

**FALL POTATOES**



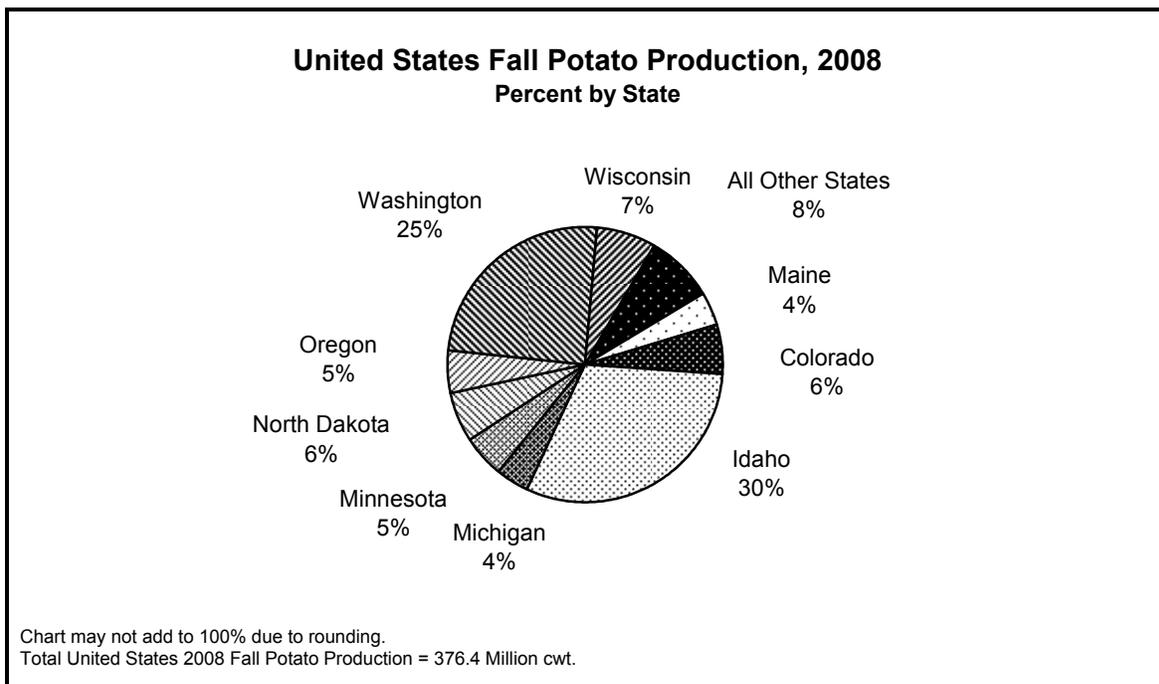
December 1, 2008 assessments placed Maine's 2008 potato production at 14.8 million cwt (hundredweight), 11 percent below 2007 output due to reductions in both acreage and yield. Maine farmers planted 56,000 acres, 1,100 fewer acres than the previous year. Cool, wet soil conditions forced growers to hold off

planting until mid-May. Warmer, drier conditions followed and the crop was all planted by early June, slightly ahead of schedule. Wet weather the last two weeks of June promoted excellent crop growth, but continued into July, forcing farmers to a 5-day spray schedule to prevent disease. In mid-July, late blight was discovered, but confined to a few locations. Dry weather finally arrived in late August and continued into September, providing excellent harvest conditions. Harvest had passed the halfway mark by the end of the month when wet weather returned, slowing potatoes moving into storage. Farmers had the crop all dug by late October, on schedule with last year and normal. The December 1 forecast placed 2008 acres harvested at 54,700 acres, with 1,300 acres abandoned due to losses from wet conditions and disease. Yields averaged 270 cwt per acre in 2008, compared with 295 cwt per acre in 2007 and the previous 5-year average of 289 cwt per acre.

