

The Seed Potato Certification Newsletter

NEW ZEALAND SEED POTATO CERTIFICATION AUTHORITY

ISSUE 6 – OCTOBER 2018

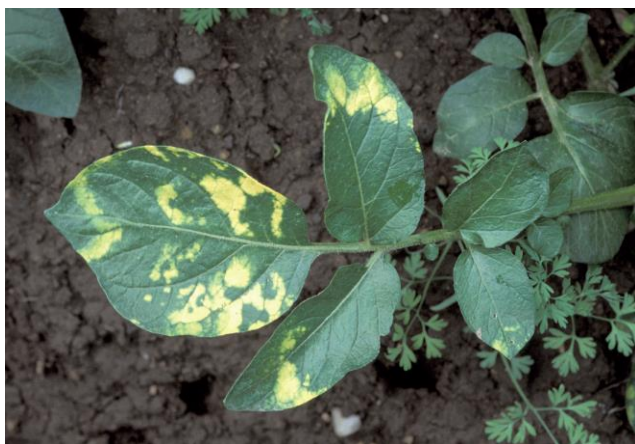
The Seed Potato Certification Newsletter is produced annually in October. There are also regular updates on seed certification in the Potatoes New Zealand e-newsletter.

Past newsletters can be found on the Potatoes NZ website (www.potatoesnz.co.nz).

Potato mop-top virus

Potato mop-top virus (PMTV) was detected in stored processing potatoes in Canterbury in September. Updates on the PMTV response can be found on the Potatoes NZ website and newsletters.

The most common symptom of PMTV is the development of yellow blotches in ring patterns on the middle and lower leaves. This may also be accompanied with a shortening of the internodes, giving a bunching or “mop-top” effect. Infected tubers may show no symptoms or may have raised, circular rings on the skin surface. Tubers may also develop reddish-brown rings or lines on the tuber surface which extend as arcs of red-brown necrotic tissue through the tuber flesh. Powdery scab (*Spongospora subterranea*) is a vector for PMTV.



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Seed Potato Certification plays a critical role in limiting the spread and incidence of potato diseases in New Zealand. This can be seen from the results of the virus survey carried out periodically by Plant & Food Research on behalf of Potatoes New Zealand, available on the Potatoes NZ website <https://potatoesnz.co.nz/mdocs-posts/2018-seed-potato-virus-survey/>. Viruses that are visually detectable have declined to low levels compared to viruses such as PVS that don't show strong symptoms.

The Scheme will play an important role in reducing the impact of Potato mop-top virus (PMTV) as the industry moves into a long-term management phase. The Authority has considered whether any rule changes are needed to help manage PMTV. At this stage the only rule change is to include PMTV in the G2 leaf testing. Section 4.6 of the rules have been updated to list the viruses to be tested for at G2.

Before making and further decisions the Authority is reviewing several matters:

- Reviewing details of the spread and distribution of PMTV;
- Participating in PMTV surveillance and monitoring;
- Reviewing the potential benefit of pre-plant spoil testing in management of powdery scab and PMTV;
- Farm biosecurity and training;
- Reviewing the need for sterile media in mini-tuber production.

Further updates will be provided through the Potatoes NZ e-newsletter.

Other rule changes for the 2018-19 season

As well as the actions taken to manage PMTV, outlined above, several other rule changes were passed at the August Authority meeting. The updated rules are now available as part of the "Seed Booklet" and also on the Potatoes NZ website. Some important changes are:

(i) Merchant registration

We have clarified that all merchants must be registered in the Scheme. A merchant is defined as a commercial entity managing the multiplication of seed potatoes for seed potato certification. It is important that we know who the merchants are, and that merchants recognise and perform their obligations as set out in the scheme rules (refer section 4 of the Rules).

(ii) Field certified

A new programme has been created within the certification scheme for seed potatoes intended for growing processing crops that currently have no official tuber inspection undertaken. Field Certified is identical to the Pyramid Programme, except that no tuber inspection is undertaken. The status of Field Certified assists with traceability of seed and makes clear the inspection status of the lines. Seed labels must be endorsed with the words "Field Certified".

(iii) Entry of new varieties into the scheme

Additional requirements have been added to section 4.2 of the Rules, relating to registration of new varieties. These requirements apply to merchants (refer to the definition of merchant, above).

All varieties entering the scheme must clearly state the material's origin, provide a description of varietal characteristics and photos, and be entered using the commonly known variety name, PVR denomination (where that exists), or an acceptable breeder reference code. All entered material must comply with the PVR Act and UPOV obligations.

The requirement for new varieties to be tested for powdery scab susceptibility has been removed from the rules, as the Authority believes there is sufficient information available commercially.

(iv) Publication of seedlines

The rules have been updated (section 2.3) to make it clear that G3-G6 lines will be published on the PNZ website and seedlines booklet.

Fees

There is no change to the entry fees for 2018-19. The entry fee for "standard" entries (i.e., those where field and tuber inspections are carried out byASUREQuality or SGS) is \$310 plus GST per hectare. This is made up of two parts: an administration fee of \$60 plus GST per ha and an inspection fee of \$250 plus GST per ha.

The fee for "approved organisation" entries (i.e., those where field and tuber inspections are being carried out by an approved organisation such as Eurogrow) is \$60 plus GST per hectare. This is the administration fee only.

Authority members

There have been several changes to Authority membership in the last year. Andy Innes has stepped down as Chair, and has resigned from the Authority. The Authority

and Potatoes New Zealand wishes to acknowledge Andy's service to the industry over many years.

Richard Redfern has accepted the nomination for the position of Chair of the Authority, and has chaired recent meetings. The Authority would also like to welcome two new members, nominated by the Authority and approved by the Potatoes NZ Board. Andrew McKay, of Alps Seeds in Geraldine, joins the Authority as a Seed Grower. Reece Balle, of Balle Brothers in Canterbury, joins the Authority an end user.

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