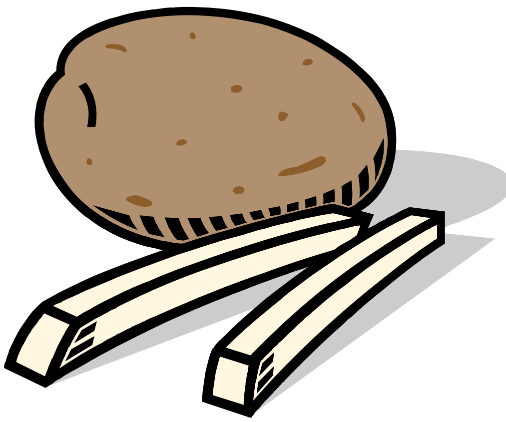
Marketing U.S. Potatoes

2005 Crop



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2005 Crop

Foreword

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If you have any questions, call the Idaho Falls Market News office at 208-525-0166

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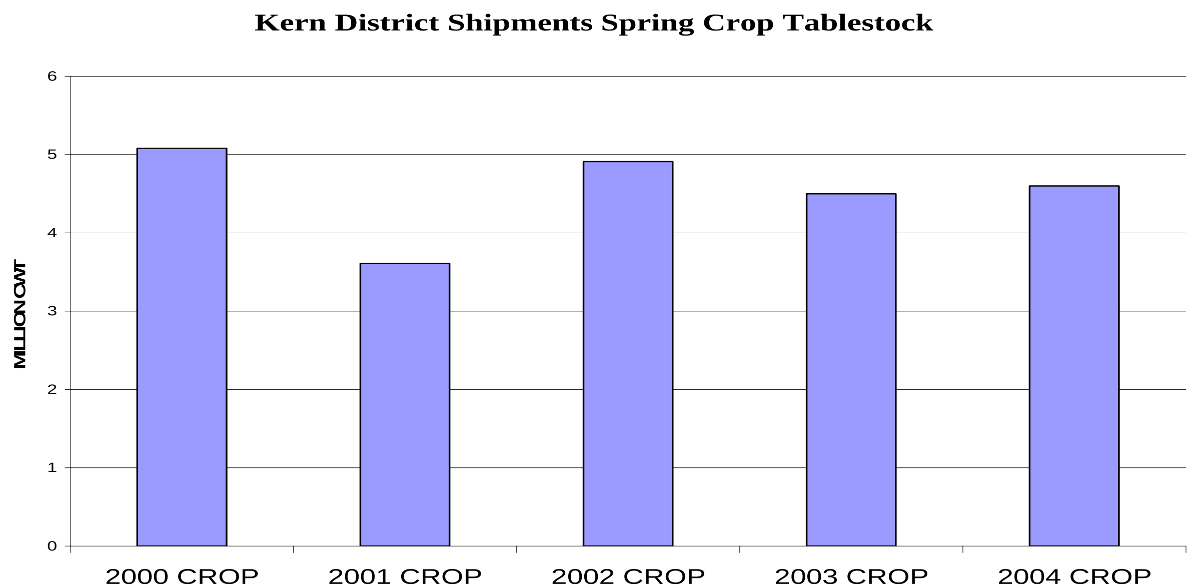
Marketing Kern Potatoes 2005 Spring Crop

Acreage & Production: USDA, NASS estimated California Spring crop production at 7,200 acres, compared to 17,500 in 2004. Yields were also estimated up at 450 cwt compared to 475 the previous year. Production was 3,240,000 cwt compared to 8,360,000 cwt. Kern county table stock acreage was 11,775 acres according to the Kern County Agriculture Commission. Russets were the leading type accounting for 3,533 acres followed by chippers 2,933, whites 2,531, reds 1,794, and yellows 984.

KERN DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA POTATO SHIPMENTS 2004 Spring Crop	
Yellow Type & other types	566,000 cwt
Whites	1,152,000 cwt
Reds	1,173,000 cwt
Russets	1,228,000 cwt
Total Table	**4,119,000 cwt**

Shipments: Fresh shipments totaled 4.1 million cwt. This was 18% larger than the previous season. Local Kern county shipments started April 26, 2005 and continued until week-ending August 4, 2005. Shipments were 30% Russet types, 28% Whites, 28% Reds, and 14 % Yellow flesh (and other) types. Table stock shipments included rail shipments of 1,632,000 cwt, piggyback shipments of 31,000 cwt, and truck shipments of 2,456,000.



Marketing: Long Whites: U.S. No. 1 50 lb cartons size A opened week-ending May 7 at $7.00-8.00, traded as low as 5.00-7.00. then closed week-ending July 16 at $6.00-7.00.

Round Reds: 100-lb sacks opened at $16.00 for U.S. No. 1 size A week-ending May 7, traded as low as 8.00-10.00, and closed at $8.00-10.00 week-ending July 16. U.S. No. 1 50 lb cartons size A opened at $11.00-12.00 week-ending May 7, traded as low as $7.00-8.00, then closed week-ending July 16 at $7.00-8.00.

Russet Norkotahs: Prices for U.S. One non size A 100 pound sacks started season week-ending June 11 at $8.00-8.50, and closed week-ending July 23 at $7.00. 50 pound U.S. One carton 80s started season at 10.00 and closed at 7.00.

Transportation Trends: Trucks hauled 60% of the crop, rail & piggyback 40%. In late May & June, the usual tight truck supply situation surfaced again this season.

Colorado Potatoes
2005 season

Production: According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Colorado growers planted **63,200 acres** (58,200 Fall acres/5,000 Summer acres) and **harvested 62,800 acres** (57,900 Fall acres/4,900 Summer acres) in 2005, down 7200 acres harvested from the previous season. However, potato yields increased 15 cwt per acre from 370 cwt in 2004 to **385.** Production decreases slightly to **24,130,000 cwt** from the previous years 25,786,000 cwt.

Growing and Harvest Season: By week ending June 5, 2005: Summer potatoes were 89% planted compared to 5-year average of 98%; 69% emerged compared to 5-year average of 83%. The crop was rated in good to excellent condition on that date. Fall potatoes were 81% planted compared to 5-year average of 98% and 13% emerged compared to 5-year average of 34%. The Fall crop was rated in mostly good condition on same date. By week ending August 7 Fall potatoes were rated in good to fair condition, while summer potatoes were rated in fair to good condition. By that date harvest of summer potatoes was underway with 4% harvested compared to the 5-year average of 8%. Week-ending September 4 saw fall and summer potatoes both rated in good to fair condition. Summer potatoes were 46% harvested compared to the five-year average of 51%. Harvest of fall potatoes had begun with 5% of the acreage dug compared to the five-year average of 5%. Growing conditions were excellent for most of the summer months. Highs in the upper 70s-lower 80s, with lows in the 40s was the norm in the San Luis Valley.

