



FACT SHEET

Potato production has a rich heritage in Maine and remains one of the top agricultural industries in the state today, delivering a surprisingly significant impact to the state's overall economy. The impact ripples throughout the state, supporting jobs within the industry, in service to it, and even other sectors of the economy.

History and Industry Standing

- Between 1928 and 1958, Aroostook County alone produced more potatoes than any state in the nation. Since then Maine's planted acreage has declined. But more recently, due to tremendous investment in agricultural practices, storage and processing, acreage has stabilized, solidifying Maine's position as an important player in the nation's potato industry.
- Potatoes were planted on 57,000 acres in 2007, yielding 295 CWT (hundred weight) per acre. This translates to about 29,500 pounds of potatoes per acre or roughly 1.6 billion pounds of potatoes harvested this fall. Maine typically ranks seventh or eighth in the nation for potato production.
- The Maine potato industry has moved in the direction of convenience, dedicating far more potato acreage to value-added processing sectors. Historically, about 65% of Maine potatoes were dedicated to table stock. Today, over 65% of all potatoes harvested move on to have value added to them in some way.
- Within the state, potatoes are critical to the continued prosperity of the Maine economy. There are nearly 400 potato growers in Maine, from Aroostook County to the western mountain region around Bethel and Fryeburg.

Economic Impact

- The total impact of the potato industry on the state's economy is \$540 million in sales. (The direct impact of the industry is \$293 million.)
- From the time they're planted to the time they're served at your table, Maine potatoes account for over 6,100 jobs in Maine. These include jobs within the industry itself (growers, processors etc.), jobs in service to the industry (truckers, equipment manufacturers/dealers, food brokers etc.) and jobs induced by the \$230 million in personal income workers earn as a result.
- Maine potatoes generate over \$30 million in state and local taxes every year that supports schools, road maintenance and many other important community needs.

Maine Potato Board Overview

The Maine Potato Board was created in 1986 by an act of the Maine Legislature for the purpose of establishing a cohesive framework for effective leadership within the potato industry. The mission of the Maine Potato Board is to provide a competitive environment for Maine's potato growers, processors, and dealers, and to create both stability and the infrastructure for future growth. The Board is an information and advisory resource for Maine's potato growers, dealers, and processors, as well as the general public on all matters relating to potatoes in Maine.

PR contacts: Angela Smith, 207.272.6894 Tim Hobbs/Maine Potato Board, 207.769.5061