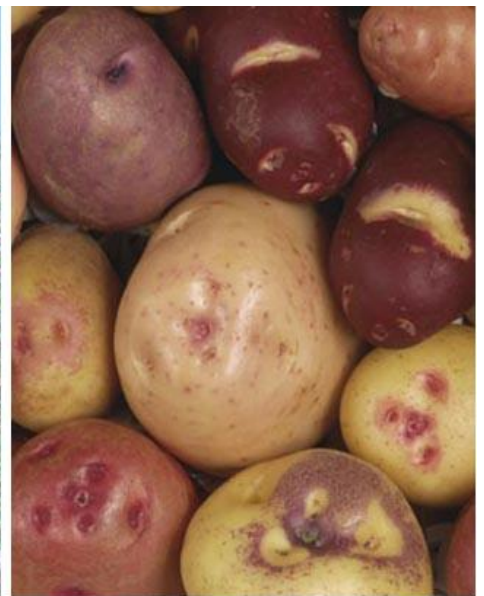


SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

EXPLANATORY LEAFLET 2025



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FOREWORD

Seed potatoes produced and marketed in Scotland must be classified under the Seed Potato Classification Scheme (SPCS). SASA is the Certifying Authority for seed potatoes in Scotland and administers the Scheme. It is a Division of the Scottish Government Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Economy (SGARE) which also undertakes SPCS inspections. This document gives information on the conditions and arrangements for seed potato classification (certification) for Pre-basic and Basic seed potatoes in Scotland. Before seed potatoes can be marketed they must meet the requirements of The Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

Although the UK left the EU on 1st January 2021 no changes have been made to the certification scheme and GB grades continue to mirror the EU scheme.

In addition Scotland also has the following stricter controls:

- a) Maintain nil tolerance for *Dickeya* spp. (in crop and lots)
- b) Implement stricter field tolerances PVY, PVA and PLRV (potato leafroll virus)
- c) Maintain current lot tolerance for potato tuber necrosis ringspot disease (PTNRD) caused by PVY

Field Generation on the label remains optional, with sellers being required to de-select the option on the marketing label on MySPUDS if they wish to market seed potatoes without the field generation information.

John Ellicott
SPCS & Export Manager

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

For seed potatoes to be eligible for classification in the SPCS, varieties entered for inspection must be on the GB Variety List or NI Variety List (NL). If the final market is outwith the UK, this requirement will not apply but eligibility will be dependent on an importing country's acceptance of the variety. See section 13.

The arrangements for Approved Stocks seed potatoes are in place to enable the early multiplication of seed potatoes of new varieties prior to National Listing and such crops must also meet the requirements of The Plant Health (Official Controls and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2019, The Plant Health (Amendment, etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, The Plant Health (Phytosanitary Conditions) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, and The Aquatic Animal Health and Alien Species in Aquaculture, Animals, and Marketing of Seed, Plant and Propagating Material (Legislative Functions and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

Pre-basic TC: GB grade PBTC

This is the highest grade of seed potatoes produced in Scotland and production may only be carried out by growers authorised by SASA as meeting the required standards for health and hygiene. Facilities are subject to re-inspection at any time.

Pre-basic seed: GB grade PB

This grade of potatoes can only be produced by growers, authorised by SASA, who are able to maintain the required standard of field production, storage and administrative procedures.

Basic seed: GB grades S, SE and E

Growers must be registered in the SPCS and be able to meet the required conditions for production for the particular classes and for record keeping.

Approved Stocks

Crops of varieties which are being considered for NL submission or are undergoing NL testing, or are being multiplied for other trial purposes, may be accepted for conditional inspection for other SPCS classes. Approved Stocks varieties supplied as minitubers from a PBTC lab will be eligible for the equivalent grade PB and varieties from other sources will be eligible for equivalent grade S. Approved Stocks may be retained and planted on basic seed farms beyond equivalent grade E (i.e. beyond seven field generations) provided they are being grown for selection purposes only. These crops will receive a crop number just as other crops do.

Test and Trial - The Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2015, as amended, allows the marketing of seed potatoes for test and trial purposes into and within Scotland. The variety must have been inspected at the grade determined by its origin and location. A written application must have been made and authorisation given for growing crop inspection and marketing for Test and Trial purposes. **Applications must be made to SPCS prior to or at the time of submission of growing crop inspection application forms.** The request must include the following information:-

- (a) the envisaged test and trials
- (b) a description of the variety
- (c) the maintenance of the variety

Orange labels will be issued for this purpose and all consignments must meet the minimum tuber inspection requirements for basic seed potatoes.