Summer Marketing Season: The USDA Market News Service, does not publish f.o.b. shipping point prices for Colorado's summer crop due to having too few shippers to establish a market.

Fall Marketing Season: The USDA Market News Service began reporting prices for Yellow Type and Round Red week-ending October 15, Russet varieties of Count cartons and no-size A bales started week-ending September 3, dry-bulk September 17 and size A bales November 19. 70 count **Russet** cartons started out at $10 per carton and finished the season $14 per carton. Non-size A baled 510-lb film bags started out at $6.50-7.00 and finished at 6.50-7.50, Size A baled 5 10-lb film bags started out at $6.50-7.00 and finished at $7.50, and U.S. Commercial bulk per cwt size A started at $8.00-8.50 and finished at $9.50-10.00. **Round Red** size A 50-lb cartons of 2 ½-3 ½ inch (premiums) started the season at $12.50-14.00; size A baled 5 10-lb film bags started at $9.00-10.00 and finished at $8.00-9.00; and size B 50-lb sacks started out at $14.00 and finished $13.00-14.00. **Yellow Type** 50-lb cartons 2

½- 3 ½ inch (premiums) started out at $12.50-15.00 and finished $12.00-13.00; size A baled 10 5-lb film bags started out at $9.50-11.00 and finished $10.00-11.50.

Movement: The Market News Service began reporting light movement of Round Reds and Yellow Type out of the Northern portion of Colorado on week-ending July 30. Shipment of Russet varieties soon followed. Colorado's summer potatoes were shipped by week-ending January 21, 2006. Shipments of Round Red, Yellow Type and Russets started shipping week-ending August 27. Fall potato shipments peaked in mid-November with the Thanksgiving promotions running add business. Week-ending November 19 saw 533,900 cwt shipped. Mid-December saw another bump of Holiday business. Week-ending December 17 saw 492,400 cwt shipped. The Easter Holiday saw another bump of business with Week-ending April 8 shipments of 428,6000 cwt. **Colorado's total shipments for the crop year through week-ending September 2, 2006 equaled 17,658,900.**

Stocks: Colorado's Fall potato **stocks** on hand **December 1**, 2005 totaled **16,300,000 cwt**. Down slightly from the 2004 December 1 holdings of 18,000,000, and represented 7**3%** of the year's production. The **April 1** potato holdings were **7,800,000 cwt**, down by nearly 15% from the previous season holdings of 9,000,000 cwt.

Packaging: Major packaging remained the 50 pound cartons, 10 & 5 pound poly bags in 50 pound paper or poly balers or card board bins, and dry bulk for Russet varieties (predominantly Norkotah with some Centennial, Nugget and Rio Grande). Round Reds shipped primarily in 10 & 5 pound poly in 50 pound paper or poly balers and card board bins, also 2 ½-3 ½" (Premiums) in 50 # cartons, and size B in 50 pound paper sacks. Yellow Type shipped primarily as 5 pound poly in 50 pound paper or poly balers and card board bins, also 2 ½-3 ½" (Premiums) in 50 # cartons.

Transportation: Trucks were a problem for the Colorado potato shippers most of the season. Transportation has become a critical issue, Rising fuel prices in 2005 cut into growers profits. There were a few incidents early in the new calendar year, such as the Holiday season when trucks tend to haul the high paying Christmas tree. Also, spring time creates additional problems when trucks are tied up hauling nursery stock that also pays a premium. Most of the Colorado's tablestock crop ships out of state, including major distribution centers such as: Atlanta, GA; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; Miami, FL; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; and because of Colorado's tie too and close proximity too Texas, Amarillo, TX; San Antonio, TX; and Houston, TX.

Delaware Potatoes
2005 Season

Statistics: According to the Delaware Agricultural Statistics Service, harvested acreage of potatoes totaled 3,100 acres, the same as the previous year and down 500 acres from the 2003 crop year. Production finished at 806,000 hundredweight, the same as the 2004 crop and a decrease of 7 percent from two years ago, while yields remained at 260 cwt per acre for the last two seasons and slightly above the 2003 crop yield of 240 cwt per acre.

Movement: According to the Market News Service, movement totaled 511,650 cwt for table stock and an additional 89,345 cwt of chipstock. The season started slightly later than normal in mid-July and wrapped up in late September with the remaining supplies in too few hands to quote.

Growing and Harvest Season: Light planting was underway the end of March with rain thwarting much progress until mid-April. By the third week in April, planting was 51% completed, compared to 70% the previous year and the 5 year average of 62%. Cooler temperatures in the early part of May slowed emergence with minimal precipitation recorded. Most planting was completed by mid-May. June and July brought hot and dry conditions with sporadic thundershowers at the time of harvest in early July. At the end of July, isolated showers and hot, humid conditions curtailed harvest with 50% completed and the five-year average 30%. Good harvest progress was made in mid-August through Labor Day with 77% of the crop harvested, on schedule with the five-year average. Most of September suffered from a moisture shortage, which accelerated the late harvest.

Marketing Season: Prices this season were sharply higher and more stable than the previous crop year. The first fob report in late July reported Round Red U.S. No. 1 50 pound sacks Size A at $14.00 compared to the 2004 season starting price of $7.00 with B size $16.00, compared to $11.00 the prior year. By mid-August, red size A prices slipped to $8.00-9.00 while Bs brought $15.00. With competition from the fall crop, red A prices finished from $7.00-8.00 for 50s in late September. Round white U.S. One 10 pound open window sacks loose opened and closed at $1.45, while the previous season opened at $1.20 and closed in mid to late September as low as $1.00. 50 pound sacks were a prevalent pack and brought $6.00 during much of the shipping season. This price averaged $1.50-2.00 above the 2004 season returns. Medium-large size 50s remained between $8.00-9.00 for the 2005 season, sharply above the previous season which reported the larger spuds from mostly $4.00-4.50 for much of the crop year, which was the same level or slightly lower than the size A profile bags. During the 2005 season, the size designation was reported as medium-large (2.75 inches) while the 2004 reports showed the large (3 inch) grading standard, which points to the bulk and yields of the 2004 crop in comparison to the 2005 season. Round white consumer packs averaged $1.00-2.00 per bale higher as well: baled 10 5-pound sacks brought mostly $8.50 compared to mostly $6.50-7.00 the year prior.

Marketing the 2005 Idaho Potato Crop

Shipments: Shipments from the 2005 crop covered a 14 month period, (from mid-August of 2005 to early September 2006). Shipments for the season totaled 30,762, 000 cwt. Shipments were 10% smaller than the 2004'crop shipments of 34,294,000 cwt. March was the peak shipping month with 2,071,000 cwt shipped. Seventy-two percent moved by truck.

Acreage and Production: This was the first full year for a potato grower group, formed more than a year earlier, to try to control the potato supply in face of decreased demand. Members promised to reduce the acreage planted in 2005 from 2004. The U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) estimated Idaho's planted acreage at 325,000 acres, down from 355,000 in 2004.

