



Know-how for Horticulture™

**Seed Potato
Certification
Workshop 2004**

Keith Blackmore
Victorian Certified Seed
Potato Association Inc

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**Potato Seed Certification
Workshop**

**An industry training
program for Certification
Officers conducted by
ViCSPA**

Keith Blackmore
Manager ViCSPA

December 2004



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Potato Seed Certification Workshop

An industry training program for Certification Officers conducted by ViCSPA

Compiled by Keith Blackmore, Manager ViCSPA

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- ⊕ Department of Primary Industries Victoria, Toolangi. Presentations were given by Graeme Wilson, Dolf de Boer and Brendan Rodoni. The Breeding Program under Tony Slater and Graeme Wilson provided the variety training and test plots.
- ⊕ ViCSPA member growers:
 - Coal Valley Seeds Taralgon
 - S Ingleton & Sons Pty Ltd Thorpdale
 - L Horsfield Thorpdale
 - EM & GE Mullen Thorpdale
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Media summary

Over the last four years ViCSPA has conducted four workshops for Seed Potato Certification officers from around Australia. The workshops have been attended by Certification staff from all schemes as well as the ViCSPA staff/Contractors.

The National Standard for Seed Potato Certification schemes (© HAL) is used by official seed schemes in Victoria, South Australia, NSW, Tasmania and Western Australia. The National Standard outlines the minimum requirements for crops being grown for Certified seed production. In The field the listed requirements include rotations, isolation, seed eligibility, disease levels (fungal, bacterial and virus diseases) and variety mixes. Tuber standards include pests, diseases, defects and size parameters.

The workshops assist in the uniform implementation of the National Standards for Certified seed potatoes as well as focusing on variety identification skills and disease identification skills. The aim is to produce uniform quality certified seed for domestic and export markets.

The workshop covered by this report was held over five days in early December 2004. Eighteen officers from five states attended the workshop.

Workshop objectives:

1. To bring together people involved in field inspection of Certified seed crops from all Australian Certified seed schemes and or seed potato growers or industry professionals
2. To improve knowledge of and ability to identify potato varieties in the field
3. To review best practice methodology for inspection of Certified seed crops
4. To improve knowledge of the identification of plant diseases
5. To further the implementation of the National standards
6. To improve our knowledge of and methodology of conducting tuber quality assessments

The workshop program included:

- ⊕ Shared experience from the existing knowledge of those in the group
- ⊕ Specialist lectures from ViCSPA and D P I
- ⊕ Variety training plots at Toolangi for use in training for variety identification and to assess skill levels on test plots.
- ⊕ Field visits to look at commercial crops and seed crops
- ⊕ Competency based assessments of the class-room subjects

All Attendees successfully completed the workshop, which included competency assessments for field and tuber inspections.

ViCSPA runs the workshops bi-annually to allow Certification Officers to maintain their knowledge and skills.

Technical Summary

The ViCSPA Potato Seed Certification Workshop was successfully held from the 6 to 10th December 2004. The venue was the Department of Primary Industries Victoria research station at Toolangi.

Attendees of the workshop:

Western Australia	- D Spencer
Tasmania	- S Elphinstone
South Australia (ViCSPA)	- A Hayton
ViCSPA	- L James, B Fry, Russell Bell, Keith Blackmore, Roger Osborn (part)
Ag Challenge	- L Logan
McCains Foods Australia	- J Opas (part)
Dept. Primary Industries Victoria	- L Fulford, V Derrico, K Watts, T Krause, D Grayling
NSW Dept Ag	- N Annard, G Leonard, W Haigh, M Rankmore

The format of the training follows similar successful programs previously run by ViCSPA. Keith Blackmore has attended similar training programs in Scotland and Canada. These countries also use similar methods for training their staff.

- ⊕ All aspects of the training week were successfully completed including all practical on-farm field inspection exercises.
- ⊕ All participants successfully completed their competency assessments for rules and process associated with tuber and field inspections. Issues addressed included, improved knowledge of variety identification, best practices for inspection, plant diseases, the National Standards and tuber quality assessment.
- ⊕ The choice of guest speakers proved informative and rewarding for those attending. These talks added an extra dimension to their knowledge of potatoes.
- ⊕ All Attendees successfully identified 9 varieties in a field assessment of the variety identification skills learnt. Many also correctly identified the mixtures in the assessment plots. A summarised description of varieties in the scheme was provided to all Attendees.
- ⊕ The field trip to Thorpdale gave on farm experience in seed cutting/preparation, shed hygiene, field layouts, disease identification and the ViCSPA QA program.
- ⊕ An evaluation of the workshop by Attendees gave a very positive feedback for ViCSPA. The main suggestions for future improvement are to show more practical differences between varieties in the morphological description of potatoes lecture and not to have two high powered lectures following each other.

Recommendation

It is proposed that the next ViCSPA Potato Seed Certification Workshop to be held December 2006. This is part of an on-going strategy by all of the Australian seed schemes to ensure that their staff have relevant and up to date skills and knowledge for their duties.

Communications/extension activities

An article with photo will be submitted in the magazine 'Eyes on Potatoes'. See Media summary

Additional Commercialisation and/or Intellectual Property issues

N/A

Attached: Workshop program

Keith Blackmore, Project/Program Leader
Cc Pauline McPherson, Program Administrator