

AUSPICA

Newsletter June/July Edition 2019

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Letter from the Editor



Welcome to the first official AuSPICA newsletter! We are excited to announce we will be producing a bi-monthly newsletter in collaboration with staff, visiting scientists, guests and growers. Yes, you read right we value your input and want to make our newsletter as interactive as possible.

Currently we have the opportunity for growers questions and answers, this is a great way to get some answers for those important questions or maybe you may just enjoy reading other growers questions.

We have such an amazing team of staff at AuSPICA, over the current and future newsletter you will see articles written and questions answered by all those amazing people.

If we have just stimulated your interest and you are keen to get involved but unsure how please contact me via email on the link below:

Crystal.wilkinson@auspica.org.au

We are very excited to working in partnership with you.

Until next month, may the weather be kind and ground green.

Crystal Wilkinson

Sabbatical Leave with AuSPICA

Steven B. Johnson, Ph.D.

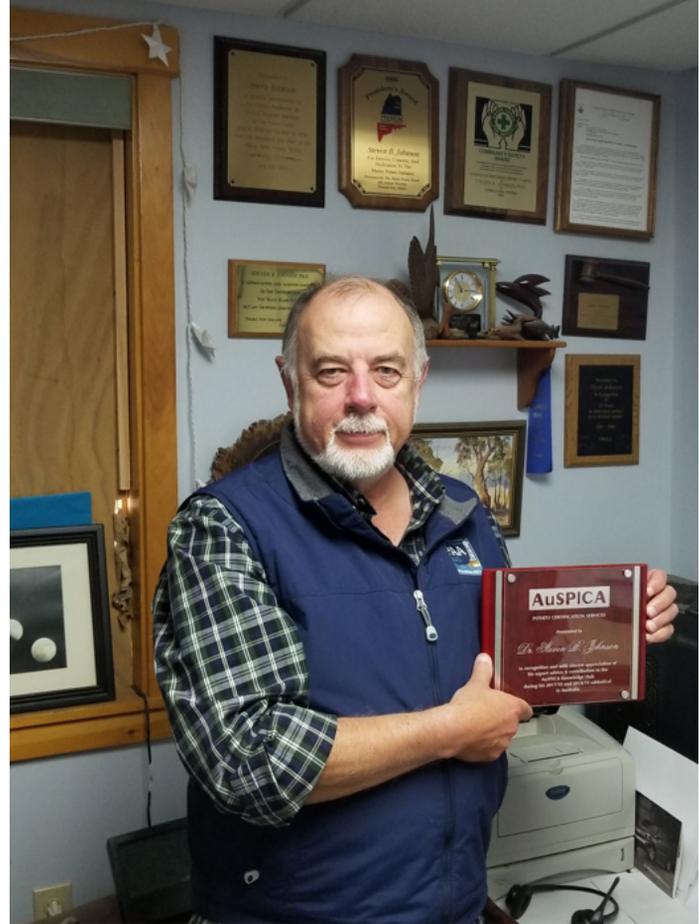
University of Maine

Cooperative Extension

I was on sabbatical leave with the Australian Seed Potato Agency, AuSPICA, in Victoria, Australia from December through February of 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. Dr. Nigel Crump is the Chief Scientist for the

organization which runs a tissue culture lab and greenhouses. AuSPICA produces potato minitubers and performs potato seed inspection and certification for the states of Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia. My leave was the culmination of ten years of a professional relationship and five years of planning.

The purpose of my sabbatical was to add to the knowledge base of potato seed inspectors and growers and establish widely accessible educational resources. I developed educational modules for growers and seed inspectors on an Internet-based educational forum. Some efforts were group training, some were train the trainer, and some were traditional one-on-one activities. Establishing an Internet-based educational forum for these and other trainings to reside was accomplished. This permits resources to be more widely accessible than they were historically.



My sabbatical was a wonderful experience both personally and professionally. I will always treasure the relationships I developed while on leave in Australia. And yes, I'm trying to figure out a way to return!

[Collaborative discussion between Seed Schemes](#)



On the 10th of May, 2019, a meeting at Devonport was held between AuSPICA, TasSeed, and invited industry representatives. The meeting was an opportunity for stimulating and robust discussion between the respective seed potato schemes. The discussion including industry provided a good forum to exchange knowledge and ideas.

A major topic at the meeting was the new blacklegs that have been found in seed potato crops in Victoria and Tasmania. At the meeting Nellie Malseed (Compliance Officer, AuSPICA) gave a presentation on blackleg and summarised implications rising from the detection of the previously unknown bacteria. The new blackleg has the potential to cause up to 100% crop loss and cool-storage breakdown. AuSPICA presented proposed changes to certification conditions based on the significance of this disease and highlighted the need for all seed potato schemes to work collaboratively to address this issue. The joint meeting offered an opportunity for industry participants to ask questions and seek information.

