



2023 WISCONSIN POTATO CROP REPORT

Growers report above average yields and excellent quality despite hot, dry weather

By WPVGA Executive Director Tamas Houlihan

The 2023 Wisconsin potato crop got off to a late start due to cold and wet weather in April. Planting was delayed by a week to 10 days, primarily due to cold conditions.

The month of May was the fourth driest on record in Wisconsin. Dry conditions and very warm temperatures persisted throughout the summer, although there were a few timely rainfalls.

By late July, 93% of the state was in a moderate to severe drought. With the extensive use of irrigation, however, the crop turned out very well, with above average yields and excellent quality, including large tuber size.

Disease severity values were non-existent through mid-June. Overall, pest pressure was not severe, and

there was no late blight in Wisconsin in 2023.

Wisconsin had a good harvest season. Warm days and cool nights led to excellent tuber bulking conditions. The first few days of September saw hot temperatures shut down harvest, but then conditions turned ideal for the next two weeks.

Rain fell steadily from September 23-25, and high temperatures returned the first few days of October, again slowing down harvest. Much cooler temperatures arrived on October 6, with highs in the 50s, and ideal harvest conditions followed for the next week to 10 days.

NO FROST DAMAGE

There was no frost until very late in October, and there were no reports of frost damage to potatoes.

Growers report that yields are average to above average and quality is excellent. Statewide yields average about 435 hundredweight (cwt.)/acre on 66,000 acres of potatoes.

This puts the state's production at 28.71 million cwt., an increase of 1.935 million cwt., or 7% compared to last year.

Total planted acres are up from last year, which was reported to be approximately 63,000. The increase in production is primarily due to the increase in acreage of about 3,000 acres compared to 2022, along with stronger yields. Yields are up approximately 10 cwt./acre across the state over last year.

This estimation is a result of conversations with growers and is lower than the estimate made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) of 29.8 million cwt. The USDA continues to overestimate Wisconsin potato production.

The USDA acreage estimate for Wisconsin in 2023 is 68,500. The USDA yield estimate for Wisconsin in 2023 is 435 cwt./acre.

GENERAL REPORT

A few Wisconsin growers in the central and southern portions of the state began planting between April 10 and 15 this year, but most growers waited out the cold, wet weather.

May saw warmer temperatures and a lot of potato acres went into the ground. These conditions put the Wisconsin potato crop about a week to 10 days behind schedule, although the crop caught up quickly.

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The Antigo seed potato region had good planting weather after wet conditions in early May. By mid-to-late May, conditions for planting were good throughout the state.

By late May and early June, there was a long stretch of dry weather with warm temperatures. Drought conditions continued throughout the summer, with very few days of rain.

May through August precipitation throughout Central Wisconsin was just over nine inches, compared to the average of over 17 inches. Thanks to outstanding irrigation management by growers, the crop turned out to be excellent, with very little disease pressure or fertilizer loss.

The Antigo seed area reported one of the highest yielding seasons in memory. Frost was not an issue during harvest this year anywhere in the state.

Statewide, growers reported



Yields were up across the board in Wisconsin, with seed growers in the Antigo, Eagle River and Rhinelander area reporting a lot of oversize potato profiles, particularly on Plover Russets, Atlantics and Reveilles (the latter shown here).

average to above average yields with excellent quality and large tuber size. Storages were full and pack-out rates exceptional.

AREA REPORTS

Northwest Wisconsin – The growing season was described as above average despite a late start due to snow and cold weather. Half the season was dry and the other half wet.

The weather was good for harvest. Growers reported that most fields had excellent yields, with an overall average of 510 cwt./acre (primarily russets). The size profile is larger than usual, with 15-20% greater than 10 oz. Quality is very good. There was no disease pressure, nor issues with storage.

Antigo, Rhinelander, Eagle River – Growers reported a slight delay to the planting season with many farms beginning in mid-May and completing planting by early June. Overall, the planting conditions were reported as being very good.

