



BADGER MEMO

The Wisconsin Seed Potato Certification Program's goal is to provide potato farmers with seed potato planting stock that is healthy and without varietal mixture. We do this through inspections and laboratory testing of the seed potato crop and the expertise of Wisconsin seed potato growers. Early generation seed potato stocks produced in our potato tissue culture laboratory and at the Lelah Starks Elite Foundation Seed Potato Farm aid in this process by providing Wisconsin farmers with a reliable source of seed potatoes.

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Waivers & Variances

To sell rejected lots within Wisconsin, please fill out the 'Waiver Request Form' on the DATCP seed potato certification website and return to Jennifer.Oestreich@wi.gov

https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/SeedPotatoCert.aspx

To sell rejected seed lots outside Wisconsin, you as the seller would need to contact the farm receiving the seed lot. The receiving farm would need to contact their state agricultural department and determine what paperwork is required for the seed lot to be shipped into the state.

If any commercial farms purchase a seed lot with PVY levels greater than 5% from out of state and grow in Wisconsin, please fill out the 'Waiver Request Form' on the DATCP seed potato certification website.

https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/SeedPotatoCert.aspx

To plant back a certified seed lot with a low level of PVY but higher than 0.5%, please reach out to WSPCP staff to see if the seed lot in question is eligible for a variance. Before requesting a variance, please look for any available seed with a virus level below 0.5%.

With this being an unprecedented year, our goal as a program is to work with all of you to ensure you have the necessary planting material and tools to have a successful 2026 season, while trying to minimize levels of PVY present in our seed growing region. We want to stress the importance of planting seed lots with low levels of PVY to try and keep inoculum levels down on individual seed farms.

Reminder: Pre-approval of Seed Lots

Out of state seed imported for certification must be pre-approved.

Potato Expo Panel Discussion with Brooke Babler

Brooke Babler (third from left) participated in a direct tuber testing (DTT) panel with two other individuals: Dr. Andrew Houser (second from left), Jason Kimm (fourth from left) and moderator Dr. Nina Zidack (first from left) at the 2026 Potato Expo held January 6-8th, 2026 at the Gaylord Texan, Dallas, Texas. Brooke focused on discussing DTT research performed by Wisconsin Seed Potato Certification staff since 2016. Below is a detailed abstract outlining the focus of this exciting panel discussion.



Seed potato certification ensures potato growers have access to varietal pure, disease-free, high-quality potatoes to produce high-yielding, healthy crops. Certified seed agencies in the U.S. have performed a combination of post-harvest visual field inspections and laboratory enzyme-linked immunosorbent (ELISA) or Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assays on leaf tissue (field or

greenhouse collected) to determine seed lot certification. These robust tests have successfully detected seed lots with elevated PVY levels for years but present limitations that may restrict quick movement of seed lots. Direct tuber testing (DTT), a technique used to test tuber tissue for pathogens of interest is being examined as a diagnostic tool in conjunction with or as an alternative to current certification diagnostic tools. DTT offers the advantage of faster turnaround and direct tuber assessment. Considerations focused on DTT validation, implementation timeline and challenges, regulatory acceptance, and research advancement will be discussed by certification agencies exploring DTT.

Moderator: Nina Zidack, Ph.D., Former Director, Montana Seed Potato Certification, Montana State University

Panelists: Andrew Houser, Ph.D., Manager, Colorado Potato Certification Service, Colorado State University

Brooke Babler, Associate Research Program Director, WSPCP, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Jason Kimm, MPIA Board member and Owner/Operator, Kimm Seed Potatoes

Testing Requirements for US and Canada

If you are exporting potato seed to another state, please ensure that all testing requirements are met as select states have additional testing requirements other than the post-harvest winter grow-out.

- Colorado requires a late blight test and PLRV test in absence of visuals
- Idaho requires a BRR test and PLRV check (visual or ELISA)
- Montana does not allow seed import into certification
- Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, and North Dakota requires a PLRV check (visual or ELISA)
- Canada (including New Brunswick and PEI) requires BRR test and PLRV check

Greenhouse Update

The first grow cycle of 2026 is underway with Greenhouse 3 & 4 planted and doing well. Greenhouse 2 will be planted in March.



In Remembrance of Veronica A King



Veronica A. King, age 85 of Madison, WI, passed away on Thursday, November 6, 2025 at St. Mary's Hospital in Madison. She was born on March 6, 1940 in Reedsburg, WI, to Frank and Ruth (Casey) Coleman. On September 24, 1968 Veronica married Edward William King, who preceded her in death.

Veronica was employed for 41 years in the Department of Plant Pathology at UW-Madison as a departmental secretary and bookkeeper, and as a staff person for the Wisconsin Seed Potato Certification Program. She arrived in 1964 just as the Department was settling into the newly constructed Russell Labs after moving from Moore Hall. Veronica joined a secretarial pool of four, which was supervised by Miss Audrey Dunlap. Initially she was the receptionist but soon took over as the staff person for the Wisconsin Seed Potato Program, as well as the secretary for several faculty. One of these was Assistant Professor Paul H. Williams who recalls her exceptional ability to take shorthand and then produce an error free typed document. Marleen Lippert, who became office manager when Ms. Dunlap retired, noted that she was an excellent proofreader and did not require a "Spell Checker". Dr. Walter Stevenson commented that she was most helpful to Extension Staff and typed letters and manuscripts for them. She also prepared expense reports and was a stickler for details, requiring defense for each expense

down to the penny. You knew that if Veronica had prepared your expense report, it would be accepted by Ag Hall.

Veronica lived through many technological changes. When first employed, her shorthand skills were in demand and soon she learned to operate a mimeograph machine, an early Xerox copier, then the computer system, the Wang, the next generation of computers, and the internet, all of which she mastered.

Veronica will be remembered for her ability to focus on her work, which she did meticulously, and for her long and dedicated service to many faculty in the Department and the Wisconsin Seed Potato Certification Program.

Outside of the office, she loved the music from Nashville such as the Grand Ole Opry and made several trips to Nashville alone. "Nashville," in some form, was on her license plate. Over the years she collected many Barbie Dolls.

Veronica was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Edward; and sister, Mary Coleman. She is survived by her son Steve of Madison.

[Inspector Contact Info](#)

Di Kessler - 715-610-2640

Cole Lubinski - 715-350-1691

Niles Franc - 608-216-6810

Kevin Gallenberg - 715-216-5552

[Contact Us](#)



Wisconsin Seed Potato Certification Office

106 7th Ave

Antigo, WI 54409

715-623-4039

Visit us on the web at <https://seedpotato.russell.wisc.edu>