



5th International Potato Workshop, September 10 and 11, 2008
THE INDUSTRY'S MOST IMPORTANT GET-TOGETHER FOR 2008

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5TH INTERNATIONAL POTATO WORKSHOP: PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION

The **PotatoEurope 2008** workshops will be held on 10 and 11 September 2008 in Villers-Saint-Christophe, the Aisne. They are organised by ARVALIS - *Institut du végétal*, with the support of the CNIPT¹ and the assistance of the entire industry: the FNPPPT², GNIS³, UNPT⁴, FELCOOP⁵, GIPT⁶, FEDEPOM, and GROUPAMA and the region of Picardie.

This key period, **the Potato industry's most important get-together** will serve to allow all actors in the sector, from producers to industrialists, to promote production knowledge and innovations.

On 10 and 11 September, the technical section and dynamic demonstrations will constitute the backbone of the event.

The technical space will attempt to meet the threefold objective of competitiveness, product quality, and eco-friendliness.

The dynamic demonstrations will take place on a 15-ha terrain.

They will allow each participant to evaluate the quality of the latest plant lifters' work and the market's new receipt chains.

More than ever, these international PotatoEurope2008 workshops will focus beyond our borders: nearly 3,000 international visitors are expected, *i.e.* one quarter of the total number of expected visitors.

¹ The "Comité National Interprofessionnel de la Pomme de Terre", or "National Interprofessional Committee on Potatoes"

² The "Fédération Nationale des Producteurs de Plants de Pomme de Terre", or "National Federation of Potato Producers"

³ The "Groupement National Interprofessionnel des Semences et plants", or "National Interprofessional Seeds and Seedlings Organisation"

⁴ The "Union Nationale des producteurs de Pomme de Terre", or "National Union of Potato Producers"

⁵ The "Fédération Française de la Coopération fruitière légumière et horticole", or "French Federation for Fruit, Vegetable and Horticultural Cooperation"

⁶ The "Groupement Interprofessionnel pour la valorisation de la Pomme de Terre", or "Interprofessional Organisation for the Promotion of Potatoes"

TECHNICAL SECTION:

4 CENTRES TO DISCOVER THE BEST IN INNOVATION

Jean-Michel GRAVOUEILLE
Potato Industry Supervisor, ARVALIS - Institut du végétal

Hosted by experts from ARVALIS - Institut du végétal, in collaboration with all of its technical partners, the technical section will provide visitors with information and expertise allowing them to meet the threefold objective of competitiveness, product quality and eco-friendliness. This marketplace of ideas, organised along 4 centres, is located at the centre of the event.

“GENETIC RESOURCES AND VARIETAL INNOVATION” centre: Highly active research

The “Genetic Resources and Varietal Innovation” centre is dedicated to potato varieties. The 26 new varieties registered in the French Catalogue since the last edition of the International Workshop will be showcased in comparison of the market’s most important varieties. Thus, over 50 varieties will be displayed for the various outlets (fresh-vegetable market, seedling exports, transformation for human food, and starch).

A workshop, held by the GEVES (the “*Groupe d’Étude et de Contrôle des Variétés et des Semences*”, or “Research and Control Group on Varieties and Seeds”) and the FNPPPT, will instruct visitors in evaluation modes for registration in the French catalogue, regulations concerning the protection of crop varieties and their consequences on the use of varieties, and new variety-identification techniques based on the use of molecular markers.

Finally, the researchers of the INRA (“*Institut National de Recherche Agronomique*”, or “National Institute for Agronomic Research”, UMR Improvement of plants and plant biotechnologies, INRA Rennes) will present works conducted as part of a concerted effort toward improvement of the species against biological aggressors (mildew and other fungi, nematodes, virus, bacteria): maintenance and characterisation of the Ploudaniel (29) collection of “Potato and related species” (a gene pool containing nearly 10,000 clones) (in partnership with the ACVNPT⁷), the creation of “improved genitors” for plant breeders, research into new sources of resistance and a study of deployment strategies that would allow preserving the efficiency of the genes as long as possible. The most successful recent example of collaboration between the INRA and French selectors was the 2008 registration of the *Coquine* (“Mischievous”) variety (good level of resistance to mildew - note 8 - and interesting early maturity).

