



ALBERTA
AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Highwood*

March 18, 2026

Maine State Legislature
March 19, 2026 at 1:00p.m.
Public Hearing Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Re: LD 473 - An Act to Support Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in Maine

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Dear Maine State Legislature:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment to Legislative Document 473 – An Act to Support Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in Maine.

On behalf of Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, I would like to bring to your attention the proposed amendment's recommendation to include Alberta as an area of origin requiring monitoring for the presence of potato cyst nematode (PCN) under Section 1. (D) is misplaced.

Based on current surveillance data, extensive and ongoing testing, and regulatory status, Alberta is PCN-free.

Alberta also conducts more PCN sampling than any other region in Canada. In fall 2025 alone, 6,957 samples were collected, representing more than half of all PCN samples taken nationally (12,963). Potato seed exported to the United States is tested in compliance with the Canada US Guidelines for Potato Cyst Nematode. Extensive monitoring demonstrates Alberta's strong commitment to early detection, science-based risk management, and maintaining its pest-free status.

Therefore, to include Alberta in a list of regions requiring PCN monitoring is not supported by current evidence and would impose unnecessary and damaging regulatory and operational burden on producers, shippers and industry partners. It will also create confusion and reputational damage by implying the presence of a risk that does not align with Alberta's verified pest-free designation and its industry-leading surveillance.

For these reasons, I recommend that the proposed amendment be reconsidered to ensure alignment with current surveillance data, regulatory findings, and internationally accepted phytosanitary principles. The USA, including the State of Maine, continues to be a valuable

trading partner for Alberta and we look forward to continuing our long and productive partnership in agricultural trade, among other areas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RJ Sigurdson', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Honourable RJ Sigurdson
Minister, Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation

John Conrad
Edmonton/Alberta
LD 473

Please refer to my submission with regards to LD 473.