The growing season was hot and

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dry. Other than one wet week in September, harvest conditions were good throughout September and well into October. Growers reported good tuber bulking after vine kill.

Yields were up across the board with some varieties reaching 600 cwt./acre. Seed growers reported a lot of oversize potato profiles, particularly on Plover Russet, Atlantics and Reveilles. Several growers reported yields ranging from 400-500 cwt./acre. Overall, average yields were about 425 cwt./acre.

Wisconsin's 2023 certified seed potato area has 9,725 acres of certified seed. This is an increase of 380 acres (4%) compared to 2022.

The seed area for major chip potato varieties increased by 355 acres, or 6.3%, to 5,955 acres. That included a 189-acre increase in the state's Frito-Lay seed area and a 167-acre increase

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– Tamas Houlihan,
WPVGA Executive Director

in other chip potato varieties.

ATLANTICS & LAMOKAS

The Atlantic seed area increased by 76 acres, while the Lamoka seed area dropped by 77 acres.

Wisconsin's russet table potato seed area fell by 26 acres, to 1,522 acres. That included a 55-acre drop in Silvertown and a 53-acre increase in Russet Norkotah acreage.

The Goldrush seed area fell by 34

acres to 392 acres.

The area certified for major red potato varieties increased by 44 acres, or 4.7%, to 985 acres. A 55-acre increase in the Red Prairie seed area was partially offset by a 17-acre reduction in the Dark Red Norland seed area.

Wisconsin's seed area for major yellow potato varieties totaled 304 acres, up from 259 acres a year earlier. Colomba and Yukon Gold remain Wisconsin's top yellow varieties. In the processing sector, the Caribou Russet certified area rose by 9.4%, to 309 acres.

Frito-Lay varieties represent the highest number of certified seed acres (2,710), followed by Atlantic (944), Lamoka (690), Silvertown (623), Snowden (602), Dark Red Norland (468) and Goldrush (392).

Central Wisconsin/Stevens Point/Plover/Amherst – Despite the late start, growers reported average to above average yields with good to excellent quality. It was a good harvest season in this area.

Average yields were 450-475 cwt./acre on russets, with some fields hitting 500-550. Some Burbank yields hit 550 cwt./acre, but the average was closer to 475 on Burbanks and Umatillas.

The size profile on Burbanks was larger than desired, but smaller on Silvertowns. The Caribou variety was



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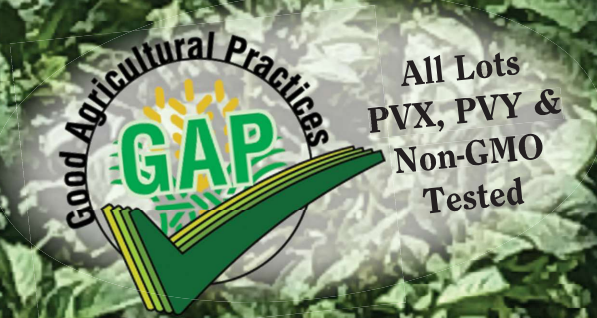


