

Dear Senator Schwartz:

My name is Bob Mattive, I am currently the Chairman of the Colorado Certified Potato Growers Association. Our farm produces certified seed potatoes and commercial tablestock potatoes. I am writing to you on behalf of our association and as a grower. I would like you to support the Colorado Seed Potato Act, SB10-072. I have written a brief summary explaining the need for the act.

In the U.S. there are only 2 major seed producing states that do **not** have a Certified Seed Law; Colorado is one of them. Colorado primarily produces potatoes for the fresh/table market. The majority of Colorado potatoes are grown in the San Luis Valley. About 20% of the potatoes grown are Certified Seed Potatoes. Nearly one-half of the certified seed produced in the SLV is sold to commercial growers in the SLV. The production area is heavily concentrated with both commercial and certified seed growers very near to each other. For each of the last few years, rejections of certified seed have reached nearly 20% due to the increasing level of Potato Virus Y (PVY) in stocks, the principle cause of a mosaic disease which reduces size and yield of the crop. The level of mosaic in the commercial acreage has radically increased over the past few years primarily due to the use of very susceptible, latent-type cultivars. PVY is spread by aphids and can easily move to neighboring fields.

The Colorado Seed Potato Act would require growers to purchase and plant certified seed potatoes. To reduce the burden on producers, there is a one year plant back provision; allowing growers to plant back, on their own farm, their own potatoes which were grown from certified seed the prior year.

Advantages to enacting the Colorado Seed Potato Act:

- The Seed Act would aid in reducing potato mosaic disease levels such as PVY in the overall crop and in managing other disease issues.
- The Seed Act would eliminate the illegal sale or transfer of non-certified seed and Plant Variety Protected seed without adversely affecting commercial growers.
- The Seed Act would help Colorado maintain the Late Blight Quarantine currently in place to test and prevent late blight infected seed from entering Colorado.
- The Seed Act would promote better verification for trace-forward and trace-back of potatoes when Food Quality Protection issues arise.
- The Seed Act would continue to afford Colorado increasing export market opportunities. Mexico has become a significant export market for Colorado potatoes. Mexico requires the potatoes it imports to be grown from certified or qualified seed stocks.

I would like to thank you for your service to our great state and again ask that you vote in favor of the Colorado Seed Potato Act SB10-072.