



WASHINGTON STATE POTATO COMMISSION
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Mike Dodds (left) is handed the gavel from Nelson Cox (right) at the WSPC's Annual Meeting

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New WSPC Chair Elected During Annual Meeting

Moses Lake- The Washington State Potato Commission (WSPC) held their annual meeting last week and elected the organization's new Executive Committee for the upcoming fiscal year. Mike Dodds was named chair of the commission and will officially begin his term July 1, 2015. Dodds is the Raw Material and Environmental Manager for the Moses Lake facility of Basic American Foods. Dodds will follow Nelson Cox who has chaired the commission since last July.

"I consider the WSPC to be the best potato group in the nation and I'm looking forward to doing my part in helping the commission accomplish many great things this next year," said Dodds. "It will be a busy year for all as there is plenty of work to be done. One of the key elements will be the long range planning meeting we will hold with the potato industry throughout Washington state. It will be a great time to report back on previous accomplishments and plan for the near-term future."

Cox will continue to serve on the commission and on the WSPC's Executive Committee. The members of the WSPC's Executive Committee include:

- Rex Calloway (Quincy), 1st Vice Chair
- Stacy Kniveton (Pasco), 2nd Vice Chair
- Roger Hawley (Burlington), Secretary
- Mike Madsen (Plymouth), Treasurer
- Nelson Cox (Warden), Past Chair

Also occurring during this year's annual meeting was the recognition of three commissioners who will be stepping down from their board positions. Bob Halverson (Toppenish), Frank Martinez (Warden), and Nick Johnson (Connell) each concluded their respective terms. Halverson served as a WSPC commissioner for 15-years, Martinez was a WSPC commissioner for 12-years, and Johnson provided 6-years of service as a commissioner. Both Halverson and Martinez were elected and served as WSPC chairs during their tenure.

"It was a very humbling experience when I was first elected as a commissioner," said Martinez. "There were many things to learn, but by being able to work with such a great group of commissioners, I felt that together we have accomplished many things on behalf of the industry during these past dozen years. It was also an honor to serve as the WSPC's first Hispanic chair."

"My experience on the commission helped further open my eyes to the depth of the industry and I would encourage all potato growers to consider serving on the commission at one time," added Johnson.

Each will be missed as commissioners; however Halverson and Martinez will both continue to volunteer their time to help with two of the WSPC's committees. Halverson will participate on the Research and Technical Committee and Martinez will stay involved with the Marketing and Industry Affairs Committee.

Members of the WSPC Executive Team will each serve within their respective positions for one year. The commission is governed by 15 commissioners. Nine are potato grower-elected positions and five are positions appointed by the commissioners. In addition, a representative from the Washington State Department of Agriculture also sits on the board. In accordance with its by-laws, the WSPC commissioners select a new chair and other leadership positions on an annual basis.

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 or call 509.765.8845.

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