

United Potato Partners Program Announced to Growers

On February 11, 2008, United Potato Growers of America (UPGA) and the Potato Marketing Association of North America (PMANA) announced the formation of United Potato Partners, a key strategic alliance with Bayer Crop Science, AMVAC, and WinField Solutions. United of America and PMANA jointly represent over 75% of United States fresh potato acres and over 80% of all fry process acres.

With the formation of this key alliance, major suppliers are acknowledging that United's efforts have helped restore and stabilize grower profitability.

"This is a significant show of unity with and financial support for United Potato Growers who are major consumers of their products, and they are not the only major suppliers that will be joining," said Buzz Shahan, COO of UPGA. "You can anticipate the announcement of a major fertilizer supplier joining the Partners in the coming weeks."

Jerry Wright, CEO of United Potato Growers of Idaho (UPGI) stated, "These companies are really stepping up with significant dollars in a show of unity and support, and it only makes sense that the more we support them, the greater their financial support will be for us."

How the Program Works

All three organizations, Bayer, AMVAC, and WinField Solutions, will contribute volume-related funds to UPGA offices to offset the costs of data collection and information systems, both at UPGA headquarters as well as at the state co-op level. Alliance members openly acknowledged United's contribution of key information and category analysis as the cornerstone of the organization's success, leading to improved grower profitability. These monies will be distributed back to each state based upon product usage and membership.

How to Participate

All members of United are qualified to participate in the program. To benefit, growers need to use Partners' products. Growers can review the available AgriSolutions products at www.agrisolutionsinfo.com. Since Idaho represents one-third of all acres in the national program, Idaho growers in both UPGI and SIPCO stand to gain a dues offset for their participation. The UPGI Board of Directors has agreed that wherever possible, the monies will be returned to growers based upon their support of the program through usage of the Potato Partners products.

Money from WinField Solutions money will be returned as a direct grower rebate. Thus growers can potentially "double" their rebate when they buy Bayer or AMVAC products (like VAPAM or K-PAM) at their local WinField retailer. In Idaho, WinField Solutions Partners include:

- Valley Agronomics with four locations in the Magic Valley, one in Burley, and four in the Idaho Falls, Rexburg and Ashton areas
- Bingham Cooperative with locations in American Falls and Blackfoot

All purchases at these WinField retailers earn a grower-specific cash rebate. In addition, purchases of Bayer and AMVAC products will earn additional dollars returned to growers through the offset of dues.