“AGRONOMY AND SOIL PRESERVATION” Centre: A heritage worth preserving

The “Agronomy and Soil Preservation” centre, hosted with the assistance of the INRA, the Chambers of Agriculture of the Marne, the Pas-de-Calais and the Somme, and partners from technical development groups, will discuss three points:

1. The problems of settlement in potato growing: with a background of decreasing crops and preservation of water resources, soil-structure management represents an important stake. This workshop will provide the opportunity to review the solutions offered to farmers in the context of rotation (reduction in soil pressure, varied crops, decompacting techniques...), but also to discuss the tools and methods required for a proper soil-structure diagnosis.
2. A presentation of the innovations in planting techniques, focusing particularly on simplified single-run planting (interest and agronomic limits, economic consequences...).
3. The fight against runoff erosion, with a dynamic demonstration presenting specific performing equipment, planter- and ridger-adaptable, to allow the creation of miniature dams between mounds (*Barbutte* model, distributed by Ets COTTARDS).

⁷“Association des Créateurs de Variétés Nouvelles de Pomme de Terre”, or “Association of Creators of New Potato Varieties”

“TECHNICAL ITINERARY AND CROP OPTIMISATION” Centre

This centre will present the major elements of the technical circuit, from a decision-support tool point of view, to assist on the production of a consumable-economical potato: water, fertiliser and phytosanitary products.

1. A first workshop will survey irrigation-planning solutions: the Irrinov[®] method and the Internet automated water-balance project to be tested in 2008. This workshop will also provide the opportunity to present the new decision-making tool for the planning and management of size-class yields (MAPP) (in collaboration with “*Agro-Transfert Ressources et Territoires*”, or “Agro-Transfer Resources and Territories”).
2. A second workshop will be dedicated to the fight against mildew. The prototype of the new decision-support tool, a result of the merger of Mild-LIS[®] and MILPV, will be demonstrated over the Internet. After a preview presentation by the “*Services de la Protection des Végétaux*”, or “Plant Protection Services”, and by ARVALIS - *Institut du végétal*, it will become operational in time for the 2009 campaign. Information on the new fungicides will be presented. Finally, the INRA (Rennes / Le Rheu) will present the latest information available on the evolution of mildew strains and their aggressiveness.
3. The theme of the third workshop will be the treatment of seedlings against black scurf and silver scurf. The evolution of these treatments, currently still consisting mostly of dusting, toward ultra-low volume spray treatments conducted on roller-tables or in the furrow, will result in better management of the applicator risk (a collaboration with the FNPPPT and its EPR).
4. The fourth workshop will consider the rest of the phytosanitary protection of potatoes. It will include the fight against pests (soil pests, aphids, beetles, slugs), the fight against weeds, and top-killing. This last topic will be the subject of a field demonstration of new top-killing strategies, combining chemical top-killing and mechanical techniques, considering the changes in approved chemical products to be expected as a result of the “*Grenelle de l'Environnement*” (French multiparty conferences on the environment held in 2007) (withdrawal or decreased use of the products involved) (in collaboration with the SRPV and FREDON).
5. Fertilisation planning will be the subject of the fifth workshop, with presentation of the main nitrogen-contribution planning tools such as Jubil[®] or Azo-LIS[®], but also of P, K, Mg fertilisation with Plani-LIS[®].
6. Finally, a sixth workshop will present the progress of the European excellence network for the development of a less pesticide-dependent agriculture (ENDURE network, European Network for the Durable Exploitation of Crop Protection Strategies). An Internet prototype of the “Expertise Centre” gathering essential data on the phytosanitary protection of potatoes in Europe will be demonstrated (in partnership with the INRA, ACTA – “*Association de Coordination Technique Agricole*”, or “Association for Technical Agricultural Coordination – and European partners of the ENDURE network).

