



Tater Talk

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\$10,000 and \$25,000 Grants Available to Rural School Districts Through America's Farmers Grow Rural Education

HONOLULU (Jan. 6, 2012) – Statistics show that the United States ranks only 25th in math scores and 21st in science compared to 30 industrialized nations. These facts show that education is strongly in need of support. To help, Monsanto Fund, the philanthropic arm of Monsanto Company, is launching America's Farmers Grow Rural EducationSM to aid rural school districts by providing \$10,000 and \$25,000 grants in 1,245 counties across 39 states.

"We believe our rural communities are the heart of America," said Deborah Patterson, Monsanto Fund president. "We want to help strengthen local communities and education systems, especially in the areas of science and/or math. A strong science and math education helps build a foundation for many careers in agriculture, but also will help our students to be more competitive with those in larger cities and other nations."

America's Farmers Grow Rural Education gives farmers the opportunity to nominate a public school district in their rural community to compete for a grant. Nominated school district administrators can then submit an application for either a \$10,000 or \$25,000 grant to support a science and/or math educational program by April 30, 2012. School districts that apply for a \$10,000 grant will compete against other school districts that are located in the USDA-appointed Crop Reporting District (CRD); except that CRDs with fewer than five eligible school districts will compete against each other for a single grant. A school district that applies for a \$25,000 grant will compete against schools that are located in its state or designated region.

The Monsanto Fund will award 199 grants this year. There will be 177 \$10,000 grants and 22 grants of \$25,000 awarded. Visit growruraleducation.com to see a complete list of eligible states and regions. Overall, the Monsanto Fund will donate more than \$2.3 million to school districts in 39 states through this program.

Grants will be awarded based on merit, need and community support. The America's Farmers Grow Rural Education Advisory Council will select the winning grant application. This group is made up of 26 farmer leaders from across the country, who are passionate about both farming and rural education. The council members are actively engaged in their local communities through various leadership positions, such as a

member of the local School Board, an active Farm Bureau leader or a member of an educational organization or committee within various organizations. The council is responsible for reviewing the top grant applications to select the winning school. These individuals are passionate about both agriculture and education, which is essential when choosing the best grant.

The program started with a successful pilot in Illinois and Minnesota, in which farmers were given the opportunity to nominate a public school district in 165 eligible counties in those two states. The Monsanto Fund awarded more than \$266,000 to local schools in 16 CRDs through the pilot.

The America's Farmers Grow Rural Education program is part of a broad commitment by Monsanto Fund to highlight the important contributions farmers make every day to our society by helping them grow their youth. Visit www.growruraleducation.com for additional information and to view a complete list of winning school districts.

Potato Expo 2012 Session Presentations

CHIP BREAKOUTS

Benefits and Challenges of Consolidation in the Chip Industry

- [Part I](#)
- [Part II](#)
- [Part III](#)

Joe Guenther, PhD, Professor, Agricultural Economics, Idaho Center for Potato Research and Education

[Acylamide: Seeking an Industry Solution](#)

A.J. Bussan, PhD, Associate Professor, Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Gregg Halverson, President and CEO, Black Gold Farms

Paul Bethke, PhD, Assistant Professor, USDA/Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison

[Zebra Chip Update](#)

Charlie Rush, PhD, Director, SCRI Zebra Chip Project, Texas Agrilife Research and Extension Center

FRESH BREAKOUTS

[Potatoes: The View From Inside the World of a Produce Retailer](#)

Reggie Griffin, Vice President Produce, Kroger (retired)

[Fresh Potatoes in Today's Marketplace - Attitudes and Purchasing Trends](#)

Kate Thomson, Senior Research Manager, Sterling Rice Group

[Growing Fresh Market Potatoes-High Risk/Reward](#)

Moderator:

Keith Masser, Chairman/CEO, Sterman Masser Inc

Panelists:

Keith Doyen, Vice President, Willard C Doyen & Sons

Jim Knutzon, CEO and President, Farm Fresh Direct

Bob Meek, CEO, Wada Farms Marketing Group LLC

Bart Connors, General Manager and Partner, Basin Gold Cooperative

Russell Wysocki, CEO, RPE

[The State of the Economy and the Cost and Availability of Money](#)

Brian Johnson, CEO, Choice Financial Group

PROCESS BREAKOUTS**[Eyes on Fries](#)**

Kathy Hayden, Foodservice Analyst, Mintel Menu Insights

[Why Foreign Restaurant Operators Should Buy US Fries](#)

John Toasperm, Vice President for International Marketing, US Potato Board

[Potatoes: Any Day, Any Way](#)

Maureen Storey, PhD, President and CEO, Alliance for Potato Research and Education (APRE)

[US Frozen Potatoes Overseas – Frozen Potato Trade: History and Vision](#)

Matt Lantz, Manager, Trade Policy, Bryant Christie, Inc.