Results from the 2008 Potato Objective Yield (POY) Survey placed the average number of hills per acre for all potato varieties planted in Maine at 11,210 hills per acre, down three percent from the 11,519 hills per acre seeded in 2007. On average, growers harvested 8.6 tubers per hill in 2008, compared with the 8.9 tubers per hill average in 2007. Survey results placed fewer potatoes in the US #1 category in 2008 than in earlier years for round whites and

russets. Round white varieties graded out at 76 percent US #1, compared with 89 percent in 2007 and the 5 year average of 82 percent. Russets graded out at 66 percent US #1 in 2008, compared with 70 percent in 2007 and five year average of 68 percent. Lab results placed more long whites in the US #1 category than the previous two years. Long whites graded out at 64 percent US #1 in 2008, compared with 59 percent in 2007 and the five year average of 66 percent. Yellow varieties graded out at 82 percent US #1, unchanged from the previous year. Improved prices offset the decline in production from a year earlier, increasing the projected value of the 2008 crop three percent above 2007 to \$136 million. The preliminary price received for 2008 crop Maine potatoes for all uses was estimated at \$9.20/cwt, compared with the 2007 average price of \$7.90/cwt. Final 2008 crop disposition and sales data will be published September 24, 2009.

Potato farmers in Massachusetts began seeding the 2008 potato crop the last week in April and finished up the last week in May, on schedule with last year and ahead of the previous 5-year average. Hot, humid weather accompanied by severe thunderstorms dominated the last two weeks in June. Wet conditions persisted throughout most of July and August. Losses were heavy at some locations from high winds and excessive moisture, and of the 2,800 acres planted in the state, growers harvested only 2,400 acres. Yields averaged 270 cwt per acre, compared with 320 cwt per acre in 2007 and the 5-year average of 279 cwt per acre. Rhode Island potato farmers enjoyed drier weather conditions in August, and yields were expected to average 285 cwt per acre from the 500 acres harvested based on early December assessments.



## FALL POTATOES: Acreage, Yield, Production, Disposition and Value, 1999 – 2008

State and Year	Area		Yield per Acre	Production	Total Used for Seed	Disposition			Price Per Cwt	Value of	
	Planted	Harvested				On Farm Where Grown		Sold		Production	Sales
						Seed, Feed, Home Use	Shrink and Loss				
	1,000 Acres		Cwt		1,000 Cwt			Dollars	1,000 Dollars		
<b>MAINE</b>											
1999	65.0	62.5	285	17,813	1,408	330	1,850	15,633	6.35	113,113	99,270
2000	64.0	64.0	280	17,920	1,313	315	1,490	16,115	6.15	110,208	99,107
2001	62.5	62.0	265	16,430	1,355	301	849	15,280	7.65	125,690	116,892
2002	64.5	64.0	265	16,960	1,386	310	790	15,860	7.05	119,568	111,813
2003	66.0	65.5	260	17,030	1,245	215	2,430	14,385	6.05	103,032	87,065
2004	63.5	61.5	310	19,065	1,231	190	4,900	13,975	6.50	123,923	90,735
2005	57.5	56.2	275	15,455	1,264	242	1,183	14,030	8.25	127,504	115,619
2006	58.5	57.0	305	17,385	1,228	228	1,227	15,930	7.80	135,603	124,027
2007	57.1	56.5	295	16,668	1,183	195	633	15,840	7.90	131,677	125,374
2008	56.0	54.7	270	14,769					9.20 *	135,875 *	
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>											
1999	3.0	2.9	255	740	64	0	30	710	6.35	4,699	4,509
2000	2.9	2.6	255	663	63	1	75	587	5.40	3,580	3,170
2001	3.0	2.9	265	769	71	5	30	734	6.90	5,306	5,065
2002	3.3	3.2	255	816	65	5	16	795	7.30	5,957	5,804
2003	3.0	2.7	265	716	56	5	16	695	6.00	4,296	4,179
2004	2.6	2.5	320	800	59	5	6	789	6.60	5,280	5,198
2005	2.5	2.4	260	624	76	4	8	612	8.80	5,491	5,388
2006	3.1	3.1	240	744	59	5	5	734	10.10	7,514	7,433
2007	2.7	2.6	320	832	60	-	12	820	7.50	6,240	6,151
2008	2.8	2.4	270	648					13.70 *	8,878 *	
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>											
1999	0.6	0.6	225	135	9	-	2	133	7.25	979	964
2000	0.5	0.5	275	138	13	-		138	7.20	994	994
2001	0.5	0.5	280	140	10	-	3	137	6.70	938	918
2002	0.5	0.5	235	118	13	-		118	7.75	915	915
2003	0.6	0.6	285	171	11	-	12	159	7.00	1,197	1,112
2004	0.5	0.5	290	145	14	-	3	142	7.65	1,109	1,086
2005	0.5	0.5	210	105	12	-	2	103	8.50	893	874
2006	0.5	0.5	260	130	14	-	2	128	10.40	1,352	1,325
2007	0.6	0.6	300	180	12	-	5	175	8.55	1,539	1,495
2008	0.5	0.5	285	143					12.90 *	1,845 *	
<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>											
1999	68.6	66.0	283	18,688	1,481	330	1,882	16,476	6.36	118,791	104,743
2000	67.4	67.1	279	18,721	1,389	316	1,565	16,840	6.13	114,782	103,271
2001	66.0	65.4	265	17,339	1,436	306	882	16,151	7.61	131,934	122,875
2002	68.3	67.7	264	17,894	1,464	315	806	16,773	7.07	126,440	118,532
2003	69.6	68.8	260	17,917	1,312	220	2,458	15,239	6.06	108,525	92,356
2004	66.6	64.5	310	20,010	1,304	195	4,909	14,906	6.51	130,312	97,019
2005	60.5	59.1	274	16,184	1,352	246	1,193	14,745	8.27	133,888	121,881
2006	62.1	60.6	301	18,259	1,301	233	1,234	16,792	7.91	144,469	132,785
2007	60.4	59.7	296	17,680	1,255	195	650	16,835	7.90	139,456	133,020
2008	59.3	57.6	270	15,560					9.42 *	146,598 *	

