Table & seed potatoes from Western Australia at a glance

Dr I McPharlin

Peter Dawson

Rachel Lancaster

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ON E O F T H E M O S T P E S T & D I S E A S E - F R E E
A G R I C U L T U R A L
P R O D U C T I O N A R E A S I N
T H E W O R L D …

“In the south of WA, potatoes are produced under the most ideal climatic and phytosanitary conditions imaginable. In fact, the growing conditions there might be described as laboratory conditions, which is reflected in the yields close to what is believed to be the potential limit for producing potatoes on one hectare of land… There is no bacterial wilt, no potato cyst nematode, no late blight and no potato virus Y. Tuber scores in the seed potato growing areas of WA. There is no other potato growing area in the world, known to WA, whose seed conditions are equal.”

Peter Schmiediche
Regional Representative
International Potato Centre (CIP)
Bogor, Indonesia (1992-97)

FOOD SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The industry continues to take a proactive and positive stance on food safety issues by implementing integrated crop management techniques (ICM) to reduce pesticide use and adopting quality management systems corresponding internationally-recognized Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. Growers are actively involved with researchers and government agencies in further refinement of sustainable production practices.

CERTIFYING SEED POTATOES FOR WORLD MARKETS

Food safety and environmental sustainability

The Western Australian Seed Potato Certification Scheme is an industry co-operative scheme. The Department of Agriculture, through its AGWEST Seed Quality business unit, administers the scheme and ensures production and marketing guidelines agreed to by industry. AGWEST Seed Quality inspectors undertake inspections of both the growing crop and harvested tubers, provide advice and certify seed lots which meet the quality standards. Certified seed potatoes are produced over a maximum of five field generations from minitubers, micro-tubers or plantlets produced in accredited laboratories from pathogen-tested stocks maintained in tissue culture. The term “Certified” is not restricted to any one generation. Seed from any generation is certified based on the standards set for the relevant generation. Any of the five generations (G1 to G5) may be sold as Certified seed, for example Certified G3 or Certified G4.

Growing for the Future

Western Australia has much to offer as a seed potato supplier for the growing conditions there might be described as laboratory conditions, which is reflected in the yields close to what is believed to be the potential limit for producing potatoes on one hectare of land.

● A growing core of large scale professional growers
● One of the most pest and disease-free agricultural production areas in the world
● Ample land and water for future expansion
● National collaboration between growers and associated service industries
● National government commitment to quality service to its customers and makes every effort to ensure accuracy, currency and reliability of the data contained in this document. However, changes in circumstances after publication may affect the quality of this information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful for the cooperation of Western Australian potato exporters who contributed information and assistance to the project. Support for the project by Terry Hill is also acknowledged.

DISCLAIMER

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Western Australia produces a range of horticultural commodities including fruit, vegetables, flowers, nursery products and wine as part of its fast growing $600 million horticultural industry. Natural advantages such as climate and clean environment, soils and water make Western Australia an ideal place to supply a variety of high quality produce to domestic and international markets.

### Seed Potatoes - A Growing Industry

Western Australia is a leading national exporter of table potatoes, accounting for almost 40 per cent of Australian exports. The high quality of Western Australian potatoes commands premium prices on both national and international markets.

Opportunities to export Certified potato seed, particularly to south east Asian markets are growing and varieties suited to export markets are being developed by the State Government’s research and development agency, Agriculture, Western Australia.

Proximity to Asia, an export orientated horticultural natural resource asset, includes the capability of exporting root crops, all done in one stage. Western Australian advantages when it comes to doing business: Potatoes are the most significant crop in the south temperate areas of Western Australia representing about 30 per cent of the total area under irrigation for table potato production. The area is free from winter frost and two of the most important potato diseases including late blight, bacterial wilt and potato eye nematode.

### Availability

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### The Quality Advantage

One of the most pest and disease free agricultural production areas in the world...

Western Australia is free from many potato pests and diseases, giving producers the unique advantage of being able to produce quality table potatoes with minimal chemical use. The absence of major potato disease also means that growers can be confident that seed potatoes from Western Australia are low risk.

### Research and Development

The Department of Agriculture, the State Government’s agricultural research and development agency, delivers support through research, extension and industry development services. The Department of Agriculture encourages the horticultural industry to work together with a view to developing long term markets, while continuing traditional research and advisory services on crop protection, post harvest technologies, quality and productivity improvement.

### Future Prospects

The success of the project to improve potato production in Vietnam means that this methodology could be used to develop other markets for WA certified potatoes. The Department of Agriculture is developing projects in East and West Africa and in Sri Lanka.

Western Australia is ideally positioned to access significant markets in Asia, Australia, the Indian Ocean region and beyond.

Western Australian seed potatoes are exported to Brunei, Fiji, Indonesia, Mauritius, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Middle East. Seed potatoes have been exported to Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

### Strong Industry Support

Western Australia’s economy is based on exports and consequently it has well developed infrastructure. The State is well served by an extensive network of sealed roads and highways and a network of modern ports, including the major port of Fremantle near Perth which is regarded as one of Australia’s most efficient. There are several Western Australian exporters of potatoes and several freight service providers.