It is possible to market Approved Stocks using an orange Test and Trial label provided the conditions stated above are met. If you envisage using this marketing option, please contact SPCS.

2. APPLICATIONS

GB grades PB, S, SE and E, including Approved Stocks varieties, can be entered on the application form SPCS1.

GB grade PBTC growers must use the separate PBTC application form for their PBTC crops, including those of Approved Stocks varieties.

You can apply online via MySPUDS at: www.sasa.gov.uk/spcs-myspuds

Further application forms can be obtained from SPCS (see Section 40), your local Area Office or downloaded from the SASA website: www.sasa.gov.uk/spcs-growing-crop-inspection-documents

An electronic template of the form can also be downloaded and sent by e-mail to spcsapp@sasa.gov.scot

Please read the “How to make an application” sheet that is available at: www.sasa.gov.uk/spcs-growing-crop-inspection-documents

Applications should arrive at SASA no later than **14 May 2024**, or within two weeks of planting (whichever is later). SASA cannot guarantee inspection of crops submitted after this date.

3. FEES

The fee payable for PB, S, SE, E and Approved Stocks crops entered for inspection is £29 per half-hectare or part thereof. The ready reckoner in Annex 3 shows examples of the fees that will be charged for inspection.

Fees for crops withdrawn from the SPCS are not payable if written confirmation is received prior to the first official inspection. However, an administration fee of £1.50 per half-hectare is payable.

An invoice for the fees due will be issued in late summer to the person in whose name the crops have been entered – i.e. the Producer.

The fees for PBTC will also be invoiced.

The invoices issued will be due for payment within 30 days and should be settled promptly. No cheques should be submitted with applications unless requested by SASA.

GROWING CROP REQUIREMENTS

4. POTATO CYST NEMATODE (PCN)

Detailed information is available in the **Soil Testing for PCN – Information for Growers Leaflet**, available at www.sasa.gov.uk/pcn-soil-testing-documents

GB grade PBTC – the growing medium must be tested prior to planting and found to be free from PCN.

GB grades PB, S, SE & E and Approved Stocks – All crops entered for inspection **must** be grown on land for which a clearance certificate issued by SASA is in force at the time of planting. Growers must ensure that the area to be planted is entirely within the area designated on the clearance certificate. Contact SPCS Administration or your local Area Office if in doubt.

It is the responsibility of the growing crop applicant to ensure that clearance is in place. If you are renting land from another person to grow seed potatoes, you must ask to see the relevant clearance certificate before planting.

Crops cannot be accepted for classification if they are wholly or partly planted in untested land or land where the growing of seed potatoes is prohibited.

If cysts of PCN are found during the growing crop inspection (e.g. as a result of symptomatic plants being seen), a Crop Inspection Report cannot be issued for the crop.

Growers are reminded that it is an offence to plant ware crops in **land recorded as infested unless an Official Control Programme has been agreed with your local Area Office and recorded in a Notice. Crops planted in contravention of this may be required to be destroyed. All licences to plant ware potatoes in scheduled land issued prior to 2010 expired on 31st December 2010.**

A clear pre-crop PCN test is required for all land used to grow potatoes for further planting, both within the SPCS and for farm saved seed (FSS). The sole exception is for FSS to be planted on the same place of production.

5. WART DISEASE

Land intended for seed potato production must be free from wart disease.

6. ROTATION

GB grade PB – the land on which seed potatoes are to be planted must not have grown a potato crop during the preceding 7 years.

GB grades S/SE/E – the land on which seed potatoes are to be planted must not have grown a potato crop during the preceding 5 years.

Approved Stocks – must comply with the above requirements, as appropriate.

7. ORIGINS OF STOCKS FOR PLANTING AND GRADE STANDARDS

GB grade PBTC – Only nuclear stock supplied by SASA can be used by authorised PBTC producers for the propagation of PBTC seed potatoes or plants. These microplant cultures will, to the best of our knowledge, be true to type for the variety and, as far as can be ascertained by modern testing techniques, be free from viruses and pathogenic bacteria.

No species of *Solanaceae* other than potato species, or any potato material other than that derived from nuclear stock shall be maintained and propagated by authorised PBTC producers.