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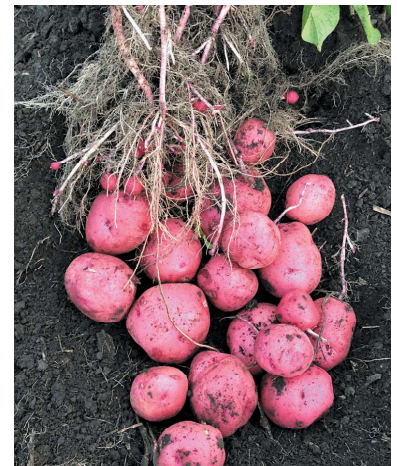
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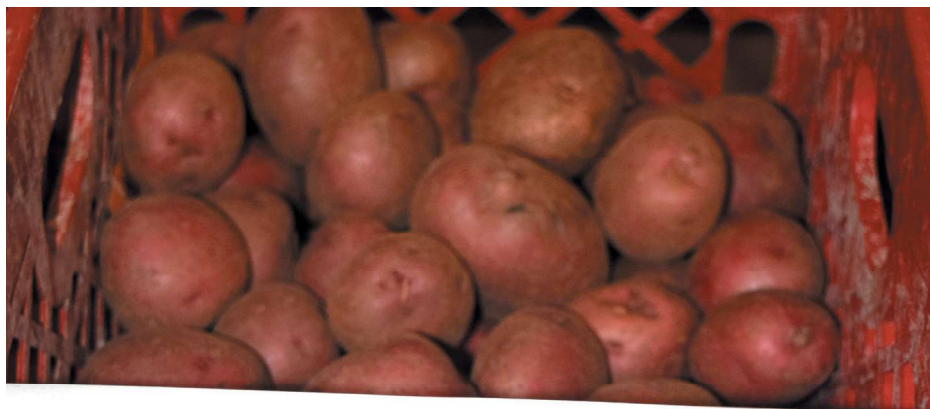
reported to have good size and yields, with a high of 575 cwt./acre.

Reds and yellows had very good yields, with one Little Potato Company red variety hitting 450-500 cwt./acre. There was some Colorado Potato Beetle pressure and some early die.

Central Wisconsin/Plainfield/Bancroft/Nekoosa – Growers reported average to above average yields and good quality. There was variability by field and variety, with yields anywhere from 400 to 550 cwt./acre.

Central Wisconsin/Hancock – Growers reported an average to above average crop with a good size profile and roughly 30% 10-ounce potatoes and above.

Chip crop yields were in the usual 500 cwt./acre range with good quality. Processing potatoes yielded average



Dark Red Norland

Check, Red: 15/25

	DRN		Red Average	
	cwt/a	%	cwt/a	%
Total Yield:	622		633	
Premium:	74	12	101	16
A-size:	454	73	431	68
B-size:	76	12	85	13
C-size:	4	1	6	1
Culls (%):	2.1		1.9	
Gravity:	1.056		1.064	
Internal Defect (%):	0.0		0.4	

Above: The seed potato area certified for major red potato varieties increased by 44 acres, or 4.7%, to 985 acres. A 55-acre increase in the Red Prairie seed area was partially offset by a 17-acre reduction in the Dark Red Norland (examples shown) seed area.

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2023 CROP USAGE BREAKDOWN (in Hundredweight and % of Overall Crop)		
Seed Potatoes	4,019,400	14%
Chip Potatoes	7,751,700	27%
Frozen/Fry	6,316,200	22%
Fresh Potatoes	10,622,700	37%
Total	28,710,000	100%

to above average at 450-460 cwt./acre, although one grower reported lower yields than expected, averaging closer to 400 cwt./acre with a small size profile.

Central Wisconsin - Coloma/Grand Marsh – Yields were reported to be average to above average at about 400-450 cwt./acre with excellent quality. Overall, yields were reported to be about 10% above average.