[Harmonizing GAP Requirements](#)

Suresh DeCosta, Manager of Quality Systems US Supply Chain Management, McDonald's

SEED BREAKOUTS**[Acrylamide Research Project](#)**

A.J. Bussan, PhD, Associate Professor, Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Gregg Halverson, President and CEO, Black Gold Farms

Paul Bethke, PhD, Assistant Professor, USDA/Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison

[PVY Research Project - Groves](#)

Russ Groves, PhD, Vegetable Extension Specialist and Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison

[PVY Research Project - McIntosh](#)

Chris McIntosh, PhD, Professor, Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, University of Idaho

[Bacterial Ring Rot Detection Trends](#)

Neil Gudmestad, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Plant Pathology, North Dakota State University

Late Blight

Howard Judelson, PhD, Professor, Department of Plant Pathology & Microbiology, University of California-Riverside

Seed Piece Treatment: Evaluating Formulations

Sam Thornton, AgriEdge Specialist, Syngenta

Developments in Seed Technology: What's Happening in Europe

Martin F.W. Jansen Klomp, Sector Manager, Processing, HZPC Holland

Project: Zebra Chip

Charlie Rush, PhD, Texas A&M University

Gerhard Bester, PhD, Senior Group Manager for North America Agro Operations, Frito Lay

James M. Crosslin, PhD, Research Plant Pathologist, USDA-ARS

GENERAL SESSIONS

What Do Consumers REALLY Want? How Do They Really Feel About Potatoes?

- [Part I](#)
- [Part II](#)
- [Part III](#)
- [Part IV](#)

Phil Lempert, "The Supermarket Guru®," Leading food industry analyst, journalist and trend-watcher

Sustainability in Action – Value Chain Partners Discuss Current Activities

Sustainability + Transparency = Success

Frito-Lay and Black Gold Farms

- [Part I](#)
- [Part II](#)

Stewardship of All Resources: People, Planet, Profit

Kroger and Wada Farms

- [Part I](#)
- [Part II](#)
- [Part III](#)
- [Part IV](#)

Grow, Measure, Improve and Repeat

McCain Foods and WHB Farms

- [Part I](#)
- [Part II](#)
- [Part III](#)
- [Part IV](#)

Moderator:

John Keeling, Executive VP and CEO, National Potato Council

Fresh Sector Panelists:

Bob Meek, CEO, Wada Farms

Reggie Griffin, Vice President Produce, Kroger (retired)

Chip Sector Panelists:

Eric Halverson, Executive VP of Technology, Black Gold

Gerhard Bester, PhD, Senior Group Manager for North America Agro Operations, Frito-Lay

Frozen Processed Panelists:

Eli Wollman, Farm Manager, WHB Farms

Leigh Morrow, Director for Crop Improvement for NA, McCain Foods

SCRI Sustainability

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics 427 Lorch Street, Madison, WI 53706-1503

Paul D. Mitchell Phone: 608.265.6514 Email: pdmitchell@wisc.edu Web: www.aae.wisc.edu/mitchell/

January 6, 2012

On December 29, 2011, we had a meeting with seven vegetable growers and Duane Maatz, WPVGA president, to discuss a collaborative project we are developing on sustainable processing vegetable production (sweet corn and green beans). We appreciate WPVGA's help in coordinating this effort with growers. See the brief project summary at the end for more information. Likely, not all of you who were interested were able to attend. This letter explains what to do if you want to support this project.

The USDA requires that federal money received for this project is matched one-to-one by non-federal money. Thus, we need growers to write letters supporting our grant proposal and describing their supporting activities so that we can use them as "matching contributions". Growers generate match by simply taking credit for the efforts they already devote to enhancing sustainability. We are not seeking "hard" dollars, only an accounting of what you are already doing in this area.

Three activities that will generate match for this project are:

- 1) Time devoted to the Project Advisory Board and other project meetings, including travel costs and pre- and post-meeting preparation/follow-up. We anticipate 20 hours per year.
- 2) Time spent Completing Sustainability Reports, including draft and test versions of sustainability assessment tools for the project. We estimate 20 hours per year.

- 3) Field Trials: Time and additional costs to differentially manage fields evaluating new production practices, as well as time to organize and summarize data. Example practices that growers could examine by sponsoring field trials on their farms include:
- a) Polymer coated urea for sweet corn,
 - b) Urease or nitrification inhibitors for green beans,
 - c) Evaluate Contans (*Coniothyrium minitans*) for controlling white mold in green beans,
 - d) Evaluate sweet corn varieties for foliar disease resistance,
 - e) Cultivation for weed control in green beans for weed resistance management, and
 - f) Use soil meters to determine when to irrigate.

