



WASHINGTON STATE POTATO COMMISSION
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18 May 2020

To: Western SARE Administrative Council

Re: Preproposal: Development of late blight forecasting model for Washington State

Dear Western SARE Administrative Council,

This letter is written in support of the preproposal submitted by Dr. David Wheeler entitled "Development of late blight forecasting model for Washington State". The proposed work will integrate data collected at multiple levels to provide improved forecasts of late blight outbreaks that are site-specific rather than regional, and treatment recommendations to WA potato growers. This work promises to minimize fungicide applications without compromising the potato yield and quality for which WA is known. Late blight causes a devastating disease in potato and other solanaceous crops and is among our greatest pest challenges. Forecasting outbreaks is important because early treatment is the key to Late blight control.

The WSPC is committed to research to solve potato pest and agronomic challenges and has long history of evaluating and supporting research projects that enhance potato production and sustainability. Dr. Wheeler's preproposal exceeds the quality of work we support. We are excited by the potential of this effort to bring cost-effective solutions to the late blight problem for which we treat every year. The potato industry in WA maintains strong relationships with the research community to ensure the success of worthy research endeavors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Matthew J. Blua".

Matthew J. Blua, PhD
Director of Industry Outreach
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