Salad Potato Project

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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

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)

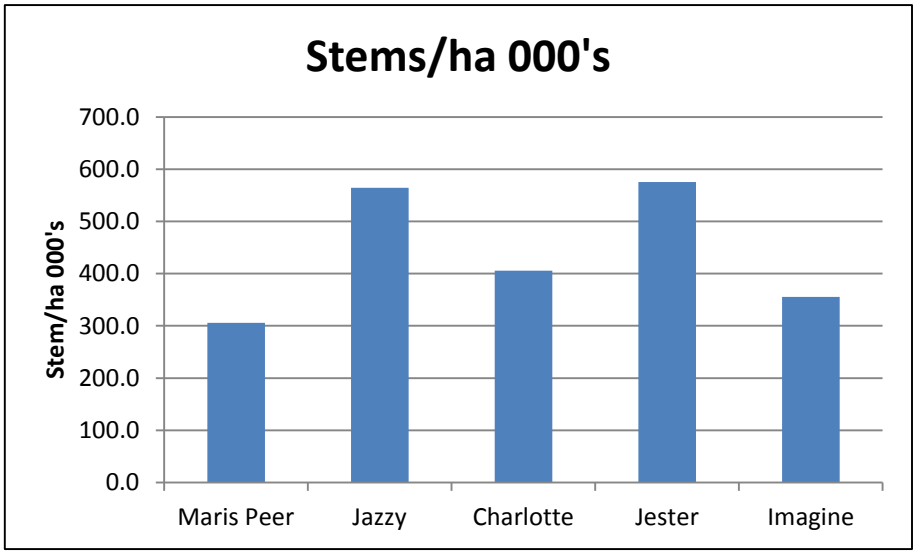
Program 2015

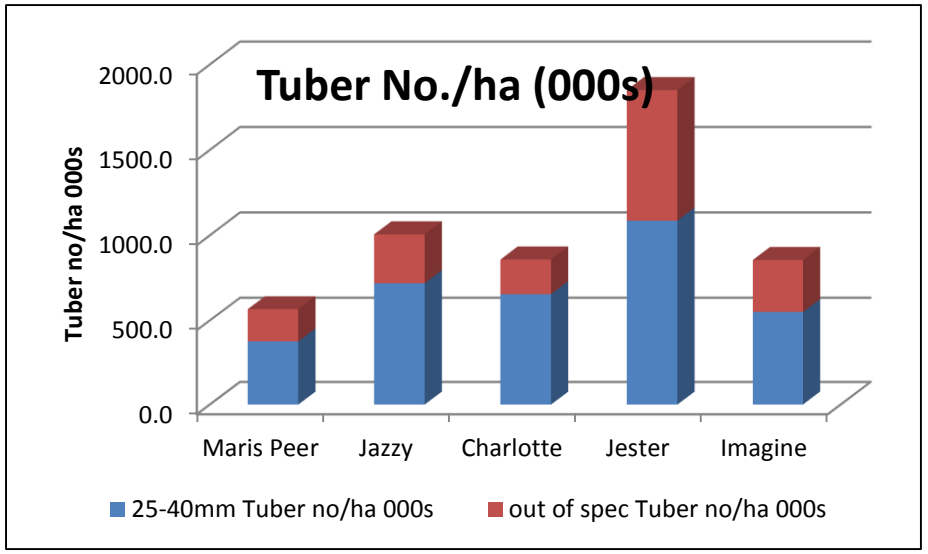
Meeting 3 **(Field visit prior to burn off, July)**

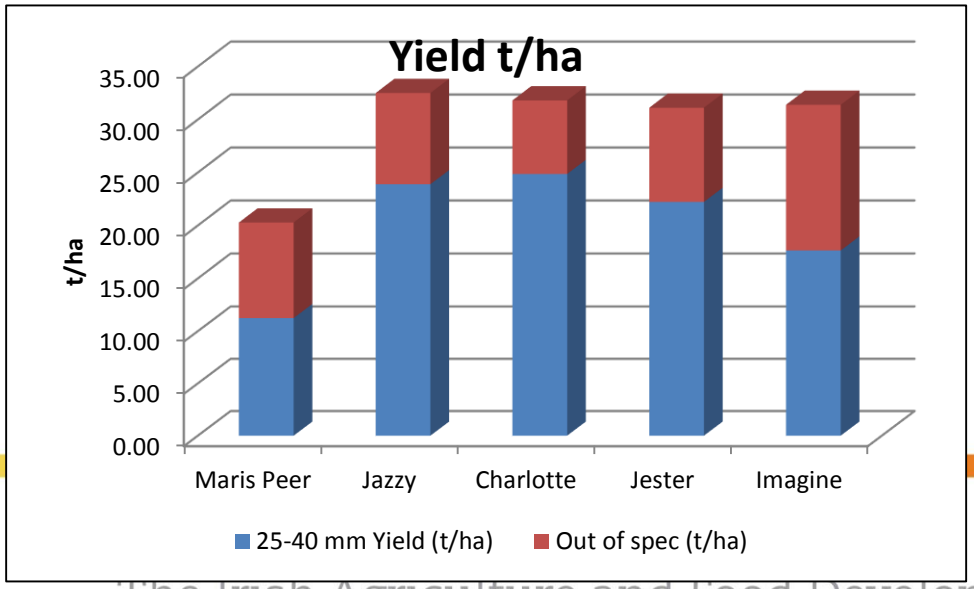
Key outcomes

- 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)*





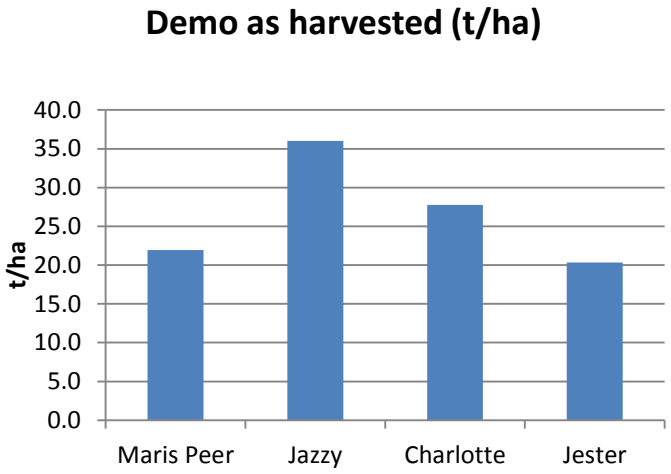


Program 2015

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
  - Huge numbers, quite a bit under spec, good skin
  - Jelly end rot (early sale)
- Imagine
  - Good yield and skin, divided opinion as to market



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?