The planting of clean certified seed is a major component of integrated disease management for the control of blackleg. During the meeting, the available laboratory diagnostics that are used to determine the causal bacteria were discussed, this included sampling strategies testing either tubers or stems.

In addressing the issue of blackleg, a number of strategies were discussed around the requirements for certified seed entering Victoria, including tuber tests, to confirm freedom from blackleg (*Dickeya spp.* and *Pectobacterium spp.*) This will ensure that blackleg cannot be multiplied up within the respective seed

schemes and to provide confidence that certified seed remains clean.

This meeting successfully enhanced collaboration and enriched the understanding and cooperation between the two seed certification schemes. Due to its overwhelming success it was suggested by multiple parties that this forum should be repeated on a regular basis, in addition to meetings with the Australian Seed Potato Council.

For more information on blackleg symptoms and impacts, see

<https://www.auspica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Blackleg-on-Potatoes-in-Australia.pdf>

Dirt Diggers to Divine Diners



We are searching high and low to find some amazing potato recipes to share every newsletter, if you have a great recipe to share please email me on crystal.wilkinson@auspica.org.au

Our recipe this newsletter is from the [Blind Lady's Cafe](#)

Twice Baked Breakfast Potatoes

Cut the baked potatoes in half or slice off just some of the top and scoop out potato (make a potato salad or potato patties with the scooped out part of the tater)

Put a bit of butter in the bottom of the potato and fill with your preferred ingredients I added a bit each of cooked chopped bacon, mushroom, onion and cheddar :)

Top with an egg and a pinch of salt n pepper or as I use, Mrs Dash Original seasoning

Bake in a preheated 350 oven for 12-15 minutes until your eggs are cooked to your desired doneness. I like mine still a bit runny :)

Top with more cooked chopped bacon and cheese, a bit of chopped green onion if ya like and return to oven until cheese is bubbly, about 5 min.

Top with sour cream and serve :)

Omg AMAZING JUST AHHHMAAAZING!!!!

Now of course if you leave out the egg you have yummy Potato Skins for a

snack/appetizer :)

