

# North Dakota Potato Council

## Report to the 2025 North Dakota Legislative Assembly House and Senate Agriculture Committees

### Background

The North Dakota Potato Council was established in 1967 to promote advertising, research, development, and cultivation of North Dakota potatoes. The Council consists of one elected individual from each of the state's five districts.

In 1993, legislation gave the Potato Council more power and responsibility, requiring an assessment of all potatoes grown in the state or sold to a designated handler. The current assessment remains at three and a half cents per hundredweight, with a maximum of four cents per hundredweight allowed.

The North Dakota Potato Council contracts with the Northland Potato Growers Association to promote, research, and educate about North Dakota-grown potatoes.

### Crop Reports

2023:

The 2023 growing season was successful. Irrigated growers achieved some of their best yields due to minimal rainfall, allowing for better control of irrigation and nutrition. While dryland crops were smaller, they benefited from strong market prices. Overall, demand for potato products remained high throughout the season.

2024:

The year started with relatively no snow cover, allowing growers to get an early start to the 2024 season. Cool-weather during development resulted in higher-than-average numbers of tubers per plant. A combination of high-quality seed varieties and favorable weather conditions mitigated the development of diseases in the 2024 potato crop. The decline in precipitation and increase in heat compared to previous years caused harvesting delays, especially in the state's dryland region. Harvest was completed with no notable issues and average yields.

### Biennium Highlights

- I. Continued partnership contract with Northland Potato Growers Association (NPGA) to conduct promotion, research, and education of North Dakota-grown potatoes
  - a. NPGA was able to attend seven domestic tradeshow on behalf of the Council through Specialty Crop Blocks Grants
  - b. NPGA developed consumer marketing campaigns to educate consumers on the benefits, availability, and uniqueness of North Dakota-grown potatoes.
  - c. Lab research at USDA-ARS, University of Minnesota, North Dakota State University was conducted. Through support of checkoff funds, NDSU developed a new potato variety that McDonald's accepted. Additional research focused on on-farm field research and pest management.
- II. Change in Executive Secretary
  - a. Jacey Kuersteiner was hired in August to assume the Executive Secretary role with the Potato Council
- III. Endowed Professorship in Potato Breeding at NDSU
  - a. The North Dakota Potato Council directly assisted in financially supporting the Johansen-Thompson Endowed Professorship in Potato Breeding at NDSU. The endowment will ensure the continuity and expansion of the potato breeding program at NDSU.

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- IV. Senate Bill 2039
  - a. The Council has worked with numerous growers to create and support SB 2039 relating to the definition of agricultural property. It is important that this bill passes to keep potato storage warehouses assessed as agriculture property rather than commercial property.
- V. Business Opportunities
  - a. The North Dakota Potato Council was key in attracting a new processing plant to the region. Their efforts included conducting on-farm field trials for new potato varieties, collaborating with the processing plant to encourage its establishment in North Dakota, and partnering with city and government officials to attract the company to the state. On Tuesday, January 7th, it was announced that Agristo has chosen to move forward with plans for a location in North Dakota. While this is exciting news, some details are still to be finalized before breaking ground.

## Next Biennium

The North Dakota Potato Council will continue contracting with the Northland Potato Growers Association for promotion, research, and education. The focus will be increasing demand for North Dakota potatoes, fast-track new seed varieties, assisting Cavendish Farms in Jamestown with any needs related to their \$150-million plant expansion scheduled to break ground in spring of 2025, and work with Agristo to finalize their processing plant location in Grand Forks.

### North Dakota Potato Council Budget For the Years Ending June 2025 and 2006

REVENUES:	30-Jun-25	30-Jun-26
Potato Assesments	\$575,000	\$590,000
Interest on Investments	10,000	10,000
Total Revenues	\$585,000	\$600,000
EXPENDITURES:		
Operatings Fees and Services	\$518,000	\$518,000
Grants, Benefits & Claims	\$50,000	\$50,000
Travel		
Insurance	550	550
Rental/Leases		
Professional Fees and Services		
Total Expenditures	\$568,550	\$568,550
Revenues Over Expenditures	\$16,450	\$31,450

## Audited Financials

### Comparative Statement of Revenues and Expenditures For the Years Ended June 30, 2024 and 2023

REVENUES:	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2023
Potato Assessments (net of refunds of \$0 and \$3,538)	\$ 559,848	\$ 632,328
Interest on Investments	20,926	6,664
Total Revenues	\$ 580,774	\$ 638,992
EXPENDITURES:		
Operating Fees and Services	\$ 518,000	\$ 518,000
Grants, Benefits & Claims	50,000	
Travel	752	
Insurance	588	551
Rentals/Leases - Building/Land	200	
Professional Fees and Services		6,375
Total Expenditures	\$ 569,540	\$ 524,926
Revenues Over Expenditures	\$ 11,234	\$ 114,066