Production was estimated by NASS at 118,288,000 cwt versus 131,970,000 cwt the year before, a 10% cut. This was due to the smaller acreage and a drop in per acre yield from 374 cwt in 2004 to 366 cwt for 2005.

Growing Conditions & Harvest: Planting was on-time in April and May**.** Summer temperatures were moderate and Indian-summer continued into October providing excellent harvest conditions. The crop went into storage with few problems.

Marketing: Early-season Russet Norkotah marketing started from the field in mid-August. Baled 100-lb film bags opened at $6.00 per bale for Non-size A and 70 counts 50-lb cartons at $11.00 per carton. Russet Burbank 10-lb film bags of non-size a potatoes traded between $4.50-6.00 per bale most of the season. This price was $2.00-4.00 higher than the same time the previous year most of the season. In July of 2006, baled prices shot up strongly to nearly $7.00 per cwt for a short-lived peak price.

70 counts in 50-lb cartons opened at $11.00 per carton for Norkotahs in August. Burbank 70 count prices trended downward from October reaching the season-low of $7.50-8.00 per carton at the end of January. After that, 70 count carton prices climbed steadily peaking in July at $15.00 per carton.

The grower co-operative also reduced the amount of potatoes in the fresh-market channels doing much of season utilizing weekly "flow-control" procedures or packing shed quotas for their members. August 2006 "old-crop" were higher than many had expected after new (2006 crop) marketing had already started.

Maine Potatoes
2005 season

Production: According to the New England Agricultural Statistics Service, Maine's 2005 **potato production** was estimated at **15.4 million hundredweight**, nearly a **17% decrease** from the biggest 2004 season in a decade (19 .0 million cwt). The January Crop Production summary for 2005 placed harvested **acreage at 56,200** a **9% reduction** from the 61,500 acres in 2004. The **yield of 275 cwt** per acre was down from the **record-high yield of 310 cwt** the previous season.

Objective Yield Survey: Results from the annual Potato Objective Yield Survey conducted by NASS placed the **Russet Burbank** (for processing) as the leading variety planted in the state, **comprising 42.5 percent of the total acreage**, followed by the numbered **Frito-Lay chipping varieties** at **17.1%** and **Shepody,** a long white variety also used primarily for processing 7.2%. Rounding out the top five were Atlantic (3.5%) and Superior (3.4%), both Round white varieties, the former a chipper and the latter a table variety. Acreage by potato type was round and long **white (45%)** down **from 48%** over the 2004 season, **Russets at 53%** (was 49%) and **red** varieties **2%** (was 3%).

Growing Season: Cool, wet weather in May **delayed planting by two weeks**. The crop was only 20 percent planted by June 1, compared with the previous year's 95% planted and the normal 80% progress. Planting continued well into mid-June, with slower emergence due to cooler temperatures. By this time, only 55% of the crop had emerged, while the 5 year average was reported at 65%. Drought conditions during July and August put stress on the crop, but kept disease pressure in check.

Harvest: Vine dessication began near Labor Day in the southern tip of the county, while growers in the northern St. John valley waited til the end of September for a better tuber size. Rains bulked up the crop but harvest progress was slow. Smaller growers managed to finish with harvest my mid-October. However, excessive rains again in mid-October delayed harvest with 20% of the crop left in the ground, mostly late maturing Russet Burbanks for processing. Size and yield of the Burbanks were slightly higher than earlier expected. Flooded fields delayed harvest at many farms and some growers did not finish digging until early November. Some acreage proved to be too wet for harvest.

Shipments: Maine fresh potato **shipments totaled 2.57 million cwt.** (through June) for the 2005 season, compared to **2.71** million cwt. for the same period in 2004, and **3.44** million cwt in 2002, according to the Market News Service. Key shipping months spanned from mid-December through March this season. The season began slowly and ended at a snail's pace. **Round white demand was slightly better than Russet demand**, largely due to the record yielding crop in Idaho and neighboring western states. Major destinations for the 2004 crop (through May) were **Massachusetts** with approximately 2,023 loads, **New York** 1,449 loads, **Pennsylvania** 804 loads, **North Carolina** 480 loads and **New Jersey** with 474 loads.

Easements: According to the Maine Department of Agriculture's Inspection Service, **loads sent to Canada for processing** totaled **170,330 cwt**. or **310 loads** through June 2006, an increase from the previous season of 102,411 cwt or 244 load total. However, during the 2003 season, 285,272 cwt or 622 loads was moved to Canada during the same time frame.

Potato Stocks: Stocks on hand **December 1 totaled 12.5 million cwt**., **17 percent less** the 2004 crop holdings. Disappearance to date totaled 2.9 million cwt., the smallest amount used/lost from harvest through November in recent years. Processor usage was down by 17% from a year ago; the late harvest delayed 2005 crop usage by nearly one month. Storage accounted for **82% of the state's total production**, above last year's 79% and the five year average of 77%. Of the stocks on hand December 1, 42% were round white varieties, 53% were russets, 3% long whites and 2% red varieties. The **May 1 stocks** on hand reported Maine **holdings of 4.3 million cwt.,** less than a year ago (5.0 million cwt).

Marketing Season: The **first fob pricing** report was issued by the Market News Service in late-October with **Round white** U.S. One 2-inch minimum10-pound open window sacks loose from **mostly $1.35-1.40, sharply higher than the .80-.90** the previous year, and baled 10 5-pound filmbags **mostly $7.75-8.00,** far above the **$4.75-$5.25** the prior season. The **first pricing report for Russets** occurred in early-November with **baled 10 5-pound filmbags** of U.S.One 2 inch or 4 ounce minimum at **mostly $8.00-8.25** also far above the previous year's prices of **$4.75-5.25, and the strongest price reported during the season in Maine**. By early March, Russet demand nationwide was light while prices dipped slightly to help improve movement. **Russet Norkotah** baled 10 5-pound 2 inch or 4 ounce minimum fell slightly to **mostly $7.50-8.00** and remained at that level. Round white prices continued to climb during the season. In **early March**, with supplies fairly light, **2 inch 10s were reported at $1.45-1.60** and by the end of the month, prices had **reached $1.80-1.95**, with 2 ¼ inch minimum **mostly $2.00-2.10**. Supplies were light and held in few hands by mid-month. Competition from Prince Edward Island was not felt as in previous seasons, as provincial supplies were held in check also, and new crop Round white prices were strong in the south. The **last Round white report** of the season was issued April 14th with baled U.S. One 10 5-pound film bags 2 inch minimum at **mostly $10.00-11.00** per bale and loose 10s from $1.85-1.95. This was one of the earliest finishes to the Round white crop in recent history. Last season, the last report was issued in early June with sharply lower prices ($4.00-4.75) that prevailed for the entire season. By May 1st, Russet supplies consisted of mostly leftover Burbanks (overages on processing contracts) with little fresh market appeal as the consumer market nationally had been generally flat for much of the Spring. Prices remained stable at mostly $7.50-8.00 for U.S. One baled 2 inch or 4 ounce minimum 10 5-pound film bags.