“DURABILITY OF THE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS” CENTRE

This “Durability of the Production Systems” centre, hosted in collaboration with the UNPT, will consider several economic and environmental issues.

First, the visitor will be invited to calculate the potato-related production cost of his operation. A presentation of production costs obtained in France and abroad will provide him with a better grasp of his own situation.

The presentation of a UNPT study’s results will also touch on employment issues.

Works carried out on evaluating various systems will be discussed. A single series of technical, economic and environmental indicators will permit a comparison between the chosen exploitations, each of which must respond to its own logic and constraints.

Finally, a workshop will be devoted to the Institute’s works and tools (AQUASITE[®]...) concerning multiple-scale pollution-risk assessment and control.

As part of the International Year of the Potato, this centre will also provide an opportunity to discuss the potato abroad, thanks to the presence of the Agro Without Borders (“*Agro Sans Frontière* », or ASF) association, which has laboured in Africa for nearly two decades.

LARGE-SCALE DYNAMIC DEMONSTRATIONS

Michel MARTIN
Potato Equipment and Conservation

The dynamic demonstrations will constitute a focal point of attraction for this edition of PotatoEurope 2008. They will provide the opportunity of discovering the manufacturers' latest innovations for the entire tuber harvesting, reception and storage chain. This will also be the first European demonstration of automated qualitative-sorter models to enter conditioning centres.

All of these events will convert PotatoEurope 2008 into the most significant European event of the kind.

A DOZEN LIFTING AND HARVESTING FIELDS

Amac, AVR, Dewulf, Grimme, Underhaug, WM; all manufacturers currently present on the French market will present a range of their products on 15 hectares of Bintje potatoes, with an intermound spacing of 90 cm, specially planted for the occasion and earmarked for industrial transformation (McCain). Despite the sectors significant upheavals over the last few years, 6 brands have committed to meet in Villers-Saint-Christophe to present their new models. This will mark the first participation of WM Kartoffeltechnik in a French event.

The models which will be presented are not fully defined as yet, but we know they will cover the various market sectors for the types of potato production, with:

- 2 combined 1-row plant lifters, adapted for mid-surface exploitations, allowing field sorting and crating without the need to go through a reception area,
- 4 combined 2-row plant lifters (2 of which are self-propelled) offering the same advantages as above, but with a greater field rate,
- 5 simplified 2-row plant lifters (including 1 self-propelled), the kind of machine which represents the core of the French potato-lifting market,
- 1 semi-combined 4-row plant lifter meant for the annual extraction of very large surfaces under a long enough harvest time.

These dynamic demonstrations will be conducted with the partnership of the Deutz Fahr and La Campagne companies, which will lend the tractors and trailers, respectively, required for the event to be carried out properly.

SIX RECEPTION CHAINS

Over 600 tonnes of potatoes will go through the 6 reception yards present, to be scrubbed before being shipped to McCain's Harnes plant.

This will provide a chance to appreciate the latest innovations implemented by manufacturers Bijlsma, Climax, Dewaele Briche/Auger, Downs, Grimme and Miedema to receive, scrub, precalibrate, stack or crate harvested tubers, combining yard flow and scrubbing performance while limiting risks of damage to the tubers.

Box-pallet handling will be provided using JCB materials.

Each producer, whether of plants, of consumption for fresh-vegetable, transformation or starch markets, can get a preview of the best techniques offered by manufacturers.

A FIRST IN QUALITATIVE OPTIC SORTING

For the first time in Europe, a public event will allow visitors to discover the performance of qualitative optic sorting machines, a process that was still in its teething stage a mere decade ago. Now operational, these machines are appearing in growing numbers in conditioning centres, offering increasingly effective task automation, but without sacrificing lot traceability.

