

WISCONSIN BANKERS' FARM BULLETIN

Sort Wisconsin Potatoes to Obtain Best Prices

By

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WHY PAY FREIGHT AND SORTING CHARGES ON CULLS?
Sorting at home saves these costs and opens prime markets for the producer.

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Wisconsin Bankers' Association

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Sort Wisconsin Potatoes to Obtain Best Prices

By establishing a reputation for a continuous supply of well graded stock Wisconsin can successfully compete in the largest and best potato markets of the country.

The potato must be graded and sorted if it is to present the best appearance and the grower get the highest prices. All the inferior stock should be thrown out and the best potatoes given a chance to make an attractive showing.

Representative Wisconsin potato growers, shippers, and transportation companies, or their agents, are now co-operating to improve the sorting done at loading stations. Careless or otherwise improper sorting has been especially conspicuous recently, and has resulted in losses from dry rot, common scab, undersized and coarse green stock, and mixed varieties.

Late potato blight is prevalent again throughout the middle west and eastern Atlantic states. The disease varies in its severity in Wisconsin and some of the sandy loam areas are comparatively free from blight. These sections should be able, if the sorting is carefully done, to furnish shipments practically free from rot.

When potato blight destroys the vines dry rot, especially in wet weather, attacks the tubers in the hills. At digging time the soft rotten spots may be so small as to escape detection.

Four Enemies of the Potato Growers' Profits

Mixed varieties

Scabby and rotten tubers

Green and dirty stock

Careless Grading

The rot develops rapidly under cool, moist conditions and may destroy a large percentage of a car load before it reaches the distributing point. Of course when large amounts of potatoes infected with the disease are moved someone must stand a serious loss. This rot ultimately shows in sunken discolorations or dry, hard blisters. All infected stock should be removed from commercial shipments through careful sorting.

Common scab regularly does more damage to potato shipments than any other trouble. Shipments of potatoes for either seed or table stock are more frequently rejected for common scab than for any other disease. The late blight rot causes a special, serious condition, but common scab is apparently always more or less prevalent. It can be controlled, in part through seed treatment, rotation, and correct cultural conditions. Of course badly scabbed stock is a dead loss and must be removed by sorting.

Undersized, green, spongy and coarse stock also often help to lower the value of Wisconsin potatoes. A common understanding between growers and dealers as to what is acceptable is needed at loading stations.

The sale of mixed varieties can be entirely avoided and no one improvement can be accomplished more readily. Community potato raising now under development in Wisconsin will encourage the production and sale of large shipments of one variety. As a rule, one, two, or three distinct varieties will satisfy all commercial requirements.

But great improvement can be made if certain standards for sorting and grading potatoes are adapted. These recommendations for greater uniformity in potato shipments were made at a conference held in Chicago of representatives of the growing, shipping and marketing interests:

Size. Market stock of round white variety shall be graded over a screen which measures $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches in the clear. For long white varieties, a screen of $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, in the clear, is recommended.

¶ While greatest improvement can be made by growing, properly, but a few standard varieties, careful sorting and grading will accomplish much.

¶ "Wisconsin is one of the four great potato producing states of the Union. Potatoes are grown on nine out of ten farms in the state."

Weight. Stock running over twelve ounces is undesirable and not over five per cent of this maximum weight should be allowed in first-class shipments.

Quality. Stock should be practically free from serious external imperfections including late blight rot, common scab, sun burn, frost injury, bruises, knobiness, second growth, etc. Stock should be mature and clean.

Varietal purity. Commercial potato shipments should be graded to one variety.

Commercial potato growing in Wisconsin is not on a speculative basis. The industry is inter-related with a permanent system of farming by men who have investments in homes. For the reason that all natural conditions are favorable for the development of the industry Wisconsin always will be a great potato-producing state.

Potato shipping interests maintain that competition is extremely keen now between potato-growing sections of this country. Wisconsin can meet this competition and reach out into new territory only through establishing a reputation for the continuous supply of well graded stock.

To Readers of this Bulletin:

With this October "bulletin" the Wisconsin Bankers' Association completes its Second Year's circulation of these Monthly Agricultural Bulletins. The information contained is furnished by men who are recognized as AUTHORITY upon the various subjects and the Bulletins are circulated by the various Banks of Wisconsin in order that the Farmers of our State may have the benefit of RELIABLE INFORMATION concerning various phases of Agricultural Development from which the "Earning Capacity" of every Wisconsin Farm may be brought to its highest stage. We are confident the readers of these Bulletins have been benefitted by them, and if you DESIRE TO RECEIVE BULLETINS FOR THE COMING YEAR (free of cost), a request to YOUR LOCAL BANKER will undoubtedly secure them for you. If your banker does not distribute them, a postal to Geo. D. Bartlett, Secy. Wisconsin Bankers' Association, Milwaukee, will place your name upon the Association's mailing list and secure you copies of future "bulletins" each month.

This is one effort made by the Bankers of Wisconsin toward the further development of Wisconsin as an Agricultural and Dairy State.

WISCONSIN BANKERS' ASSOCIATION.