Packaging: Major consumer packages for Maine Round whites were 2-inch minimum loose 10-lb. sacks and baled 10 5-lb film bags. Some growers with premium chain-store accounts packed 2 ¼" minimum during the season and were rewarded with higher returns that averaged $1.00 above the 2 inch pack. The primary package for Russets was baled 5-pound film bags, although some chain store accounts were interested in 8-pound, 10-pound or 15 pound packages.

Transportation: Rising fuel costs were reported during the 2005 crop year, with surcharges as high as 18% added to the base rates during the second half of the season. Rates to Boston, MA. Were calculated at approximately $2.40 per cwt, New York City $3.00 and Philadelphia, PA. $3.50 for much of the season. Shortages were reported slightly less than previous years as production was down and seed shipments did not suffer from rain delays or inclement weather in the growing regions.

Maine Chipping Potatoes - 2005 season

Statistics: Maine **chipping potato shipments totaled nearly 1.9 million cwt**. for the 2005 season**, a decrease** from the previous season's total of 2.0 million cwt and the previous record movement in 2002 of 2.2 million cwt. Contracts were similar to the previous season, with the slightly reduced yield the primary reason for the slight decrease in shipments. The first shipments of the season began mid-August and generally finished by the end of May. Most of the production is located in Central and Southern Aroostook County with one major grower in the northern part of the county.

Marketing: Harvest of out-of-the-field supplies began a few weeks later than the previous crop years in late August and finished with supplies out-of-storage in late June. The entire Atlantic Seaboard summer potato season ran a few weeks late, thus the later start for Maine. Contracts stayed behind schedule for much of the year as demand was fairly light outside of previously contracted volume. **Peak shipping occurred March-May, with a seasonal spike mid-November through December**. Volume has remained fairly stable for the last several years, as most supplies are contracted ahead of the season and the Maine market has attracted less regular buyers. There was no open market chip stock buying this season. The major buyer/contractor in the state was Frito-Lay, with smaller quantities sent to Cape Cod and Wachusettes Potato Chip Companies in Massachusetts.

Maine Seed Potatoes 2005 Season

Acreage: The Maine Seed Inspection Department was responsible for inspection and certification of seed shipments by variety and destination for the industry. Florida-tested and certified acreage for the 2005-2006 season totaled **11,467 acres, down 15 percent** (13,532) from last season and **22 percent lower** than the 2003 season (14,786). These figures did not include growers own seed pots. Certification tags were issued by state Seed Potato Specialists for lots that met official grades for Main Certified Seed, and after Florida testing, recorded 5 percent or less virus diseased plants. The top twelve seed varieties were: Superior, Russet, Burbank, Frito Lay numbered chipping selections, Atlantic, Yukon Gold, Reba, Norwis, Snowden, Andover, Shepody, Monona and Dark Red Norland. **Measurable decreases** were noted in the following key varieties: **Altantic** (-31%), **Dark Red Norland** (-24%), **Shepody** (-43%), **Russet Norkotah** (-38%), **Snowden** (-18%), **Russet Burbank** (-27%), **Norwis** (-29%), **Monona** (-43%), **Ontario** (-55%), **Reba** (-17%), and **Superior** (-7%). The **biggest increases** were noted in **Yukon Gold** (+22%), **Harley Blackwell** (+200%), **Marcy** (+41%), **Andover** (+4%) and **Frito Lay** chipping varieties (+2%).

Shipments: Shipments began in November to Florida and finished in late May for the 2005 shipping season. A total of **1,065,778 cwt** was reported by the Maine Seed Inspection Service, **down 10%** from the previous year of 1,254,446 cwt and a 15 % decline from the 2003 season. Major destinations for Maine seed were **Florida** with **187,096 cwt, down 26%** from the previous season's figure of 251,599 cwt; **North Carolina 211,534 cwt down 14%** from last year's final of 246,044 cwt, **New York 202,092 cwt, down 14%** from 234,974 cwt; and **Pennsylvania off 4% at 96,050 cwt. Peak volume** was reported **mid-March through April,** when North Carolina, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and several other Mid-Atlantic States received the bulk of their shipments. Destination included 29 state and/or countries this season. The **major varieties** shipped by Maine seed growers were the Frito Lay numbered chipping selections (185,820 cwt) followed by Round White **Atlantic** (160,891 cwt), Superior (93,931 cwt), Snowden (81,969 cwt), and Reba (75,670 cwt). **Atlantic** movement **decreased sharply by 48% from the previous season and Snowden was off by 25%** while the **Frito Lay numbered varieties increased 12%** and Superior increased by 11% from last season.

Marketing: The Market News Service did not report any open market sales of seed during the 2005 season as supplies were lighter and pre-season sales were swift. Very little open seed was available after the New Year, a sharp contrast to the past several seasons, when seed was dumped and without a home. Unofficially, some reports of seed trading in the mid to high teens were heard from brokers in the late winter months.

Michigan Potatoes
2005 season

Production: According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Michigan growers **harvested 42,800 acres** in 2005, up 8500 acres from the previous season. However, potato **yields** remained the same as the previous season at **325** hundredweight **per acre** and down slightly from the record season of 2003 of 330 cwt. **Production improved slightly to 13,910,000 cwt** from the previous year at 13.6 million cwt and 15 million cwt in 2003. Unofficial estimates planted for the table market total about 1/3 of the acreage or 14,500 acres.

Growing and Harvest Season: Planting of the summer round white Onaway crop in Central Michigan (approximately 2,000 acres) started in early April and progressed rapidly under favorable temperatures and generally dry conditions. By mid-May, planting was in full swing with 65% completion statewide, well ahead of the 5 year average of 56% and 51% the previous season. Warm temperatures by the end of the month pushed emergence as planting continued at a fast pace. Most of the crop had been planted by the middle of June, with emergence accelerated by hot weather and spotted showers. The summer months brought one of the hottest and driest seasons on record in the state. In mid-July, growers in Central Michigan began light harvest of the Round white Onaway crop. Early harvested tubers had skinning problems and some growers backed off of the harvest to let the tubers grow and mature. Harvest was slowed by high soil and pulp temperatures. Growers with irrigation were glad to have it as continued drought-like conditions prevailed into the fall. Movement to storage across the state began in early September. Harvest surpassed the half-way mark by October 1 and table varieties were generally in storage by October 20.

