

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UNITED ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF 2010-11 POTATO ACREAGE COUNT

Idaho Growers Seek to Balance Supply with Consumer Demand

Idaho Falls, Idaho, July 7, 2010 — United Potato Growers of Idaho announced Wednesday the official results for its 2010-11 statewide acreage count. For the current growing season, United's six counting teams surveyed over 3 million acres and counted 292,571 potato acres in Idaho. This number represents a decrease in acres of just over 24,500. In 1965, Idaho growers planted a similar amount of potatoes.

"This year represents a rebalancing for Idaho growers," said United chairman Carl Taylor. "With last year's returns falling below the cost of production, this acreage count reflects that growers are adjusting their operations accordingly to address those losses."

Why Count Acres

Prior to United's annual acreage count, Idaho potato growers relied solely on the acreage survey conducted by the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS). With United's annual count, Idaho potato growers have a real versus statistical count of all potato acres planted in Idaho. Other United chapters in Washington, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Colorado are wrapping up their acreage counts this month, too. These organizations use the same process and software to count their potato acres. Results from their acreage counts will be available in the coming weeks.

Knowing the acreage count gives growers much-needed information for the upcoming market season. If a grower knows the number of acres potentially available to the market, better decisions can be made about when to sell the crop, increasing the grower's potential to cover operating costs. United's data collection efforts don't end with the acreage count. In August, United will conduct its pre-harvest field digs to help establish an estimate of this year's crop.

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How United Counted

Relying on Farm Service Agency (FSA) field maps for the entire state of Idaho, United sent multiple teams around the state of Idaho to physically count potato acres by ground and air. All told, these teams reviewed more than 123,000 fields. To count acres, United used a combination of GPS and mapping software to record the crops planted in each field. Fields were recorded as either potatoes or 'other.'

In order to properly verify a field's crop, a team member, at minimum, had to be close enough to see the field using field glasses. United required that teams visually verify a field before recording its crop. Each team transmitted its data to the home office. For tracking purposes, each team's data was tagged to ensure that if errors arose they could be linked back to a specific team.

Following the count, United conducted an audit to verify the accuracy of its findings. Teams then audited 761 fields, representing 52,421 acres or 1.6%. Based on the audit, United's counters achieved an accuracy rate of 99.9%.

Protecting Data

As part of this counting process, United follows an established data policy for the handling of all acreage data. United believes it can best serve the grower community while maintaining landowner privacy. As such, United will only provide and/or publish acreage data in aggregate by United districts, counties and by state. Any maps published as part of a presentation or article, for example, will have all identifiable characteristics (e.g., road names, county names, etc.) removed to prevent disclosure of specific field locations. United will take every necessary measure to ensure that this data is protected to maintain program standards and security.

About United Potato Growers of Idaho

United Potato Growers of Idaho is a member co-op of the United Potato Growers of America which was formed in March 2005 by growers to focus on managing national potato supply so as to positively affect grower profitability. Through UPGA membership, growers are empowered to better understand and act upon demand for their product. Call UPGI's office, 208-535-8500, or visit www.unitedpotato.com to learn more.