**PEIWI: Agriculture on PEI - Did you know?**

* **Did you know?** PEI is the largest producer of potatoes in the country, producing approximately 22% of Canada’s potatoes each year and able to boast having the largest acreage.    Many different varieties of potatoes are grown for different uses with one potato growing up to 5 to 10 potatoes. Planting takes place ideally in May and June with harvest beginning in early Summer with the main crop harvested in late September through to November.  There are 175 potato producers on PEI with approximately 82,000 acres of potatoes grown in PEI per year. 98% of our farms are family-owned and operated and the PEI potato sector is the oldest commercial industry in Canada, dating back to the 1700’s.

PEI potatoes are grown for three specific markets:

* Table: 30% are sold to retail and food service sectors.
* Processing: 60% are manufactured into French fries, potato chips, or other products.
* Seed: 10% are grown with high quality and health standards for next year’s potato crop.

PEI potatoes are used and shipped globally to over 20 countries in a normal year with PEI being a leading centre for potato research and innovation for North America.  PEI potato growers are also highly committed to sustainable production practices, including integrated pest management, crop rotation, nutrient management, and soil conservation.

Submitted by Ellen MacPhail, Executive Director, PEI Women’s Institute

Source: PEIWI, PEI Farm and Food Care, PEI Potato Board.