Farmers would coordinate with UW researchers to design their field, then track input cost differences for the field trial versus their conventional management and coordinate with the processor to collect yield, quality and recovery data. The goal would be to evaluate the practice at the field scale, not a small plot, so the fields would be large (20 acres or more). For some field trials, the field would be partitioned into large strips with different management practices and for others the unit would be the whole field. The dollar value of matching effort is based on the extra time and input costs to manage the field differentially and any yield loss would also count as a matching contribution. We estimate about \$200/ac for each field trial, but growers can develop their own cost estimates.

To help write these letters, a template is included along with letter and is also available on my web page (<http://www.aae.wisc.edu/mitchell/SCRI.docx>). To determine values for farmer time to attend project meetings and complete sustainability assessments for activities 1 and 2, we assume a value of \$75/hr or \$600/day and 5 days per year. This estimate includes the cost of social security taxes as well as travel costs, but growers can develop their own estimates for the value of their time; growers can also allocate more or less time to project activities. For field trials, the template assumes 20 acres for a sweet corn field trial and 20 acres for a green bean field trial each year for 3 years at a cost of \$200/ac. Growers can allocate more or fewer acres, but we ask for at least 5 acres per year, and growers do not have to sponsor trials every year. Growers can also develop their own per acre cost estimates.

If you are interested in supporting this project, contact Paul Mitchell (info below and in letterhead). Specific steps to follow are

- 1) Read the Farmer letter template: <http://www.aae.wisc.edu/mitchell/SCRI.docx>
- 2) Draft a version of the letter
- 3) Email/fax the draft me and I'll suggest edits, mostly focused on the matching part. I know what will raise flags at CALS research and will suggest fixes. Then I will send it back.
- 4) Read the edited version and we can go back a forth until we are both happy.
- 5) Email/fax the final version with signature.

Please contact me with questions or concerns using the following information:

Email: pdmitchell@wisc.edu Office: 608-265-6514 Cell: 608-320-1162 Fax: 608-262-4376

Sincerely,



Paul D. Mitchell

Mr. Walker's Budget is "Credit Positive for Wisconsin"

Wall Street Journal Editorial: The Greece Next Door: Illinois gets a credit downgrade, in contrast to Wisconsin.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204555904577164944279702590.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

Run up spending and debt, raise taxes in the name of balancing the budget, but then watch as deficits rise and your credit-rating falls anyway. That's been the sad pattern in Europe, and now it's hitting that mecca of tax-and-spend government known as Illinois.

Though too few noticed, this month **Moody's downgraded Illinois state debt to A2 from A1, the lowest among the 50 states.** That's worse even than California. The state's cost of borrowing for \$800 million of new 10-year general obligation bonds rose to 3.1%—which is 110 basis points higher than the 2% on top-rated 10-year bonds of more financially secure states.

This wasn't supposed to happen. **Only a year ago, Governor Pat Quinn (Illinois) and his fellow Democrats raised individual income taxes by 67% and the corporate tax rate by 46%.** They did it to raise \$7 billion in revenue, as the Governor put it, to "get Illinois back on fiscal sound footing" and improve the state's credit rating...

It's worth contrasting this grim picture with that of Wisconsin north of the border. Last winter Madison was occupied by thousands of union protesters trying to bully legislators to defeat Republican Governor Scott Walker's plan to require government workers to pay a larger share of their health-plan costs, and to shore up the pension system by trimming future retirement liabilities. The reforms passed anyway.

In contrast to the Illinois downgrade, Moody's has praised Mr. Walker's budget as "credit positive for Wisconsin," adding that the money-saving reforms bring "the state's finances closer to a structural budgetary balance." Read more:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204555904577164944279702590.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

We are on the right track. If you haven't made a pledge to push back against recall elections there is still time. Please contact the WPVGA for more information.

Duane Maatz

Show Me The Spuds:

Annual Wisconsin Potato Industry Show and Grower Conference Set for January 31-February 2, 2012 in Stevens Point

Scab management, storage management, seed management; tractors, planters, harvesters: it's a spud lover's smorgasbord.

The biggest event in the Wisconsin potato industry is set for January 31 to February 2, 2012 at the Holiday Inn, Stevens Point. The WPVGA/UW Extension Grower Education Conference and 63rd Annual Industry Show allow the entire industry to converge and network under one roof.

Wisconsin's grower conference is widely recognized as one of the largest and best events in the nation, offering top-notch educational programming on the most critical issues facing the potato industry. The Industry Show

features state-of-the-art technology along with the newest products and services available in the industry while also facilitating networking opportunities for growers, vendors and researchers.

The trade show takes place over two days, Tuesday, January 31 and Wednesday, February 1, at the Holiday Inn on the east side of Stevens Point, in the heart of Wisconsin's Central Sands growing region. This venue offers a large exhibition area and the ability for exhibitors to display large agricultural equipment indoors. This year's show has an expanded exhibit area, with over 15 additional booth spaces and upwards of 75 exhibitors. There will also be some heavy equipment on display outdoors.