#breakfast #potatoes #stuffedpotatoes

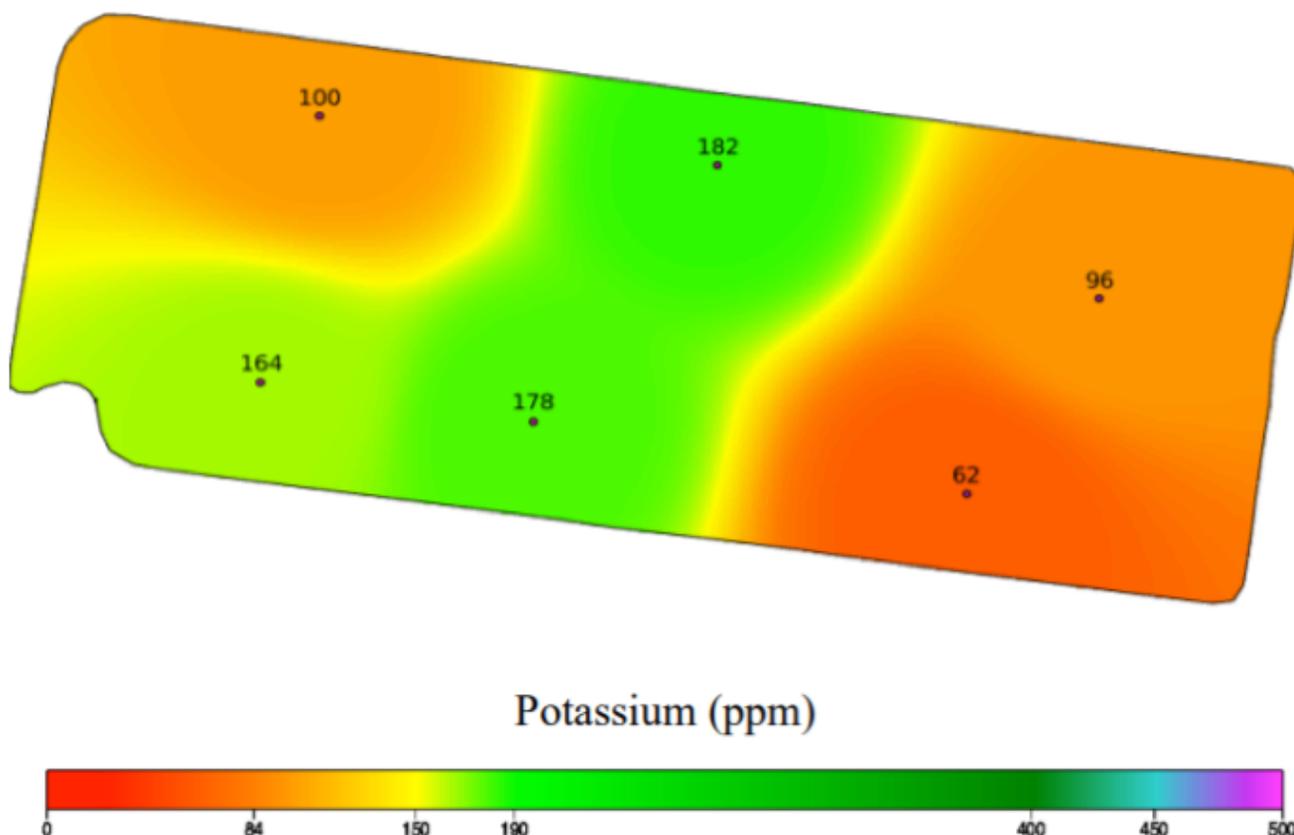
Growers Q&A

Q: What are some benefits on getting my paddock mapped with associated soil nutrient analysis?

A: Knowing the correct amount of plant nutrients required for the best crop yield should not come down to guess work. As many paddocks vary in size, topography and cropping regimes it is important that accurate mapping of the soil nutrients is undertaken to ensure fertiliser addition is correctly applied across the paddock to maximise potato crop yield and quality.

Advances in technology has meant paddocks used for potato production can be GPS soil sampled and nutrient tested to assess nutrient variation across an area. This allows more informed decisions to be made in terms of managing variation. Importantly, precision soil sampling allows repeated soil sampling, at known site locations, over multiple years to measure and compare effectiveness of soil fertility programs.

To deliver service to industry, AuSPICA has developed an independent soil sampling and nutrient mapping service. This service is being done in partnership with A&L Canada.



The above image details how nutrients can vary across a paddock; by using

this example of potassium (K) we can see clearly how the example field changes concentration. By displaying images such as this, the interpretation of nutrient deficiencies can be more easily explained.

AuSPICA will provide consultation on interpreting the soil analysis. Once the laboratory results have been received, recommendations on the best management for your paddock will be reported to you.

AuSPICA soil sampling and mapping will be coordinated by Mitchell Gorman.

To book an appointment today contact Kerrie Hollis on (03)59620000 or contact your local Certification Officer.

[New AuSPICA Knowledge Hub](#)

We are proud to announce that the AuSPICA Knowledge Hub is officially launched. The aim of this site is to provide a single site with the latest potato related information and technology.

Access to the website will be for Affiliated Members and Certified Seed Grower members who pay an additional annual fee (details on our website).

The Knowledge Hub includes access to the specific AuSPICA created educational tools and materials, including videos and fact sheets on a range of topics. These topics include

- Seed cutting and handling
- Disease and pest facts
- Physiological age
- Seed selection
- Blight management
- Best Practices

Furthermore, if there is a topic that you are especially interested in or would like to learn more about, feel free to send us an email and we'll ask our extensive group of potato experts.

In addition to the Knowledge Hub, there will be other activities including access to visiting potato experts from around the world, where you'll be able to ask questions in person.

[UNECE Potato Pest, Disease and Disorder Online App](#)

