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APGI continues to see rise of yellow potato demand

By

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[Associated Potato Growers Inc.](#) is one of the largest volume shippers of potatoes in the Red River Valley, with 17 North Dakota and Minnesota farmers bringing the goods for the company, which is headquartered in Grand Forks, ND, with operations also in Grafton and Drayton.

Last year's crop was better than expected for the company, as the dry conditions and amount of heat endured helped to create a strong crop, though yields were down about 15 to 20 percent. Things are looking better for 2022.

"This season, the crop of both yellows and reds will be of very high quality," said Mike Torgerson, CEO of APGI. "Although heavy rains early on caused some damage, ideal conditions after that produced better volume than average. We'll be able to supply the market with plenty of both."

That's a good thing because the demand for yellow potatoes has never been hotter as customers are clamoring to fill their shelves.

"There's a high demand for yellow potatoes from grocery stores and restaurants alike," Torgerson said. "APGI seeks to fulfill the needs of our wholesale clients by producing top-quality yellow potatoes."

In fact, every year for the past 10 years, APGI has seen a slight increase in yellow acreage. Yellow varieties come from Nodak, Nature's Pride, Mighty Reds, GoldenValley, Big Giant, Tasty, Holsum and private labels.

"No matter what the label says, you'll get delicious potatoes that elevate any meal," he said. "The demand on the yellow varieties is increasing in popularity year after year as their being 'something different' is being promoted more at store levels. They offer good taste and bigger yields."

Not that red potatoes aren't in demand. Torgerson noted that reds have always been a popular choice of restaurants and grocery stores, and wholesalers that want to provide top red potatoes without spending too much money turn to APGI.

As a grower-owned cooperative in the Red River Valley, APGI is in direct correlation with the product it grows and takes pride in producing top-quality products that are as healthy as they are delicious.

A reliable source of potatoes since 1948, Torgerson noted that wholesaler clients continue to turn to the company because it sells both red and yellow potato varieties, are Primus GFSI-certified, use high-tech packaging machines and provide harmonized audits for all growers.

"Primus certification is a stringent food-safety program that we maintain to ensure the highest quality

product is packed at our locations,” he said.

These days, automation is becoming more important than ever for the company as the labor force seems to be more limited every year. The biggest obstacles, therefore, are labor and transportation for the company and it is doing what it can to combat those challenges.

“We have installed three new packaging machines and a palletizing robot to keep up with packaging demands,” Torgerson said.

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