<sup>1</sup> 2008 crop production, disposition and sales will be published September 24, 2009, in the *Potatoes, 2008 Summary*.<sup>2</sup> New England includes: Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.\* 2008 figures are preliminary as published in *Crop Values*, February 13, 2009.

## MAINE POTATOES: Potato Production and Stocks by Month, 2002 – 2007 Crop Years

Crop Year	Production	Stocks Held by Growers, Local Dealers, and Processors						
		Current Year	Following Year					
		December 1	January 1	February 1	March 1	April 1	May 1	June 1
		1,000 cwt						
2002	16,960	12,600	11,200	9,500	8,000	6,300	3,900	2,100
2003	17,030	13,500	12,100	10,500	8,900	6,500	4,100	2,300
2004	19,065	15,000	12,800	11,100	9,400	7,500	5,000	2,900
2005	15,455	12,500	11,200	9,700	8,400	6,500	4,300	2,500
2006	17,385	14,000	12,500	10,900	9,600	7,600	5,300	3,000
2007	16,668	12,900	11,400	9,700	8,000	6,400	4,300	2,500

MAINE POTATOES: Prices Received by Farmers for Potatoes, Monthly and Marketing Year Average, 2002 – 2007 Crop Years <sup>1</sup>

Crop Year	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Market Year Average
2002	5.75	5.45	5.60	6.65	6.95	7.10	7.10	7.45	8.10	8.15	7.40	7.15	7.05
2003	6.00	5.25	5.45	5.85	5.70	5.80	5.70	6.10	6.30	6.75	7.05	7.05	6.05
2004	5.90	5.15	5.65	6.15	6.35	5.90	6.55	6.60	6.95	7.30	7.40	7.70	6.50
2005	*	5.85	6.30	7.85	8.20	8.20	8.40	8.75	9.45	9.30	8.50	8.10	8.25
2006	*	6.25	6.50	8.15	8.25	8.35	7.90	7.60	8.15	8.20	8.05	7.65	7.80
2007	*	6.20	6.40	7.25	7.55	7.60	8.00	8.55	8.65	9.15	8.75	8.55	7.90

<sup>1</sup> Average price of potatoes sold for all uses, including table stock, processing, seed and livestock feed.

\* Missing data indicates too few potatoes being marketed to set price.

