



WASHINGTON STATE POTATO COMMISSION  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 3, 2015

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*Ted Tschirky, who farms potatoes near Pasco, shows Paul Rosser of Chick-fil-A the potato planting process.*

***Washington potatoes – From Field to Fries***

The 2015 potato growing season is upon us and on average Washington state potato farmers grow more than 20 percent of all U.S. potatoes. The ideal combination of sun, controlled water sources and nutrient-rich soil make Washington home to the world's most perfect conditions for growing potatoes. Washington state potato farmers rank first in global per-acre yield of potatoes, which is 44% more than the average of other potato-producing states and far above other potato-producing countries.

These conditions have allowed Washington state to lead the nation in french fry production. Due to the fact Washington's farmers are able to grow potatoes that have the perfect consistency and result in french fried potatoes with a crisp skin and a fluffy interior. Many restaurants have looked towards Washington potatoes for their quality and dependability that they can provide to their customers. In addition to the first-rate french fries made from Washington potatoes, buying local product is also key for many customers.

Chick-fil-A, who is opening three restaurants in Washington state this month, sources all of their potatoes from Washington potato farms, which are used to make their signature Waffle Potato Fries and hash browns. In fact, Chick-fil-A sourced more than 438 million pounds of Washington potatoes last year alone, which helps employ more than 23,500 people within the state's potato industry. A group of their local restaurant owners visited Washington's potato fields to get a first-hand look at the potato planting process in preparation for their restaurant openings.

"Quality is our top priority at Chick-fil-A, and we need to know that we're always delivering premium food to our customers," said Paul Rosser, franchise owner of Chick-fil-A at Lynnwood. "We know that our customers care about where their food comes from and how it's made, so to be able to see first-hand the fields where potatoes are being grown that will eventually be on our menu – that's something so few restaurants can provide. We're committed to sourcing and buying as much food locally as possible, and we're proud of the longstanding relationships we've had with the Washington State Potato Commission, Washington farmers and our suppliers who deliver a consistently premium product."

"It is a great opportunity for us to showcase what makes our growing region so special," added Ted Tschirky, a potato farmer from Pasco, WA who helped provide the group a tour of his fields. "Whether you are looking at planting, growing or harvesting, we handle our crop with care throughout the entire season. It is one of the reasons we are able to provide the world's best quality and most consistent supply of potatoes."

The group traveled from the greater Seattle area and connected with a few local growers. Throughout the tour they learned how Washington's potato farmers are providing the region and world with top quality potatoes. The first Chick-fil-A restaurant will open in Bellevue on April 7, and will have plenty of their waffle fries made with Washington potatoes ready for their customers.

*Established in 1956, the mission of the WSPC is to support an economically and environmentally sustainable Washington State potato industry by providing strong leadership and innovation and building partnerships to meet the demands of global consumers. For more information about the WSPC, Washington potatoes or other general inquiries please visit [www.potatoes.com](http://www.potatoes.com) or call 509.765.8845.*

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