Summer Marketing Season: According to the Market News Service, f.o.b. shipping point prices for the summer Round White Onaway variety **began at a strong level** the end of July as U.S. One Size A 10 lb. open window paper sacks sold from **$1.30-1.40.** Movement was sluggish for the early potatoes as tubers lacked maturity and skin due to hot dry conditions. By mid-September, prices dropped to $1.05 as fall harvest supplies were available. The **last report on Onaway** was issued early October. Some early supplies of Russet Norkotah and Goldrush were available in Central Michigan mid-September with initial prices for Russet Norkotah U.S. One ten-pound film bags size A $1.20-1.30. There was also some contracted acreage of Russets grown for an Eastern repacker with shipments that continued into the New Year.

Storage Season: Prices for **Round White** varieties resumed with storage supplies in early November with U.S. One size A **10 pound open window sacks loose from $1.50-1.65**. Russet Norkotah and Goldrush prices firmed up near the end of October with the harvest completed, as U.S. One size A 10 pound film bags loose increased slightly to $1.40-1.45. At Thanksgiving time,

Russet prices settled from mostly $1.50-1.65, the same as Round whites. By the first of the New Year, Round white prices climbed slightly again as supplies in the East dwindled and demand fairly good. Loose 10s brought mostly $1.55-1.65 and remained at this level for the remainder of the season. By **April 1**, **white supplies were fairly light and in few hands**. Russet demand, on the other hand, stalled by slow demand as the size profile in Idaho favored consumer packs and kept the 10 pound bag market very competitive. February's "Potato Lover's Month" campaign saw Russet 10s drop to $1.45-1.55 with slower movement. By the end of the month, Round white supplies were in too few hands to report prices. **The last report** of the season on April 20th listed **Round white** U.S.One 10 pound open-window sacks loose at the **$1.55-1.65 mostly $1.65 level**, the same as the last several weeks. With supplies in few hands, Russet demand and **prices improved by mid-May as 10s brought from $1.55-1.75. The season finished at the end of the month at these levels** and the remaining light supply in too few hands to establish a market.

Movement: The Market News Service began reporting light Onaway movement in mid-July. Shipments in September peaked with several contracted bulk loads of field Russets sent to an out-of-state repacker, although the early Round white movement was slow and the crop had maturity issues due to heat. Thanksgiving-mid December volume was steady with good promotional ads in place for holiday business. **Volume for January through March increased 6%** over the previous crop year, but **lagged by nearly 12% from the record** 2003 crop, in spite of fairly light demand. The Easter holiday in mid-April brought another small promotional boost. The season came to an early close at the end of May with very few supplies left. **Total shipments for the crop year through the end of May totaled 3, 694 loads.**

Stocks: Michigan's potato **stocks** on hand **December 1**, 2005 totaled 7**.9 million cwt**,
Down slightly from the 2004 December 1 holdings of 8.0 million cwt, and represented **63% of the year's production**. Round whites in storage composed 87 percent of the potatoes planted, down from 89%, with Russets at 12% and Reds 1%, the same as last year. The **April 1** potato holdings were 1**.7 million cwt**., were down by nearly 23% from the previous season holdings of 2.2 million cwt.

Packaging: Major packaging remained the loose 10 lb. open window paper sack for Round Whites and 10 lb. film bags loose for Russet varieties (predominantly Norkotah and Goldrush). Special promotions were geared early in the season around the 15-lb. film bag Russet and an 8-lb. film bag of premium Round whites and Russets for a major chain store buyer in the state throughout the season.

Transportation: Trucks were not a problem for the Michigan potato grower overall. There were a few incidents early in the new calendar year, when transportation became a critical issue, although rising fuel prices cut into growers profits. Most of the table stock crop raised stayed within the state or to nearby receivers in neighboring states; hence, trucks were generally adequate.

<u>Michigan Chipping Potatoes</u>
<u>2005 season</u>

<u>Statistics:</u> According to Michigan Agricultural Statistics Service, **acreage planted** for the state was **43,000, the same as the previous year** with **42,800** acres **harvested**. **Yields** averaged **325 hundredweight per acre** with **production** at **13.9 million cwt**, compared to 13.6 the previous year and the record-breaking 15 million cwt. in 2003. Approximately 87% of the stocks on hand December 1, 2005 were Round white varieties, largely for chipping potatoes and a smaller percentage for the table market, with 12% Russets and 1% red varieties. **Movement** for the 2005 season totaled **8.1 million cwt.,** down slightly from last seasons' total of nearly 8.3 million cwt. Round white chipping varieties have dominated potato production in Michigan and the state led the nation in chipping production. Predominant varieties included Atlantic, Snowden, Pike and FL numbered selections.

<u>Growing and Harvest Seasons:</u>
Planting of out-of-field supplies (mostly Atlantic and Pike) began in early April in south central St. Joseph County, followed later in the month by Bay County and growers in the West Central region of the state. Planting was in full swing by the first of May with favorable temperatures and dry conditions. Warm temperatures arrived by the end of May and pushed emergence above the state 5-year average. **Record high temperatures and drought-like conditions** were present during much of the growing and harvest seasons. The initial harvest of Atlantics began in late July in southern St. Joseph County with high soil and high pulp temperatures. Growers with irrigation were glad to have it as drought-like conditions prevailed into the fall. Movement to storage was noted by mid-September and continued through October.
<u>Marketing:</u> Open market sales were practically non-existent when out-of-the-field supplies were available. Growers were concerned with meeting their contracts after only average yields were recorded and had little if any extra tonnage to sell. **By December, open market activity increased with prices generally from $10.25-11.00 cwt., well above the 2004 season prices during that time period of $6.00-6.50 cwt.** Open market pricing continued to advance as growers received **mostly $12.00 cwt during February and March for limited offerings**. However, as many small contracts were filled slightly ahead of schedule and the Florida season on schedule, the few **open market offerings in early April fell to mostly $10.00** cwt. These prices were certainly much better than April of 2004 when occasional open market offerings sold from only **$2.00-2.50** cwt.

<u>Stocks</u>: According to NASS, Michigan's potato **stocks on hand December** 1, 2005 totaled 7**.9 million cwt**, down slightly from 8.0 million cwt the previous crop year, and represented 60% of the state's production. The May 1 potato stocks showed **holdings of .5 million cwt were down considerably from** the previous season (.9 million cwt).

MARKETING THE 2005 BIG LAKE & CENTRAL MINNESOTA CROP

GROWING CONDITIONS: The Big Lake & Central Minnesota District stretches from the Big Lake area (Sherburne County) in the south to Long Prairie, Perham, Bemidji and Red Lake areas in Central Minnesota.

HARVEST: Light harvest activity of Round Reds started the last week of July. Most growers of Round Reds had finished digging by the last week in September with minimal weather delays during harvest. The peat soil area around Gully, MN finished around week-ending October 25. Some russets were still being harvested into the first day or two of November.