## MAINE POTATOES: Percent of Acres Planted by Variety and Type, 2003 – 2008

Variety and Type	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	Percent					
<b>By Variety:</b>						
Russet Burbank	33.2	36.7	42.5	42.5	39.1	42.6
Frito-Lay, All	11.9	11.5	17.1	17.1	18.9	13.8
Shepody	9.8	9.3	7.2	5.2	4.6	4.6
Russet Norkotah	4.4	3.0	1.6	2.1	2.6	4.2
Norland	1.9	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.6	4.0
Yukon Gold	2.0	3.3	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.7
Goldrush	1.6	1.9	2.7	1.0	2.8	3.7
Norwis	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.3	1.8	3.6
Superior	6.1	3.0	3.4	4.5	5.0	3.5
Ontario	8.3	5.5	2.8	2.9	2.0	2.6
Katahdin	2.5	2.5	2.4	3.1	2.8	2.4
Reba(NY87)	1.7	1.7	1.4	2.1	1.5	2.2
Atlantic	3.5	3.0	3.5	1.5	2.0	1.4
Red LaSoda	*	*	*	*	*	1.0
Chieftain	1.4	1.3	*	*	*	*
Monona	*	1.7	1.0	1.9	1.9	*
Snowden	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.1	3.8	*
Other Varieties	7.1	6.4	4.7	5.3	5.3	6.7
<b>Total Varieties</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>By Type:</b>						
Russets	40.0	43.5	47.0	46.0	45.0	52.0
Whites (Long and Round)	56.0	51.0	49.5	51.0	46.0	35.0
Yellows <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	-	5.0	8.0
Reds	4.0	5.5	3.5	3.0	4.0	5.0
<b>Total Types</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup> Unavailable prior to 2007.

\* Included with other varieties.

**MAINE POTATOES: Number of Tubers per Hill, Hills per Acre,  
Percent of Net Yield by Weight Within Grade, by Type, 2003 – 2008**

Type and Year	Tubers per Hill <sup>1</sup>	Hills per Acre	United States Grading Categories		
			US Number 1 2 Inch Minimum <sup>2</sup>	US Number 2 or Processing Usable 1 ½ Inch Minimum <sup>3</sup>	Cull <sup>4</sup>
	Number		Percent of Net Yield <sup>5</sup>		
<b>Reds <sup>6</sup></b>					
2004	-	12,598	-	-	-
2005	-	13,005	-	-	-
2006	-	14,532	-	-	-
2007	8.1	12,874	80	17	3
2008	7.2	13,785	87	9	4
<b>Yellows <sup>6</sup></b>					
2007	6.6		82	12	6
2008	9.0		82	10	8
<b>Round Whites</b>					
2003	7.8	13,521	77	11	12
2004	8.5	13,609	85	8	7
2005	7.3	12,494	83	8	9
2006	8.0	12,604	78	10	12
2007	7.1	13,290	89	9	2
2008	6.7	12,796	76	12	12
<b>Long Whites</b>					
2003	6.8	12,021	62	19	19
2004	6.8	13,024	69	11	20
2005	6.7	10,402	81	11	8
2006	6.0	13,149	60	17	23
2007	7.5	11,943	59	24	17
2008	5.0	11,784	64	21	15
<b>Russets</b>					
2003	10.5	9,731	61	22	17
2004	10.7	10,012	70	13	17
2005	9.8	9,007	74	16	10
2006	10.9	10,208	63	21	16
2007	11.0	9,629	70	18	12
2008	10.2	9,603	66	20	14
<b>All Varieties</b>					
2003	8.9	11,729	-	-	-
2004	9.3	11,969	-	-	-
2005	8.6	10,595	-	-	-
2006	9.1	11,613	-	-	-
2007	8.9	11,519	-	-	-
2008	8.6	11,210	-	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Tubers 1½ inches and over.

<sup>2</sup> Potatoes which meet the requirements for US#1, as stated in U.S. Standards for Grades of Potatoes, USDA, Agriculture Marketing Service.

<sup>3</sup> Potatoes which meet the requirements for US#2, as stated in U.S. Standards for Grades of Potatoes, USDA, Agriculture Marketing Service.

<sup>4</sup> Potatoes not meeting the requirements for US#1 or US#2, as stated in U.S. Standards for Grades of Potatoes, USDA, Agriculture Marketing Service.

