

Salad Potato Project

Michael Hennessy

Head of Crops and Energy Knowledge Transfer, Teagasc



The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Introduction

- Background
- Objectives of the program
- Highlights
- Results
- Future



Background

Main crop profitability and market access

- Drop in consumption
- Increase consumption in other potato categories
- Diversification necessary

Diversification options

- Utilise machinery and building infrastructure
- Seed, processing, chipping opportunities
 - Salad Potato?



Industry Statistics

Salad Potato market

- Multiple trade 20,000-25,000t (7-8% of the Ware Market)
 - Plus restaurant & catering trade

Estimated Irish Production

(IFA figures)	2013	2014	2015
Area (hectares)		130	148
Production (t)	3070	3200	3650



- Imports make up the balance
- Opportunities for Irish produce

Salad Potato Working Group

Working group set up to investigate Salad Potato potential

- IFA, Bord Bia & Teagasc



Key objectives

- Grow the market for indigenously salad potatoes
- Increase the tonnage grown in Ireland
- Increase the number of growers
- Improve growers knowledge
- Leave a legacy of information

How Salad Potatoes can fit?

Alternative to ware

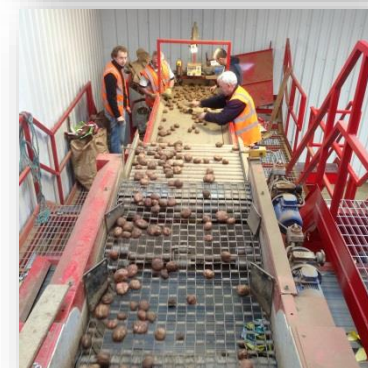
- Target different market segment
- Higher value market

Agronomic considerations

- Sown later
- Harvested earlier
- Use same equipment (with adjustment)

But

- Higher risk (alternative markets)
- Equipment costs
- Irrigation a necessity



Program 2015

Key meetings for information dissemination

- April, May, July and September
- Establish information gaps
- Target existing growers to help production base
- More widely inform potato growers of salad potatoes

Demonstration farm

- John Stafford, Wexford (Slaney Farms)

External collaboration

- Dr. Stuart Wale, SRUC, Scotland
 - Potato researcher/consultant



Program 2015

Meeting 1 (Planning for the season , April 2015)

Key outcomes

- Market Specifications (size 25-45 or 47)
 - Skin finish critical, Variety & Yield
 - Rejection - no market- no sale

Agronomic issues

- Soils, machinery, irrigation, PCN, Black dot

Important of soils & fertility

- Free draining, long rotation, free from disease, irrigation
- Phosphorus & tuber set

High stem numbers (high tuber counts)

- Seeding rate critical role



		SAOL Soil Analysis Report (REPS Samples)		Johnston Castle Labs, Wexford Prepared on: 16/10/2007 Prepared by: JOHN PETTIT SAOL module version 2.0.0	
Client		Adviser or Consultant		Sample Details	
HARRY GARTY HILLTOP, SALSALLY CROSSABEGG, WEXFORD		MR JOHN PETTIT JOHNSTOWN CASTLE ADVISORY 053 9171350 / john.pettit@eagasc.ie		Received: 16/10/2007 Report Created: 16/10/2007 SubCode Reference: 5012-07-040 Advice Sample ID: 5040244-15 Enterprise: Sheep (S) Field No./NMP No.: 1 Land Parcel No.: Y150	
Nutrients - Test Results					
Nutrient	Result	Units	Grassland Index	Advisory Comments	
pH	5.65				
SMP (for lab use only)	5.1				
Phosphorus (P)	12	mg/l	High (4)		
Potassium (K)	125	mg/l	Medium (3)		
Magnesium (Mg)	155.9	mg/l	High (4)		
Nutrients - Advice and Comments for Good Permanent Grass (GG) on Mineral Soil					
Nutrient	Advice / No Org. Manure	Units	Laboratory Comments		
Lime Requirement	7.5	tonnes/ha			
Phosphorus (P)	0	kg/ha	Insufficient stocking rate information to give nutrient advice.		
Potassium (K)	0	kg/ha	Insufficient stocking rate information to give K nutrient advice.		
Magnesium (Mg)			Response unlikely for this crop!		
Miscellaneous Notes					
XSL = excess lime mg/l = milligrams per litre gon = parts per million mg/kg = milligrams per kilogram kg/ha x 0.2 = tonnes/ha tonnes/ha x 2.5 = tonnes/ha tonnes/ha x galton/cow x 11 This advice is given only for the area sampled and is based on test result and on the information supplied with the soil sample. Do not exceed N & P limits set out in EC (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2005. Teagasc cannot be held responsible for any losses which may occur from the use of this report.					
Full Sample ID	Cropping History	Meats Fed	Stocking Rate (L/ha)	Grassland (S)	N Applied Previously
5040244-15	W1	0	0	10	10
Previous Grass	Soil Texture	Previous Crop	Organic Manure Proposed	Organic Manure Previously	Organic Manure Before That?
No	3	100	30	30	No