SHIPMENTS: Recorded shipments of Round Reds and Russets for the season totaled 1,923,200 cwt. The Idaho Falls, Idaho, USDA Market News Service collected shipments through the voluntary cooperation of individual shippers. All shipments were transported by truck. Shipments of Reds started in late July, and peaked in August. Shipments of Russets started the second week of September and finished for the most part in early October; a few Russets were stored and marketed in November, December and January.

ACREAGE & PRODUCTION: National Agricultural Statistics Service reported planted acreage for all of Minnesota at 46,000 acres in 2005 with 43,000 acres harvested. Yield per harvested acre equals 410 CWT per acre.

MARKETING: The Big Lake & Central Minnesota marketing of Round Reds 2005 started in late July, a month after Arizona had finished for the season and the California volume of Round Reds had began to stabilize.

Shipping point prices for Round Reds U.S. No. 1 size A in 50-lb paper sacks, started the last week of July at $10.50-11.00 per 50lb unit. During the ten weeks of the Red potato marketing season, prices ranged from a season opening high of $11.00 per 50-lb unit for the Size A 50-lb paper sacks to a low of $5.50 per 50-lb unit the week of October 1. Size A Round Reds in 50-lb paper sacks finished the season at $5.50-6.00. Size B in 50-lb paper sacks started the season at $15.00-16.00, dropped to a season low and closing price of $6.00-7.50 the week of October 1.
Russet Norkotah were not reported by the Idaho Falls, Idaho, USDA Market News Service. This is due to the area having but a few russet shippers and a short window when they are all running.

PACKAGING: The major packs for Round Red potatoes were 2000 lb tote bags. This package is used by shippers as the base price for pricing size A 50-lb paper sacks, 50 lb cartons, and 10 & 5-lb film bags. The packaging for Norkotah was size A and non-size A in 100 lb sacks, 10-lb and 5-lb film bags; 50-lb cartons of count size potatoes.

Marketing the 2005 Red River Valley Potato Crop

Planting, Growing Conditions & Harvest: Most table-stock Round Red potatoes were planted in May. Minnesota's potato planting was 90% complete by May 25, compared to the five year average of June 1. Growing conditions during the summer were abnormally wet. By harvest the low spots in most fields were not harvested. Standing water was common in the Red River Valley. Producers reported that the remainder of August and September would need to be warm and dry to push the potato crop to maturity. Color in most cases was a #2 on the color chart. Some growers suffered from skinning at harvest time due to the wet soil. Harvest was slightly later than normal, with several rain storms keeping them out of the field. As of October 28, 2004 there were still growers not finished harvesting. Most Round Red Table Stock growers finished harvesting the week of October 16, 2004. Over-all potato harvest in the Red River Valley was generally complete by the week ending October 24.

Shipments and Transportation: Table-stock shipments started the week of August 20, 2005 and continued from storage through the last week of July 2005. The peak shipment month was November with 515,000 cwt. Fresh shipments for the season totaled 7,258,000 cwt Shipments are collected from the voluntary cooperation of shippers. Most shipments were by truck. Railroads moved 169,000 cwt of the 2005 crop.

Acreage & Production: Minnesota reported 46,000 acres total planted in 2005 with 14,500 acres in the Northwest counties. Production was of 3,402,000 cwt in the Northwest counties. North Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service listed 2005 acreage at 92,000 planted. Most table-stock potatoes in North Dakota are grown dry-land. There were 23,500 dry-land acres which mostly went to table stock. Overall yield per acre in North Dakota was 250 cwt, down from 265 in 2004 crop, making production 20.5 million cwt from North Dakota. 15.5% of the planted acreage was red potatoes according to N.D. Agricultural Statistics Service.

Marketing: Shippers started harvesting and shipping Round Reds the week ending August 20, 2006. Round Red prices started at $12.00-13.00 for 100 lb sacks of U.S. No. 1 Size A. The price for 100lb sack peaked in late-December at $14.00. Starting in early January the Market News Service started reporting size A 2000 pound tote bags, as they have become the prominent pack, replacing 100 # sacks. The season did end on a positive note as prices rebounded in May 2005 to 18.50-19.00 for those tote bags. The shipping season was completed by July 1, 2006.

Packaging: The Round Red potatoes were packed primarily in 2000 pound tote bags approximately, 50-lb paper sacks and baled 10 and 5 lb film bags.

Long Island Potatoes
2005 Season

Statistics: According to the New York Agricultural Statistics Service, New York growers **harvested 20,100** acres of potatoes for the 2005 season, **900 more acres** than the previous season. **Production** increased slightly to **5,226,000** hundredweight but remained almost 20% **below** the 2003 season total of 6,510,000 cwt. Statewide **yields decreased to 260 cwt** per acre, 10 cwt below the previous season and the 2003 season's record high yield of 300 cwt. Growers on Long Island generally yield slightly more than the state average due to the varieties grown on the island, notably the large profile Norwis. Unofficial sources reported planted acreage of potatoes under 3,000 acres on Long Island, a slight decrease from the previous season.

Growing and Harvest Seasons: Planting started on schedule in early April and wrapped up in early May. A cooler and wetter trend favored tuber growth throughout the season from planting time through much of the harvest. Heavy rains from the aftermath of gulf hurricanes slowed harvest in September and again by torrential rainfall in October (up to 18 inches in parts of the Island). Most of the crop was harvested with the exception of a few low-lying fields by the end of the month.

Marketing Season: The first fob shipping point sales was issued by the Market News Service in early September. The Atlantic Seaboard potato seasons had been delayed due primarily to weather conditions and lagged behind in marketing efforts, especially nearby Delaware. However **prices were sharply higher** with **Round white** U.S.One **50 pound sacks size A mostly $6.00 compared to $4.25-4.50 in 2004, and large size $8.00 compared to mostly $4.50-5.00**. Demand was good during the harvest as growers jumped at the strong market prices. **Movement in September and October had more than doubled** during the same time frame as the previous two seasons. The shipment pace slowed in November; however, prices continued to climb. Round white U.S.One **size A 50s** were reported at **mostly $6.75-7.00** compared to the previous year of mostly $4.00-4.25 while **large size brought mostly $7.75**, a slight drop from the $8.00 start with few supplies. Consumer packs also slowed healthy price increases with market prices at Thanksgiving time **for baled 10-5s at mostly $9.25 and 5-10s mostly $8.25** compared to the 2004 season prices of mostly $5.75-6.25 and mostly $5.25-5.50 respectively. **Chef or large size potatoes were tight by the end of the calendar year for much of the season due to slow sales.** The final f.o.b. of the season was issued in early January, much earlier than previous years as the few remaining supplies were held by only a few shippers. At that time, size A 50s finished mostly $6.75-7.25, large size mostly $7.50-7.75 and baled 5s at mostly $9.00-9.25. These prices reflected nearly **$6.00 cwt higher than the 2004 season-ending market**.