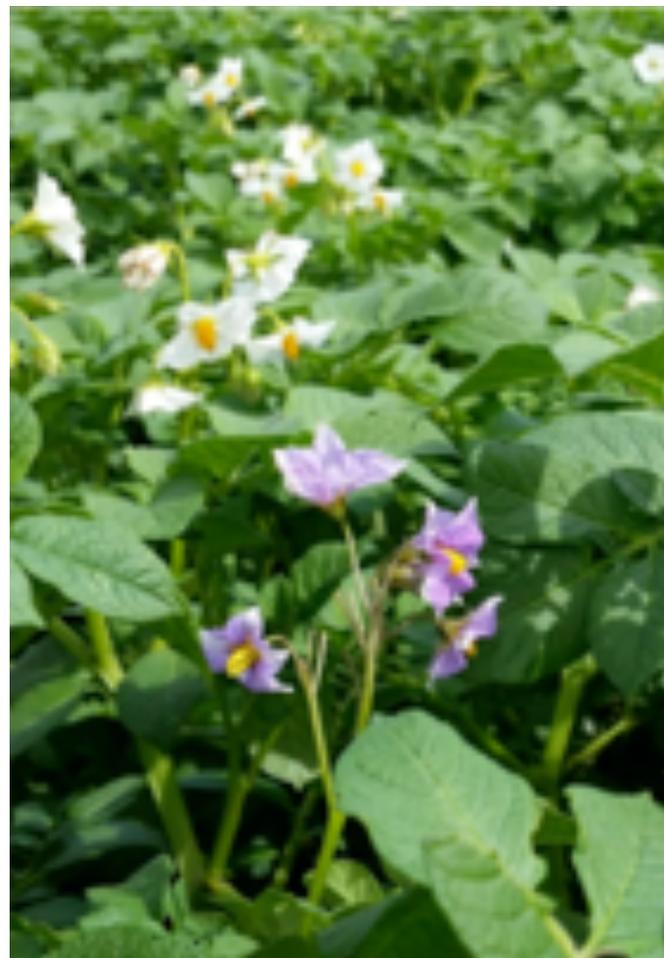


To access the app, click here: <https://spg.softwareobjectives.com.au/#!/search>

AuSPICA has worked with a software developer (Software Objectives) to produce the UNECE Pest, Disease and Disorder Guide as an online publication. This can be accessed on your phone, tablet or laptop and is available for free. AuSPICA will be working with the UNECE to ensure this online app is available as an international resource. Please send any feedback on additions, improvement etc.

[Variety Mix Prevention in Black Label Seed](#)

The AuSPICA certification officers are well trained in identifying variety mixes in the field, but many variety mixes are occurring post-harvest in the shed. It is important that growers take additional attention with post-harvest handling and grading practices to avoid variety mixes and ensure that the intended variety remains true to type, especially when transferring seed under the black label to other seed growers. The subsequent cost associated with variety mixes is considerable and effort should be made to ensure such issues are prevented from occurring.



To address the growing concerns in relation to the supply of black label seed

that have been subsequently found to have a variety mix, the AuSPICA Board have reviewed policy to support the supply of true to type seed potatoes. An outcome of this review by the Board was to update the [AuSPICA Certified Seed Growers Code of Professional Conduct](#) to include a reference to the responsibility associated with maintaining variety purity within acceptable tolerances. To read more about this, including the changes to the code, please see our website

[Read More](#)

[Certified Seed Potatoes on Landline](#)

Our very own Certification Officer Crystal Wilkinson featured on ABC Landline, aired on Sunday 9th June.

The episode is about seed potatoes and certification and the careful science that underpins spuds!

Watch the full landline episode on [ABC iView](#), or watch the potato segment [here](#).



[Meet the Team](#)

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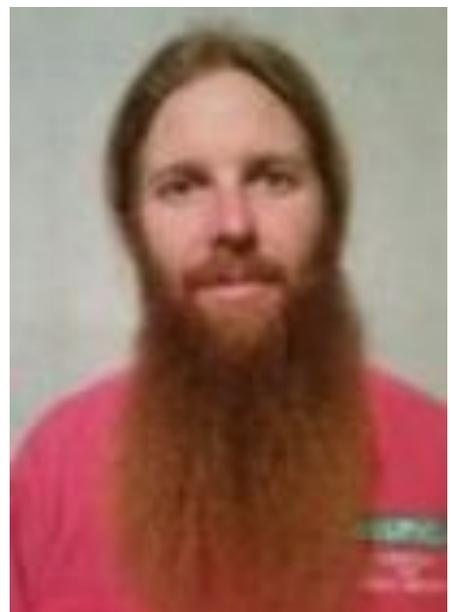
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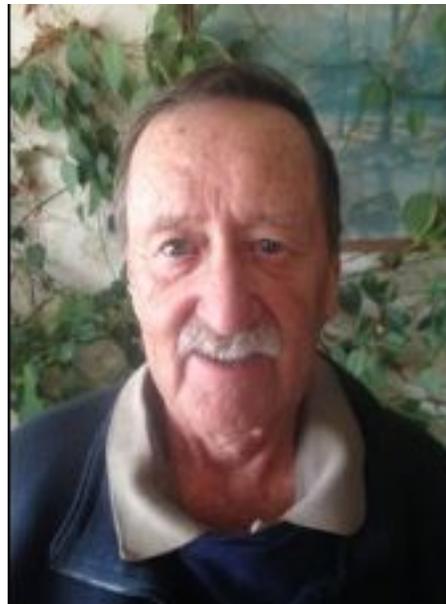
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