

Ryan Crane  
Crane Brothers Farms  
LD 473

To members of the Committee,

I am writing as a commercial potato grower in Maine to voice my support for LD473. This bill would strengthen important phytosanitary controls to help protect the seed potato industry in our state. High quality, disease and pathogen free seed has been a trademark of our state seed program, and sets the foundation for commercial processing and tablestock growers like myself to have successful crops.

The unfortunate reality is that our state has lost a large number of seed potato growers in the past 15 years, and a large number of those historically seed potato acres have been shifted to processing potato production. As a state and industry we must do all we can to ensure that the remaining seed growers in Maine remain successful and viable. As a commercial grower, being able to source 100% of my seed potato needs within my own state is a tremendous financial and logistical advantage versus other parts of the country. And having the assurance that this seed is grown to the highest phytosanitary requirements is extremely important.

I've no doubt that the Maine Potato Board has shared with you the tremendous economic impact that the potato industry has in our state. The foundation of that economic impact is, without question, the quality of our state seed potato program.

I would welcome anyone wishing to learn more to visit our farm in Exeter at any time.

Thank you,  
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