

SPECIAL FROST DAMAGE REPORT

September 2, 1964

FROST DAMAGES POTATOES DURING AUGUST

Frost caused some damage to potatoes in several of the North Central and Western States during August. Damage ranged from minor in North Dakota and Minnesota about mid-month to moderate in fall producing areas of Colorado towards the end of the month. The overall effect is expected to be relatively minor. The State summaries are:

COLORADO: One of the earliest freezes in recent years hit the San Luis Valley on August 21. Temperatures also dipped to the freezing point on later days. Severest levels were reported on August 21, 22, 28, and 30. The lowest official temperature recorded was 28 degrees at Monte Vista. The critically low temperatures were responsible for a complete kill of the top growth of an estimated 10-15 percent of potato acreage in the San Luis Valley. Varying and undetermined loss occurred on an additional 75 percent of the acreage. On this acreage, stems are still green and viable and additional sizing of potatoes may occur. About 10 percent of the total acreage, most of which is in the southern portion of the Valley, was not damaged. The loss in yield from the earlier potential is not expected to exceed 20 percent. In addition to the reduction in yields there will be an increase in the percentage of small sized potatoes. The problem will be more serious with the Russet variety because they are late maturing and were not as far along in development when the freeze hit.

CALIFORNIA: Frost damage to potatoes was reported in the Tulalake area on the morning of August 29. Temperatures varied greatly but were reported as low as 26 degrees. Vines on most of the potato acreage were damaged. Damage is limited to minor leaf burn on about 45 percent of the acreage. On an estimated 25 percent of the fields, damage ranges from singeing of the outer leaves to killing of 6 inches of the terminal vines. On the remaining fields, vine loss ranged from 6 to 12 inches.

IDAHO: Temperatures dropped below freezing briefly in scattered locations in eastern Idaho August 19-20 and again intermittently from the 26th to the 30th of August. Damage to potatoes was confined primarily to a light top freeze in small areas throughout the eastern district. However, vines on some dry land potatoes at higher elevations in the St. Anthony-Ashton area were reported frozen quite severely.

NORTH DAKOTA AND MINNESOTA: Frost damage in the commercial potato acreage of the Red River Valley in North Dakota and Minnesota on August 12-13 was spotted and mostly light but was severe in a few cases and seems to be more evident in low places or where vine growth was small. In most cases, only leaves were frosted with stems remaining green.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Statistical Reporting Service
Vg 5 (9-2-64)

Crop Reporting Board
Washington, D. C.

OREGON: Light frost occurred in Jefferson County and Klamath Falls area during August but very little if any damage was reported.

WASHINGTON AND MONTANA: No frost reported in potato producing areas.
