

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Canada Consults on Potato Wart Viability Confirmation and Field Classification

Country: Canada

Post: Ottawa

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Potatoes and Potato Products, Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

On August 8, 2024, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) opened a 60-day consultation as part of their ongoing drafting of a new national potato wart response plan. CFIA is proposing to update their detection threshold for classifying a field as potato wart positive as well as introducing a viability confirmation status field classification. They also propose to introduce a field of concern classification which is a suspect field in the current draft response plan. Comments can be submitted until October 7, 2024.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has opened a 60-day [consultation](#) to update the detection threshold for classifying a field as potato wart positive, a proposal to introduce a viability confirmation status to index field classification, and introducing a field of concern classification. Stakeholder comments can be submitted to the CFIA by October 7, 2024, via email using subject line “Potato wart consultation”: cfia.potatosection-sectiondespommesdeterre.acia@inspection.gc.ca

This consultation is part of the process to update Canada’s Potato Wart Domestic Long Term Management Plan which will become the National Potato Wart Response Plan.

CFIA is proposing that the new detection threshold be updated from requiring two or more spores of *Synchytrium endobioticum* in a single soil sample from the field to be a detected field for potato wart, to two or more spores from the sampled field (not confined to a single soil sample or sample event) confirmed by two analytical methods, molecular and morphological, to be a detected field for potato wart.

Additionally, CFIA is proposing to create two classifications for potato wart index fields (i.e. potato wart detected fields) based on whether symptomatic tubers have also been confirmed in the field.

- Index- viability confirmed: will be used for fields that meet the "detected" threshold (two or more spores in the field) and where symptomatic tubers have been observed either directly from the field or in laboratory bioassays for fields in the associated potato wart "cluster".
- Index- viability not confirmed: will be used for fields that meet the "detected" threshold (two or more spores in the field) but where there is **no** confirmed symptomatic tubers or evidence of spore increase for fields in the associated potato wart "cluster".

Source: CFIA

Index- viability not confirmed fields will undergo a further diagnostic process of soil to determine spore viability via laboratory bioassay. If viability cannot be demonstrated, the field can be reclassified as a primary contact field and released according to the phytosanitary protocol in the National Potato Wart Response Plan, if there is no known association with a potato wart cluster where symptomatic tubers were identified.

CFIA is also proposing to create a field of concern classification. These are proposed to be fields where only one spore of *S. endobioticum* is detected and confirmed by morphology and molecular analysis. These fields will be restricted pending further intensified soil sampling and potatoes from these fields will not be eligible for export certification based on the Potato Wart Order (Canada) and the U.S. Federal Order 2022 while under the additional investigation process.

Background on CFIA’s previous consultation on three main focal areas for mitigation measures, as part of drafting the National Potato Wart Response Plan, can be found in the following Gain Report: [Canada Consults on National Potato Wart Response Plan Ottawa Canada CA2024-0020](#).

To date, two provinces in Canada have reported potato wart: Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island (PEI). Newfoundland is considered endemic for potato wart, where it was first reported in 1909, with

strict biosecurity measures in effect, including a prohibition on moving potatoes out of the province. Potato wart was first detected on PEI in 2000. A U.S. Federal Order was implemented in [2015](#) following additional detections in PEI which specified import conditions for PEI potatoes to prevent introduction of potato wart to the United States. The U.S. Federal Order was amended in [April 2022](#), following 2021 detections of potato wart in two PEI potato fields, prohibiting the importation of PEI-grown seed potatoes into the United States while allowing imports of PEI potatoes for consumption that meet specified conditions.

Following the 2021 detections, CFIA initiated an investigation into potato wart on PEI. The results of soil sampling from that investigation, along with previous potato wart detections, have led to a cumulative total of 37 PEI fields testing positive for potato wart since 2000; and the investigation which took place from October 2021 to July 2023 resulted in 4 detections from 48,789 samples. Fields with confirmed potato wart are classed as restricted fields and undergo a period of evaluation for several years before restrictions can be released.

Attachments:

No Attachments.