Movement: The MNS reported **shipments** from Long Island at nearly **7,600 loads** for the 2005 season, a decrease of 13 percent from the previous season. Competition with Canada **decreased export loads again sharply for the season (49 versus 81 loads**) from the 2004 season, 167 loads for the 2003 season and 239 loads from 2002. The last shipment report was issued by the Market News Service in mid-February, notably earlier than the last several seasons.

Stocks: Stocks on hand December 1 for New York were 2.9 million hundredweight, a sizable increase **from the previous season's holdings of 2.3 million cwt.** By March 1, New York's holdings were 1.2 million cwt, sharply higher than the previous season. The remaining holdings were held in upstate chip storages, with many growers uncertain of the figures.

Packaging: The major pack on the island is the 50-lb. sack. Many growers and brokers delivered to re-packers and wholesalers in New York City, Florida and North Carolina, and large size potatoes to foodservice accounts along the East Coast.

New York Chipping Potatoes
2005 Season

Statistics: According to the New York Agricultural Statistics Service, New York growers **planted 20,500 acres** of potatoes for the 2005 season, up 500 acres from the previous year. H**arvested acres totaled 20,100 acres** of potatoes for the year, up **900 acres** from the 2004 season. **Production** figures climbed slightly **to 5,226,000** hundredweight, but far below the 2003 crop final of 6,510,000 cwt. Statewide **yields were reported at 260 cwt per acre, 10 cwt below the previous year, and 40 cwt behind the record-breaking 2003 yield of 300 cwt per acre.** The center of chip production is located in Western and Central New York in Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Livingston Counties. As a result of an acreage and disposition survey conducted by the New York Agricultural Statistics Service and Empire State Potato Growers Inc., around 5,000 acres were planted as chip stock in 2005. The main chipping varieties grown in the state were Atlantic, Snowden, Andover and Marcy.

Growing and Harvest Season: Although the early part of April was wet, unseasonably warm temperatures and light winds dried soils for planting to get underway by the end of the month. Planting was ahead of schedule in early May. Pockets of frost were reported prior to the Memorial Day weekend, but the cooler weather was beneficial for potato growth and development. However, the summer months were plagued by hot, dry conditions and limited yields in many fields. Harvest began the end of July in most areas. A tropical front from Hurricane Katrina brought heavy rains to Western New York and was followed by drier and cooler temperatures in mid-September. Harvesting was 47 percent completed compared to 59% the previous year. Heat returned at the end of the month with harvest falling further behind October 1 with only 65% completion, compared to 95% the previous year. Again, heavy rains from Hurricane Rita brought harvest to a standstill. More rains from tropical storms slowed progress mid-month, but most growers were finished by the end of October.

Movement and Marketing season: The shipping season began **in mid to late August and peaked** with out-of-the-field supplies in **mid-September.** Harvest was generally completed by late October. The dominant buyers and brokers in the New York chip market were Wise Foods, EK Bare, Utz Quality Foods, Stowe Potato Sales, Pennsylvania Potato Co-Op. Final movement for the year totaled 1.55 million cwt., down when compared to the 2004 crop year final of nearly 1.7 million cwt. The season ended several weeks earlier as one grower held potatoes for late shipment to nearby chipping plants, and were not collected due to disclosure.

Stocks on hand: According to the New York Agricultural Statistics, **stocks on hand** December 1 totaled 2.9 million hundredweight, up sharply from the previous season (2.3 million cwt), with 90% of the stocks-on-hand Round white varieties. On April 1, 500,000 cwt. remained in storage, up sharply (40%) from the 2004 crop year.

Ohio Chipping Potatoes

2005 Season

Statistics: Ohio **harvested 3600 acres** of potatoes, the same as the 2004 season, and 700 acres less than the 2003 crop year, according to the Ohio Agricultural Statistics Service. **Yields were down to 240** hundredweight per acre, from the previous years' healthy **300 cwt** per acre. **Production** was also lower at **.86 million cwt**., from the previous season's total of 1.08 million cwt. Total **movement** for the **2005 crop was 214,143 cwt**., down sharply from the previous season total of **257,812 cwt, and** the **big 2003 crop total of 427,499 cwt.,** according to the Market News Service. Approximately 1800-2000 acres were planted with chip stock in the state. The predominant areas were in western Ohio, from Findlay north to Toledo and south of Cleveland, in the Wooster area.

Growing Season: Planting began with a flurry in early April with above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation levels. By mid-month, planting accelerated to 26% compared to 14% the previous season and the five-year average of 19%. In early May, planting was slowed by cool and wet conditions, although progress was still 5-7 days ahead of the 5-year average. Most of the planting was completed by June 1 with growing degrees 24 days below normal. The summer season was hot and dry with rainfall at a 2.5 inch deficit. As growers lacked irrigation, yields suffered and most contracts fell short in tonnage.

Harvesting Season: Initial light harvest began in early August. By mid-month, harvest lagged 9 days behind the state average with only 12 percent of the crop harvested compared to 32% the previous season. Heavy rains caused by Hurricane Katrina at the end of the month pushed progress two weeks behind the previous year. By mid-September, harvest lagged 3 weeks behind with slightly above precipitation levels and above normal temperatures. Most growers were finished by the middle of October. There were no open market sales reported by the Market News Service, as most growers struggled to fill contracts with lesser yields.

Stocks on hand: The National Agricultural Statistics Service discontinued monthly potato stocks reports for Ohio for the 2005 season.

Pennsylvania Chipping Potatoes

2005 Season

Statistics: Pennsylvania **harvested 11,000 acres** of potatoes, the **same as the previous** season, but **down 1,500 acres** from the 2003 season, according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service. Nearly 4,000 acres were planted in chipping potatoes, with the predominant plantings in the Northwestern, East Central and Central districts of the state. Production was **up slightly (4%)** at **2.75 million cwt (2.64)** but a **decrease of 18 percent** from the 2003 season**. Yields** were **slightly better at 250 cwt per acre (240),** yet down from the 2003 season average of **270 cwt per acre.** Predominant chipping varieties grown were Atlantic, Snowden, Pike, Andover and Marcy.

Growing Season: Planting commenced slightly earlier than normal in early April due to warm, dry conditions. By mid-month, 17 per cent of the planting was completed, compared to 5% the previous year and the 5-year average of 3%. In May, slightly cooler temperatures and some precipitation slowed field progress, and by mid-month, planting fell behind slightly. Growers finished on schedule in early June. The summer months brought above normal temperatures and scattered showers; thus dry soil conditions persisted and yields suffered.

Harvesting Season: Initial **harvest of field supplies (Atlantic) began in early August**. By September 1, scattered thunderstorms from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina brought some moisture to thirsty fields. Harvest continued at a slightly faster pace and by mid-month, 64% of the crop was harvested compared to 50% the previous year and the 5-year average, with most fields still drier than expected. Irrigation is not prevalent in potato fields in the state. Cooler temperatures and scattered showers slowed progress slightly in early October and most growers finished by mid-month with disappointing yields. Shipments **peaked with field supplies in late August** through mid-October. The shipping year came to a close at the end of March, with a **total of 786,544 cwt. shipped**, down 7% from the previous season, according to the Market News Service. No open market prices were available this year as most growers planted for contracted sales only and were generally unable to fill their contracts due to the smaller crop.