<sup>5</sup> Percent of net yield - adjusted for field loss. Reflects condition before harvest or handling damage.

<sup>6</sup> All years not available.

**MAINE POTATOES: Percent of Net Yield by Size Groups by Type, 2003 – 2008**

Type and Year	United States Size Group Categories								Number of Samples
	1 ½ Inch – under 1 ⅞ Inch	1 ⅞ Inch – under 2 Inch	2 Inch – under 2 ¼ Inch	2 ¼ Inch – under 2 ½ Inch	2 ½ Inch – under 3 ½ Inch	3 ½ Inch – under 4 Inch	4 Inches +		
	Percent								Number
Reds <sup>1</sup>									
2007	6	7	16	28	43	*	-		6
2008	1	2	16	27	54	*	-		8
Yellows <sup>1</sup>									
2007	1	3	8	13	65	10	*		11
2008	1	2	10	15	69	2	1		9
Round Whites									
2003	3	4	14	20	55	3	1		67
2004	2	3	10	16	63	6	*		62
2005	2	3	9	15	61	9	1		58
2006	*	2	11	18	64	4	1		59
2007	1	1	10	21	61	5	1		54
2008	*	4	12	20	60	3	1		43
			2 Inches and over			10 oz and over			
			4 oz – Under 6 oz <sup>2</sup>	6 oz – Under 8 oz	8 oz – Under 10 oz	10 oz – Under 12 oz	12 oz – Under 14 oz	14 oz +	
	Percent								
Long Whites									
2003	6	5	30	25	19	4	8	3	17
2004	1	2	15	21	18	17	8	18	15
2005	5	1	27	18	19	13	9	8	8
2006	1	3	22	19	19	9	12	15	11
2007	2	1	37	25	20	5	9	1	9
2008	2	6	19	19	15	17	13	9	7
Russets									
2003	10	8	33	21	11	8	5	4	66
2004	3	4	29	21	15	9	6	13	62
2005	4	4	32	18	15	10	6	11	79
2006	6	7	35	19	12	8	4	9	64
2007	7	6	33	20	14	8	5	7	68
2008	6	7	35	20	12	7	5	8	69

<sup>1</sup> All years not available.

<sup>2</sup> Includes potatoes 2 inches or greater weighing less than four ounces.

\* Less than 0.5 cwt/acre.



MAINE POTATOES: Harvest Loss by Size Groups by Type, 2003 – 2008 <sup>1</sup>

Type and Year	United States Size Group Categories							Total
	1 ½ Inch – Under 1 ⅞ Inch	1 ⅞ Inch – Under 2 Inch	2 Inch – Under 2 ¼ Inch	2 ¼ Inch – Under 2 ½ Inch	2 ½ Inch – Under 3 ½ Inch	3 ½ Inch – Under 4 Inch	4 Inches +	
Cwt per Acre								
Round Whites								
2003	4	2	2	3	4	0	0	15
2004	3	2	3	3	3	1	0	15
2005	1	1	4	3	6	0	0	15
2006	7	3	5	3	4	0	0	22
2007	4	3	2	1	3	0	0	13
2008	6	2	4	3	7	1	0	23
	<b>2 Inches and Over</b>							
	<b>4 oz – Under 6 oz <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>6 oz – Under 8 oz</b>	<b>8 oz – Under 10 oz</b>	<b>10 oz – Under 12 oz</b>	<b>12 oz – Under 14 oz</b>			
Cwt per Acre								
Long Whites <sup>3</sup>								
2003								15
2004								37
2005								17
2006								12
2007								34
2008								*
Russets								
2003	5	2	7	1	3	4		22
2004	8	4	9	4	1	4		30
2005	3	2	6	2	1	1		15
2006	6	3	9	3	**	2		23
2007	5	2	2	2	2	**		13
2008	10	2	5	1	2	0		20

<sup>1</sup> Includes US#1, US#2 and Culls.

<sup>2</sup> Includes potatoes 2 inches or greater weighing less than four ounces.

<sup>3</sup> Long white totals by size unavailable.

\* Too few reports to publish.

\*\* Less than 0.5 cwt/acre.



Photo courtesy of Clover Leaf Farm, Presque Isle, ME