GB grade PB – All seed potatoes entered for PB inspection must have been initially classified as PBTC seed potatoes or plants. Growers may obtain PB tubers from other PB growers with the aim of multiplying these at classes PB, S, SE or E. PB seed potatoes

may be entered for inspection as PB for a maximum of four years. In the first year in the field, clones should be identified and grown separately so that any problems, such as **off-types or admixtures**, can be isolated.

Only PB, and S stocks from your own production seed, may be planted on a PB farm.

GB grades S/SE/E – Crops must be planted from seed potatoes classified during the previous year as pre-basic or basic seed potatoes.

The table below shows the possibilities for entry of seed potatoes for crop inspection the following year in relation to the grade being planted and the maximum number of field generations (FG) permitted at each grade:

Stock Classified Previous Year	Eligible for Inspection Current Year (Subject to Field Generation (FG) Rules)
PBTC	PB, S, SE, E
PB	PB, S, SE, E
S	S, SE, E
SE	SE, E
E	E

Entry Grade	Maximum Cumulative Number of Field Generations
PBTC	n/a
PB	4
S	5
SE	6
E	7

If potatoes are marketed without the field generation (downgraded at marketing) then they are only eligible for inspection at the next grade down e.g. S (FG3) marketed as S will only be eligible for inspection at SE. Further to this, the field generation of this SE crop will be assumed to be at its maximum for the grade. Therefore, the highest grade this crop could be marketed at would be GB grade SE FG6.

Details of grade tolerances are shown in Annex 1.

Approved Stocks – Seed potatoes being planted must meet the requirements of The Plant Health (Official Controls and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2019, The Plant Health (Amendment, etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, The Plant Health (Phytosanitary Conditions) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, and The Aquatic Animal Health and Alien Species in Aquaculture, Animals, and Marketing of Seed, Plant and Propagating Material (Legislative Functions and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 which protects the UK against the introduction of organisms harmful to plants and plant products. Any seed potatoes planted from potatoes imported from outside the UK must have been submitted to SASA for laboratory testing and found clear of quarantine diseases. They must be of Grade E equivalent or higher. Crops planted on a farm where PB crops are being grown must be derived from crops grown to PBTC or PB standard.

8. HIGH GRADE AREA

Scotland operates as a high grade area for seed potato production within the UK therefore PB, S, SE & E are the only grades that can be planted on a seed production unit. All basic

seed potatoes planted in Scotland for seed or ware production must be of these Grade standards.

The legislation requires that potato growers must retain documentary evidence to substantiate the origin of the seed planted and, if requested by SASA, produce an invoice and a label or a Crop Inspection Report. Failure to supply the necessary documentation may result in prosecution and seed potato crops may be destroyed if they pose a plant health risk.

9. GB GRADES A & B

It is not permitted to plant GB grade A or B seed in Scotland for any purpose. Under the classification scheme GB grade A and B is not basic seed and cannot, therefore, be planted in a high grade area.

For the same reason the option of using A as a fall grade is not available. Therefore any crop failing to meet GB grade E tolerances will be downgraded to ware status and cannot be marketed as seed. Likewise, voluntary downgrading of seed to A for commercial purposes is prohibited.

10. VARIETIES AND STOCKS FROM EU COUNTRIES AND THE REST OF THE UK

Since the UK exited the EU on 1st January 2021 it is not permitted to market seed potatoes from the EU in Scotland as required under The Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2015, as amended. With prior agreement with SASA, exceptions can be made to this rule for small quantities of seed potatoes imported for the purposes of breeding or research and for microplants. In these cases those who intend to import such stocks must notify SASA in advance and submit them for testing at SASA laboratories on arrival.

It is a legal requirement for those who intend to bring seed potatoes into Scotland from other UK countries to notify their Local Area Office of the intended shipment prior to the potatoes being moved to Scotland. **These potatoes must be sampled by SG inspectors, tested at SASA laboratories and found clear of any prohibited pests or diseases before planting can take place.** This is over and above the requirements regarding notification of planting of ware crops.

11. CONFIRMATION OF ORIGIN

GB grades PBTC, PB, S, SE and E – When the seed potatoes to be planted have been purchased, or have been classified under another applicant's name, the application for inspection must be accompanied by a label and an invoice or other trade document. The only exception to this requirement is in respect of seed potatoes that have been retained for further multiplication by the holder of the Crop Inspection Report.

The label is also the plant passport for the seed and, under the terms of the Plant Health (Official Controls and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2019, the final recipient is required to retain labels for one year for possible examination by SGARE.