Stocks on hand: The National Agricultural Statistics Service discontinued monthly stocks holding reports for Pennsylvania for the 2005 crop.

MARKETING THE CENTRAL WISCONSIN POTATOES 2005 CROP

Acreage & Production: According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Wisconsin potato planted acreage in 2005 was 68,000 acres, down from 2004s 71,000 acres. Harvested acreage was also 68,000 acres, compared to 2004s 70,000 acres. Yield per acre was 410 hundredweight (cwt), a decrease from 2004s 435 cwt. 2005s production was 27,880,000 cwt, compared to 30,450,000 cwt in 2004.

Shipments: Shipments from Central Wisconsin were 110,626,000 cwt. The peak shipping month was December at 13,578,000 cwt. All of the potatoes were shipped by truck, there are no rail shipments out of Wisconsin.

Shipments of Chip Stock potatoes were 53,978,000 cwt in 2005. The peak shipping month was December with 7,410,000 cwt shipped.

Shipments of Seed Potatoes were 14,356,000 cwt. April was the peak shipping month with 6,729,000 cwt shipped.

Crop & Weather: In mid-April, warm temperatures and isolated rainfall allowed producers to get in the fields. Temperatures were 6 to 14 degrees higher than normal for the time of the year. Precipitation was limited, ranging from .71 to 2.05 inches below normal for that time of the year. A limited number of farmers started planting potatoes in the central area of the State. Sandy soils in these areas allowed them to get into the fields, while heavier soils were still wet. Warmer than normal temperatures during the third week of April allowed many producers to get planting in full swing. A significant amount of much-needed rain fell the middle of May. Temperatures were very close to normal for that time of the year. Potato planting was nearing completion, with some farmers reporting small amounts of emergence. In Langlade County, most growers started planting potatoes. By the end of May, most of the state remained below average for rain fall and temperatures remained slightly below normal. Potatoes had begun to emerge and were looking good. In Washburn County, potato farmers were planting when weather permitted.

The first week of June saw warmer temperatures which caused crop emergence to increase to above average levels and crop conditions improve. The warming trend continued in the second week of June and kicked into high gear. Temperatures were 7 to 12 degrees above normal. Precipitation varied around the state, with some areas receiving only .84 inches, while others received as much as 4.60 inches of rain. Potatoes continued to emerge and continued to be good in quality. In Portage County, potatoes were starting to blossom and rows were starting to fill the end of June.

Warm temperatures, coupled with more rainfall, the first week of July, contributed to better crop conditions. The following week, temperatures were slightly cooler than normal and little rain was received. The crop remained in good condition. By mid-July, temperatures were much higher than normal with very little rain across the state. Potatoes on irrigated soil looked great. Non-irrigated crops were stressing due to heat stress and lack of rain.

Potatoes were being harvested in Portage county in Mid-August and continued in other areas through the first of October when harvest was generally complete.

Marketing: The first report on Round Reds was issued July 28, 2005. 50 lb sacks of U.S. One size A were mostly \$11.00-11.75. The first report on Round Whites was issued on July 29, 2005. 50 lb sacks of U.S. One size A were \$5.00-6.50. The first report on Russet Norkotahs was issued on August 10, 2005. 50 lb cartons of U.S. One 70s were \$10.00-12.00.

The last report on Round Whites was issued on September 2, 2005, Round Reds was issued on February 10, 2006, and Russet Norkotahs on June 30, 2006.

New Brunswick Potatoes
2005 season

Production: According to Statistics Canada, New Brunswick potato production was **14.4 million hundredweight**, down **13%** from the 2004 season total of 16.5 million cwt. The July 2006 production report placed harvested acreage at **55,500 acres**, down 2,500 acres from the previous season. Yields were reported at 260 cwt per acre, 20 cwt. less than the 2004 crop. The report indicated that 1,000 acres were abandoned or culled from planting time to harvest.

Movement: Early movement (September-December) to the U.S. (**683,757 cwt**) **increased sharply by 20%** from the 2004 season's total of 569,713 cwt. These figures were compiled with data issued from the U.S. Commerce Department, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and finalized by Statistics Canada. The season total through July 2006 of **1.99 million cwt**. was ahead of the previous year's movement to the US of **approximately 1.82 million cwt**. The U.S. was the number one destination for New Brunswick potatoes. Access to the States is made through the major border crossing at Houlton, Maine, with lighter shipments entering through Fort Fairfield and Bridgewater, Maine. Light shipments of the 2005 crop continued into August, although official data was not available at the time of this publication. New Brunswick has predominantly been a processing (french-fry) region, with nearly 60% of production devoted to this market. It is also the original home of McCain Foods, one of the giants in the fry industry. There are two McCain processing plants in the province, Grand Falls and Florenceville.

Growing and Harvest Season: The major growing region for potatoes in New Brunswick is the St. John River Valley, which runs parallel to the northeastern Maine border. Planting was delayed in May by cool, wet weather and lagged almost two weeks behind schedule. Crop emergence was slower through June. However, warmer and dry conditions prevailed in July and August, which affected tuber yields slightly. Harvest of Round white and Yellows was underway in August, while most Russet harvest commenced in mid-September. Most disease pressure and blight was kept in check with regular spray schedules.

Marketing Season: The U.S. Department of Agriculture Market News Service issued the first fob shipping report on **Russet Norkotah** in mid-October with CD One or US One washed 2 inch or 4 inch minimum baled 10 **5-pound film bags mostly $8.50** per bale, sharply higher than the opening price of the 2004 season. Prices remained fairly stable for much of the season with the **lowest price of $7.50** reported in the early spring. However, by the end of May at the time of the last report of the season by the Market News Service, prices had bounced back to **mostly $8.00-8.50, compared to mostly $4.50 the previous year**. The premium pack 5-9 ounce Russets were generally $1.00 above the 2 inch price during the season. Carton prices were also stable during the marketing year with **70 and 80 counts** in the **mostly $10.00-10.50** range for much of the season. These prices were sharply higher than the previous season when 70 counts averaged $6.00-7.00 box. Shipments to the U.S. continued through the summer by a few grower/packers.

Stocks on hand: New Brunswick's potato **holdings on December 1,** 2005 totaled **12 million cwt**, up slightly from December 2004 stocks on hand of 11.6 million cwt**. However, by May 1, stocks** on hand were up **sharply** with holdings of 6.7 million cwt compared to over 3.8 million cwt the previous year and one of the highest reports in the last several crop years. A few fresh shippers continued to pack for the US market through July.