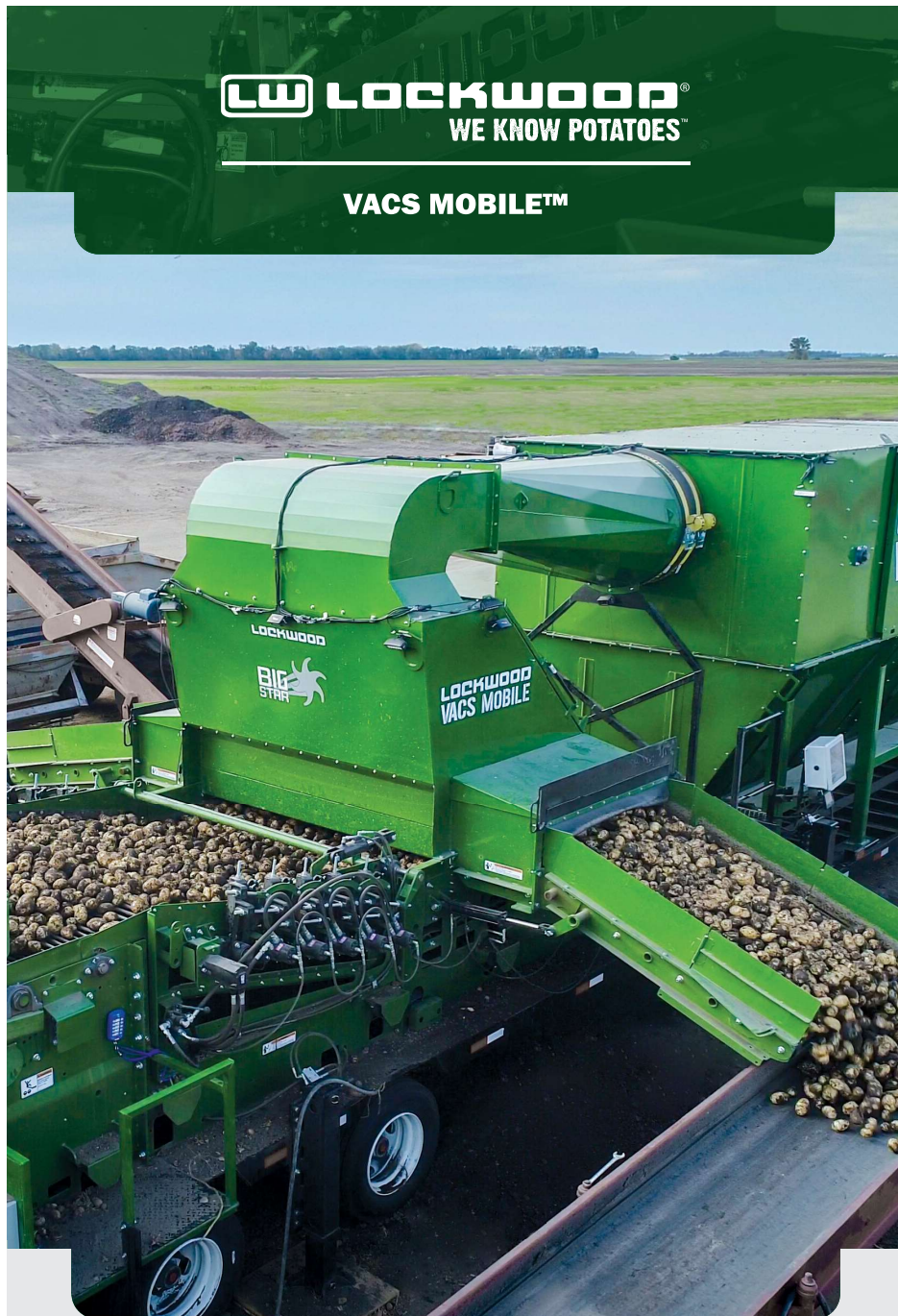
The size profile was considerably larger than last year and much bigger than expected. Growers had to irrigate considerably more than usual.

Some scab was reported on reds and Atlantics, but there was very little disease pressure overall. Bins are full with no issues to date.

Southern Wisconsin - Spring Green/Endeavor – Yields are higher than last year with an average of 510-515 cwt./acre on russets and golds. Creamer red yields were closer to 200 cwt./acre.

The quality is above average on all varieties. There were no major scab issues and hollow heart is better than normal. Some reds and yellows in the area yielded about 10% more than last year along with greater size, heavier to A's than B's. Growers reported this crop being one of the largest they've seen.

Very dry conditions in early July were followed by two inches of rainfall that helped the crop turn around. High temperatures delayed harvest by about two weeks, but there is no disease to speak of, and growers filled their storages more than normal. **BCT**




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