

**§2157. Potato Variety Development Program**

**1. Promotion.** The Maine Potato Board shall be responsible for developing, each year, a program to promote new potato varieties.

[PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

**2. Breeding.** The Maine Agricultural Experiment Station shall be responsible for breeding and testing of new potato varieties.

[PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

**3. Testing.** The Maine Agricultural Experiment Station shall hire an agronomist to work with the Maine Potato Breeding Program in Presque Isle to test new potato varieties. The agronomist shall be responsible for:

A. Developing the best cultural practices for new varieties; [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

B. Promoting new varieties of Maine seed potatoes to farmers in Maine and other areas; [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

C. Establishing field trials of new varieties; and [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

D. Monitoring the sales and performance of the new varieties. [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

[PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

**4. Multiplication.** The Seed Potato Board shall be responsible for multiplying seedstocks of advanced selections from breeding programs. The board shall establish an isolated facility at the Porter Farm to produce a sufficient volume of pathogen-free seedstocks of advanced selections from breeding programs, in order to:

A. Provide extensive and rigorous pathogen testing on the seedstocks introduced, cultured and multiplied in the facility; [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

B. Establish systematic production of pathogen-free seedstocks by meristem culture after heat therapy to free the stocks of any infectious viruses; and [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

C. Provide limited increase of the pathogen-free seedstocks in the field to produce quality seed potatoes for further evaluation by breeders and growers. [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

[PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

**5. Challenge grants.** The commissioner shall establish a challenge grant program to help in establishing field trials for new potato varieties. Grant proposals must be approved by the commissioner after review and recommendation by the Potato Plant Breeder at the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station in Presque Isle, the director of the division of animal and plant health, the chair of the seed grower's executive council of the Maine Potato Board and the Director of the Seed Potato Board. Grants may be given to farmers outside of this State. Grants may consist of seed, and assistance in determining cultural practices, and a percentage of the farmer's production costs to be determined by the commissioner. Those receiving grants shall cooperate with the agronomist of the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station in developing the best cultural practices and sharing production and marketing information.

[PL 2011, c. 420, Pt. A, §6 (AMD).]

**6. Reporting.** The agronomist of the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station shall monitor the sales and performance of new potato varieties and shall report annually to the commissioner and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over agriculture. The report shall summarize the field trial program and address total sales of new seedstock, adoption of new varieties by the State's farmers, yields, quality and other indicators of performance.

[PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

**7. Potato Variety Development Fund.** There is established a nonlapsing Potato Variety Development Fund. The Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry may accept money for this fund from the Federal Government or any public or private source and make expenditures from this fund in order to carry out activities relative to the program. Any General Fund money appropriated for potato variety development shall be deposited into the Potato Variety Development Fund. [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW); PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §6 (REV).]

**8. Rules.** The commissioner shall adopt rules, according to the requirements of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, Title 5, chapter 375, for the interpretation and implementation of this section. [PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW).]

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 1987, c. 813, §1 (NEW). PL 2011, c. 420, Pt. A, §6 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §6 (REV).

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