



NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. AND CANADA REVISE POTATO CYST NEMATODE GUIDELINES

WASHINGTON, June 4, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) today announced revised guidelines for potato cyst nematode (PCN) that will allow continued trade of seed potatoes between the two countries. While PCN does not pose a risk to human health, it is recognized internationally as a destructive plant pest of economic importance and, therefore, a quarantine pest for the United States and Canada.

“The United States and Canada are committed to working together to limit the spread of potato cyst nematodes on both sides of the border,” said U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “These revised guidelines will ensure abundant potatoes for consumers as well as viable markets for potato farmers.”

“The Canadian Government is committed to helping farmers prosper, including facilitating access to international markets,” said Minister of Agriculture Gerry Ritz. “These revised guidelines will allow for the continued trade of seed potatoes between Canada and the United States.”

The PCN guidelines describe the national survey of potato production for PCN in both Canada and the United States and now require increased soil sampling and testing from all fields where seed potatoes are produced for trade between the two countries. The guidelines also outline the measures that should be taken to manage a PCN detection and contain procedures for the subsequent removal of restrictions on land.

Both Canada and the United States have worked closely with industry representatives in revising these guidelines and will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure specific requirements are met.

Continually improving our survey strategies and enhancing the required measures when PCN is detected are key to preventing the spread of this pest while ensuring the continued trade of seed potatoes across the Canada-U.S. border.

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