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**Potatoes USA announces 2022-23 leadership**

[Potatoes USA](#), the marketing and promotion board for the potato industry, elected new leadership during its annual meeting. The newly elected chairman and executive committee will lead the board through 2022-23.

Jason Davenport of Bakersfield, CA, was elected as chairman of the board. This marks Davenport's sixth year on the board and as a member of the executive committee. He has served as the co-chair of the international marketing, the industry outreach and the domestic marketing committees, as well as the chair of the finance and policy committee for two consecutive years.

Davenport, a fifth-generation farmer, started Allied Potato Inc. 15 years ago in California, and has since expanded his farming operations to Washington, Oregon, Colorado and internationally. Allied Potatoes' major potato products are grown for the chip-stock, organic, seed, frozen and fresh-cut fry markets. In addition to leading the Potatoes USA board, Davenport is involved in the California Research-Advisory Board, the Northwest Seaport Alliance Port Taskforce, the Farm Bureau, Western Growers and Life Pioneer's CEO group.

Davenport thoroughly enjoys and appreciates the many different aspects of working in the potato industry and has loved the opportunity to grow his involvement and witness the impact he makes, particularly with international endeavors. He brings his own distinctive knowledge and perspective to the table to help develop new markets, overcome challenges with trade, and build the necessary relationships alongside other prominent organizations such as the National Potato Council, state potato organizations, and USDA FAS and APHIS.

"I am committed to driving forward the common goal and interest we all have for this industry — to grow the best potato for the world to enjoy and make sure people know potatoes are one of the most important staple foods," Davenport said.

Davenport is a firm believer in strategy and vision and is ready to lead the Potatoes USA board by looking at both the short-term and long-term goals to continue defending the potato.

In addition to Davenport, Potatoes USA's 2022-23 executive committee members include:

- Jeff Jennings of Camden, NC, chair of the finance and policy committee
- Leah Halverson of Grand Forks, ND, co-chair of the industry outreach committee
- Shelley Olsen of Othello, WA, co-chair of the industry outreach committee
- Jared Smith of Alamosa, CO, co-chair of the international marketing committee
- Mike Carter of Rosholt, WI, co-chair of the international marketing committee
- Steve Elfering of Idaho Falls, ID, co-chair of the domestic marketing committee
- Travis Meacham of Moses Lake, WA, co-chair of the domestic marketing committee
- Mike Larsen of Declo, ID, co-chair of the research committee
- Jennifer Gogan of Houlton, ME, co-chair of the research committee
- Jaren Raybould of Saint Anthony, ID, past chair

As Davenport assumes responsibilities, he would like to share his gratitude for the industry. "Everyone has always backed me and supported me and my ideas, which has helped us grow as a

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community of industry leaders," he said. "We all learn from each other as shifts are made to our growing practices, consumer trends evolve, and new technology is implemented." Davenport feels that the level of care the farmers in the industry take to keep surviving these moments in time creates the strong bond we have.

"I am looking forward to the next 10 to 20 years and seeing where we go as an industry, from on-farm and shed automation to greener practices, it will be incredible to see what we adopt in the near and long term and I'm sure it will be an interesting decade ahead of us," Davenport said.

Outside of his profession, Davenport is enthusiastic about mountain adventures and family excursions. He enjoys any chance he gets to hit the slopes and has made a family tradition out of going to the lake in Idaho and taking part in water-sport activities.

*Photo: (Back row) Blair Richardson, Potatoes USA's CEO, Steve Elferin, Mike Carter, Travis Meacham and Jaren Raybould. (Front row) Jared Smith, Leah Halverson, Jason Davenport, Shelley Olsen, Mike Larsen and Jennifer Gogan. Not pictured is Jeff Jennings.*

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