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July 17, 2008

TO: United of Idaho and SIPCO Growers  
FROM: Jerry Wright  
RE: United and SIPCO's 2008 Field Dig Process

Thank you in advance for your participation in this year's field dig process. You are by now aware of United's first acreage count results for the 2008-09 crop. Across the state, we counted **300,266 acres**, down 12.3% vs. last year plantings. **It is now critical we get a large sample of accurate field digs by county to correctly forecast production.** We need EVERY United and SIPCO member's participation. Every dig is statistically significant. All information you submit is held absolutely confidential. District aggregates will be available to participants upon request.

### **Background**

The defined format below is a process involving a series of 3 digs. This is the same format we have used for the last 3 years. This format will be used for the Burbank, Ranger, Western, Shepody, and Norkotah crops.

### **Read this and the attached form:**

This letter is the instructions written for growers and field men on how to execute the digs. Please make sure you are clear on what is required. Please review these instructions with your field person(s) who will be assisting you. **Please do not deviate from this format...it will invalidate your dig information.** If you have questions, you can call your United or SIPCO Field Man for a detailed explanation. The attached form is the actual tracking format for recording the data. Use one form per field. Fax each form to the United offices. Then save the forms and use them for the second dig, scheduled for August 21. Fax number is **208-535-8509**

### **Dig timing:**

Variety: Burbanks, Rangers, Western's, Shepody's & Norkotah's  
Dates: Please do the digs on these exact dates:  
August 1<sup>st</sup> – by grower  
August 21<sup>st</sup> – by grower  
Harvest – by United or SIPCO field staff

### **Fields to be sampled:**

- We ask you to sample all potato fields you farm. If you have 4 potato field locations, then please do 4 digs. We will consider a pivot or less as a "field". **WE DO NOT** want multiple digs in the same field.

### **The Process:**

- Choose a spot in the field that represents the AVERAGE soil and growing conditions for that field. Not the best spot nor the worst spot, but the average. Be sure to stay away from corners and poor drainage areas.

- If you can, please provide GPS coordinates for future reference. If you do not have GPS capability, that's OK. Please continue the process.
- Dig **exactly** a 10 foot strip.
- Use the attached form masters (3 copies included) to record the information requested for each dig. Please reproduce the master and use ONE form for EACH field you dig. You will be asked to:
  - Check plant count and health
  - Quantify tuber count
  - Segregate spuds by sizes and get total weight for each grouping
- Again, please do not deviate from this protocol.

**Follow-up:**

Please stay on top of your process and return the data within the prescribed time window. We will use the phone calling system to remind you to do the digs.

**Questions or need help?:** Call your United or SIPCO Field Rep:

Audie Trudell	208-520-8981	United Districts 1,2,& 3
Eric Duffin	208-221-4445	United Districts 4,&5
Jack Puyear	208-731-7054	United District 6
Shane Wright	208-241-4438	Seed District
Mike Leavitt	208-520-3757	SIPCO Process Growers

**Delivery of dig data to UNITED offices:**

- Fax the data from the completed form to UNITED offices. Then KEEP THE FORM and complete it with future dig data and fax that info to the offices. Fax number: **208-535-8509**
- All dig information MUST be faxed or returned to UNITED offices no later than 5 working days from the SCHEDULED date of the dig.

**Tools and equipment required:**

- Size rings (No need to get fancy. Cut a piece of PVC or cut holes in a piece of UMV or plywood)
  - 2 inch (Idaho only)
- A digital scale (we priced one at Wal-Mart for about \$30)

Thank you for your voluntary participation in this effort. Your information will contribute greatly to an earlier and accurate understanding of the national and state crops well in advance of the USDA estimates. District aggregates will be available to participants upon request 6-8 working days after the dig.

Sincerely,



Jerry Wright  
 CEO/President  
 United Potato Growers of Idaho