Although it may be cold outside, it's an excellent time for industry members to get together, meet old friends and see the latest in farm technology. Also, with planting time just around the corner, growers are ready to make their plans and purchases for the coming season.

In addition to a large contingent of Wisconsin growers, attendees come from all across the U.S. as well as Canada. Combining the Show with the Grower Conference has led to a record attendance of over 500 growers and industry members annually. It's easy for attendees to move back and forth from the conference rooms to the exhibit area. Conference meeting rooms, as well as dining and break areas, are adjacent to the show floor. Conference sessions are scheduled with ample breaks, providing plenty of time to visit exhibitors.

The grower conference will be held over all three days and features general sessions with topics of interest to the entire potato industry, as well as breakout sessions with more industry-specific topics. Growers and industry representatives attending the conference will have the opportunity to get a head start on the season with expert market outlooks, research reports, information on new technologies and agribusiness advice. Key topics this year include fumigation rules and regulations, scab management, new genetic advancements and storage management issues. There will also be a panel discussion on potato marketing as well as a grower panel on the integration of dairy into potato and vegetable rotations.

Over the three days of the conference, virtually all of the University of Wisconsin's potato researchers will be on hand to discuss their research results and recommendations for the coming year. In addition, several nationally-recognized speakers have been confirmed: Leslie Wanner of the USDA-ARS Vegetable Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland will offer her expertise on potato common scab; David Douches of Michigan State University will speak on biotechnology from a breeder perspective; National Potato Council and United States Potato Board representatives will also be giving updates on their respective organizations. GAP, food safety and traceability will also be covered.

Now fixtures at the grower conference are the Annual Meetings of the WPVGA and the WPVGA Associate Division along with meetings for the Wisconsin Muck Growers Association. The WPVGA will hold its Annual Meeting on Thursday, February 2, beginning at 1 p.m. The Associate Division Annual Meeting is set for 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 1.

The Wisconsin Seed Potato Improvement Association and the WPVGA Associate Division sponsor a reception from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the conclusion of the first day of the Show/Conference (Tuesday, January 31). Food and refreshments are provided free of charge to all attendees.

The annual industry banquet is the premier social event in the Wisconsin potato industry. Set for Wednesday, February 1, the cocktail hour begins at 5:15 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:30. The annual industry awards banquet follows dinner and includes the prestigious WPVGA Hall of Fame inductions. After the awards presentation, the WPVGA Associate Division hands out generous cash prizes of \$100, \$200, \$300, \$400 and

\$500, as well as a grand prize of a 40-inch LCD TV. To top off the evening, former Green Bay Packer Blaise Winter will bring his motivational speaking talents to entertain banquet attendees.

For those just wishing to attend and see the trade show, there is no admission charge.

Upcoming Events:

January 17-19 Eastern Idaho Ag Expo, Holt Arena, Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID
January 18-19 Idaho Potato Conference, Student Union Building, Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID
January 18 Auxiliary Meeting, Green Mill, Rothschild, WI 1:00 pm
January 19 Chip Committee Conference Call, 10:00 am
January 23 Research Meeting, Hancock Research Station, 9:00 am
January 24 Water Task Force Meeting, Elizabeth Inn, Plover, WI 10:00 am
January 24-25 Western Idaho Ag Expo, Caldwell Events Center, Caldwell, ID
January 24-26 Washington – Oregon Potato Conference, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, WA
January 25 WSPIA Annual Meeting, Northstar Lanes, Antigo, WI 1:00 pm
January 26 Spudmobile Meeting, Elizabeth Inn, Plover, WI 10:00 am
January 26 Promotions Committee Meeting, Elizabeth Inn, Plover, WI 1:00 pm
Jan. 31 – Feb. 2 WPVGA Grower Education Conference and Industry Show, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
February 1 WPVGA Associate Division Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
February 2 WPVGA Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI
February 10 Mint/Muck Annual Meetings, Best Western, Portage, WI 9:30 am
February 22 WSPIA Meeting, Chase Conference Room, Antigo, WI 3:00 pm
February 23 Long Range Planning Follow-up Meeting, Elizabeth Inn, Plover, WI 9am-3pm
Feb. 23-March 1 Potato Industry Leadership Institute, Washington DC
Feb. 27-March 1 Potato D.C. Fly-In, Washington DC
March 13-16 USBP Annual Meeting, The Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs, CO
March 15 Spudpro Meeting, Rhinelander Research Station, 10:00 am
May 27-30 8th World Potato Congress, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

Share your questions and comments on the issues. Do you know somebody that would like to be included on the mailing list for this E-Newsletter? Please contact: wpvga@wisconsinpotatoes.com.

Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association

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