Program 2015

Meeting 2 (Field visit – assessing planting and planning irrigation)

Field Demonstration (*Maris Peer, Charlotte, Jester, Jazzy, Imagine*)

Key outcomes

- Seeding rate and placement
 - Split grading
 - Differential in spacing from intended of 17-54%
- Stem numbers and association with tuber numbers
- Phosphate help to drive tuber numbers
- Irrigation and its interaction with skin finish (common scab)



Program 2015

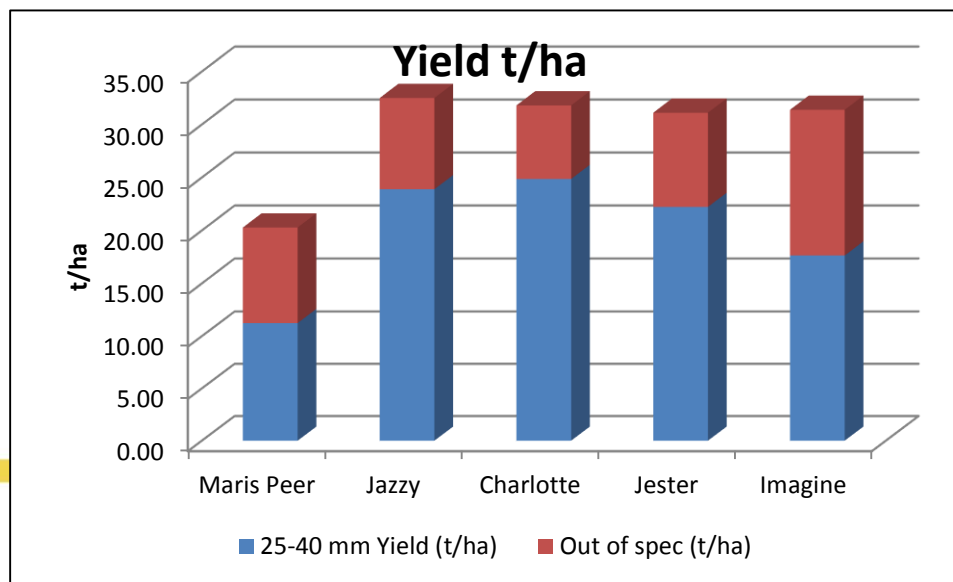
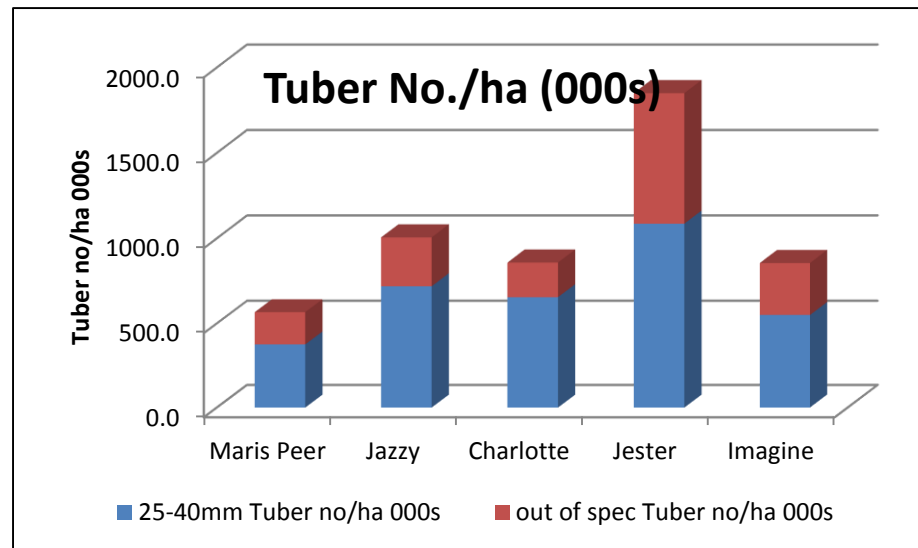
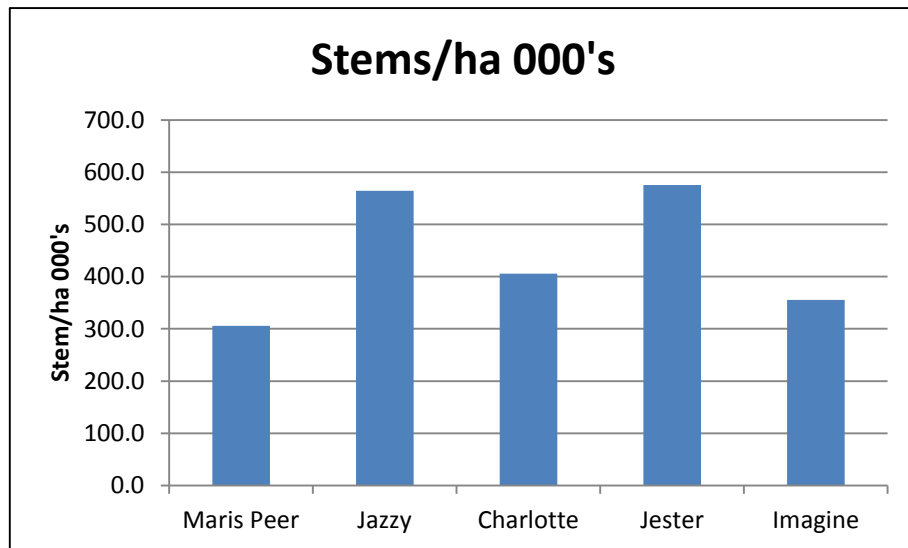
Meeting 3 (Field visit prior to burn off, July)

