

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Editor's Note: Recent news stories from earlier this week reported inaccurate results for United Potato Growers of Idaho's 2009-2010 acreage count. This press release provides the correct information and should serve as the main source of information for all stories related to the 2009-2010 acreage count.

UNITED ANNOUNCES SECOND ANNUAL POTATO ACREAGE COUNT FOR IDAHO

Idaho Growers Meet the Challenge to Manage Fresh Potato Acres

Idaho Falls, Idaho, July 8, 2009 — For the growing year 2009–2010, United Potato Growers of Idaho (United) projects that statewide potato acreage equals 315,000 acres, an increase of 4.6% over the acres counted by United in 2008–2009. United announced this year's acreage results at the All-Grower Summer Meetings July 8, 2009. Prior to United's actual acreage count, Idaho potato growers relied solely on the acreage survey conducted by the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS). With the annual count, Idaho's potato growers have a real versus statistical count of all potato acres planted in Idaho.

"While acreage went up this year, our data collection confirms that at least 10,000 acres of the increase are contracted acres," said Jerry Wright, CEO and President of United. "We commend growers for doing such a good job keeping their fresh acres in check."

United of Idaho's successful acreage count last year created an opportunity for other United chapters—Washington, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Colorado—to use the same process and software to count their potato acres this year, too. 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

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about when to sell or to hold the crop, increasing the grower's profit potential. The marketplace also responds to this kind of information, as highlighted by the market's reaction with the release of NASS's survey number every year. United's data collection efforts don't end with the acreage count

"Starting in August, we'll conduct field digs to get an idea of the potential yield for this year's crop," continued Wright. "We'll be able to estimate how growing conditions this year have impacted the yield, including areas hit by the June hailstorms. Our hope is this information will help growers have a better understanding of what to expect in the early market and throughout the remainder of the season."

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 150,606 fields and counted 3,701,821 acres. 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. Of the 150,606 fields, 811 fields were audited, representing 59,188 acres. Based on the audit, United's counters achieved an accuracy rate of 99%.

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

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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.

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