Today, the evolution in performance of computer processing tools for image or data obtained from LCD/LED cameras allows gives these materials greater resolution and allows more precise work, while resulting, at the same time, in far higher yard rates of between 10 and 20 t/h per machine, the minimum which is required if they are to find a place in the conditioning centres.

Most often, this equipment, which works on washed tubers, allows their calibration; the *de facto* result is the elimination of a tool which sometimes caused surface damage to tuber skins, an impediment to their good on-shelf presentation quality, with the incidental effect of making the purchase of this type of costly material a more cost-effective proposition.

Their on-line sorting performance then allows them to eliminate, with a high degree of reliability and without human intervention, all tubers presenting defects which would disqualify them from being introduced to the market (tubers which have turned green, or are damaged or rotten). The technique also allows a segmentation of tubers from a single lot by adapting sorting demands to the requirements of the various product purchasers or ranges.

Direct Net (Odenberg, Samo), Ebel Dis (Maf Roda), Herbert (Herbert) and Hexa Pack (Newtec) will present their material's wide range of sorting possibilities.

A RENDEZVOUS FOR PROFESSIONALS

François-Xavier BROUTIN
ARVALIS - Institut du végétal

PotatoEurope, the industry's most important get-together for 2008, will allow the French industry to communicate on production quality and technical levels within a competitive environment.

On a site in excess of 40 Ha, over 200 exhibitors involved in the potato sector (mechanisation, services, agro-supplies, press...) will exhibit to visitors their latest innovations, at the service of the entire industry.

All the sector's players are expected at the site, from producers to marketing operators, and including consultants, agro-suppliers, purchasers, conditioners, transformation industrialists...

The trade village, under the aegis of the FEDEPOM and FELCOOP, will include marketing operators who may thus promote their products and meet their international purchasers, in a professional and friendly environment.

Many international exhibitors have already stated their desire to be present at **PotatoEurope 2008**, which can only foster international exchanges.

A number of English exhibitors have also expressed the desire to participate at the Villers-Saint-Christophe site, within a dedicated space.

THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE POTATO

Pierre DEMOLIN
ARVALIS - Institut du végétal

On 18 October 2007, the UN declared 2008 “The International Year of the Potato”.

Production of the potato, the world's fourth largest staple crop, has doubled over the last fifteen years, now standing at 310 million tonnes. This should double again by 2020. Needless to say this clearly indicates the importance of the crop, both nutritionally and economically.

During this year, dedicated to the precious tuber, ARVALIS - *Institut du végétal*, with the support of all the organisations in the potato industry, is organising **PotatoEurope 2008** at the very heart of the French production basin.

PotatoEurope is a label created following a joint initiative by Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands, with the stated objective of coordinating European open-field events focusing on the potato.

PotatoEurope is a roving event, with the 2008 French edition following on the heels of the 2007 Belgian edition and preceding the Dutch and German editions, respectively scheduled for 2009 and 2010.

From the onset, the *Villers-Saint-Christophe Potato Workshops* have gained international standing. During the last French edition, in 2004, they greeted nearly 9,000 visitors and almost 1,500 foreign visitors from 34 different countries.

This year, our target visitor numbers are higher. Over 200 exhibitors (French and international) and 10,000 visitors, including 3,000 from abroad, are expected over both days.

To reach these goals, unprecedented promotional campaigns were conducted both in France and abroad (Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and – more recently – Spain, Portugal and the Mediterranean Basin) through the agricultural press, our partners' websites, the FAO website (www.potato2008.org, under “events”) and various tradeshows (Potato Night - SIA 2008, Agritechnica 2007, PotatoEurope 2007...).

Truly, “**PotatoEurope 2008**”, the International Potato Workshops, represents the worldwide Potato industry's most important get-together.

Photo caption: Official launching of the event on 06-07 September 2007, during **PotatoEurope 2007** in Kain (Belgium)