Key outcomes

- Test digs critical to assess size
- Emerged May 25-30th – burn off July 20-25
 - Burn off 7-8 weeks after emergence
- Large differences in variety tuber size/distribution



Test dig results *(Demonstration only)*



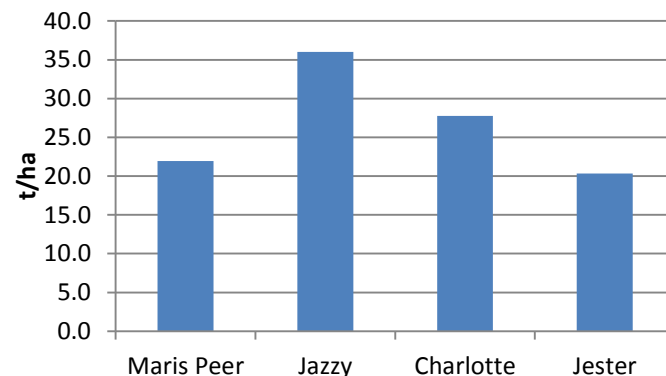
Program 2015

Meeting 4 (Salad Potato Storage)

Key outcome

- Maris Peer
 - Good numbers & skin, yields a bit low
- Jazzy
 - Excellent yield, skin a bit dull, early sale
- Charlotte
 - Good quality (but skin) with reasonable yield
- Jester
 - Good quality (but skin) with reasonable yield
- Jester
 - Huge numbers, quite a bit under spec, good skin
 - Jelly end rot (early sale)
- Imagine
 - Good yield and skin, divided opinion as to market

Demo as harvested (t/ha)



Program 2015

Meeting 4 (Salad Potato Storage)

Key outcome

- Long term storage of salads potatoes is possible
 - Increased level of detail needed
 - Preserve Skin finish and moisture
 - Drying and ventilation
 - Storage temperatures
- Higher profitability
 - Yes but ...
 - High yields and price needed
 - Increased risks



Profitability

Main Crop versus Salad Production (Demonstration Plots)

Cost	Main Crop* €/ha	Salad (demo) €/ha
Seed	1250	2565
Fertilisers	600	529
Other Variable inputs	770	680
Machinery	2360	1786
Misc. Costs	135	130
Irrigation		500
Total Costs	5115	6190

* *Teagasc Costs and Returns 2015*

Profitability

Main Crop versus Salad Production (Demonstration Plots)

Cost	Main Crop	Salad
Total Costs (€/ha)	5115	6190
Price €/t	200	350
Yield t/ha	40	30
Gross Margin €/ha	2885	4310
Low Yield t/ha		25
Gross Margin €/ha		2560
Low Yield t/ha & low price (€250/t)		25
Gross Margin €/ha		60

Lessons from UK salad growers

- Multiples want variety exclusivity
- Growing to a contract price
- Specialist salad growers
 - Quad planting increase yields
 - 15% ↑ compared to single row
- Tight financial margins



Salad Potato initiative 2016

- Program description
 - Identification of host farmer
 - Test plots on 4 farms
 - Demo plots in Oak Park
 - key meetings
 - Linkage with SRUC
 - Site selection
 - Planting
 - Storage key factors
- All potato growers welcome to meetings

Thanks for your attention

Questions?