The invoice or trade document must contain the following information:

- Name and address of seller
- Declared net weight
- Variety
- Basic seed potatoes
- Grade
- Size
- Crop identification number
- Particulars of any chemical treatment

A grower cannot enter seed potatoes for inspection if they were grown by the grower in someone else's name in the previous year and have not been officially examined and labelled. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in applications for inspection of growing crops on that agricultural unit being refused.

12. VARIETIES FROM NON-EU COUNTRIES

GB grades PBTC, PB, S, SE & E and Approved Stocks – Seed potatoes produced outside the EU must not be planted in Scotland except following quarantine at the official Potato Quarantine Unit, SASA, and in terms of a licence issued by SASA. Following release from the Quarantine Unit, stocks derived from such material may be entered for Approved Stocks inspection or nuclear stock production.

13. CROPS DESTINED FOR NON-EU MARKETS

If crops are intended for non-EU countries the applicant must inform SPCS Administration of the intended destination(s) when the application for growing crop inspection is made. Several non-EU countries have additional growing crop requirements which must be verified at field inspection in order for a Phytosanitary Certificate to be issued. Failure to inform SPCS of intended destinations may result in additional testing or inability to issue the necessary documentation for export. A list of countries known to have such conditions together with other export information is listed on the Scottish Government potato export web site www.gov.scot/publications/potato-exports-guide/.

If a variety is being multiplied specifically for a non-EU market and is **not on the NL**, this must be clearly stated when the application for growing crop inspection is made. Seed potatoes of such a variety cannot be marketed in the UK. The varietal type will be deemed to be that in the SASA variety collection which will have been derived from either the sample submitted for nuclear stock production or a sample provided by the applicant at the time of introduction of the variety into Scotland.

14. WARE CROPS

GB grades S, SE and E – On any farm where basic (S, SE and E) seed potatoes entered for inspection are grown, all potatoes planted for ware purposes, whether for sale or domestic use, must be grown from a crop that was inspected and classified the previous year as PB, S, SE or E. Applicants must take particular care when renting land through third parties, such as machinery rings, that the above criteria are met. Only Pre-basic and Basic grades may be planted on seed producing farms.

A label and an invoice (as detailed in section 11) must be submitted to substantiate purchased seed to be grown as ware. Failure to comply with this rule will mean that all the seed crops on the farm will be ineligible for inspection.

Any ware crops which pose a plant health risk to seed potato crops may be subject to compulsory destruction (see section 29).

GB grade PB – Only seed potatoes from PB, or S crops **from your own production seed**, may be planted on a unit where PB seed is planted.

15. NOTIFICATION OF ALL POTATOES FOR PLANTING

Each year, growers of potatoes in Scotland are required under The Plant Health (Potatoes) (Scotland) Order 2006 to notify SGARE of all crops that they have planted. Growers entering seed potatoes into the SPCS are required to confirm, on the application form, details of the seed crops that they wish to have inspected and all ware crops on the same production unit. However, if the grower has also planted potato crops on non-seed

production units (i.e. ware or potatoes for farm saved seed) these must also be notified to SGARE no later than 28 days after planting by completing a form PP1 and submitting it to SASA at spcsapp@sasa.gov.scot. Failure to do so may result in crop destruction and/or prosecution. Forms are available from SASA or Area Offices or online at: www.sasa.gov.uk/ware-potatoes-documents

16. ORGANIC CROPS

The tolerances and conditions for organic seed potato crops are the same as for non-organic crops.

They will, however, be listed in the Organic section of the Register of Pre-basic and Basic Seed Potatoes if requested by the applicant on the application form. This request will be accepted as a declaration that they are a member of a recognised organic association e.g. The Scottish Organic Production Association (SOPA).

17. INSPECTIONS

The following checks will be undertaken by the seed potato inspectors:

PCN – records will be checked to ensure the relevant PCN clearance certificate is in place for the land in which each crop is planted.

Identification of Crops – each crop must be identified in the field by a field plan and a marker (e.g. a peg or post) which clearly shows where each crop starts and ends. Attached to each marker there must be the relevant official label from the bought-in seed planted. Where the grower's own seed is replanted on the same agricultural unit, the relevant crop marker must provide information on the variety, grade and producer's number. Labels should be protected from the elements. **Failure to identify separate crops will result in the refusal of inspection.**

Area – the number of drills will be counted and the area of the crop entered will be confirmed as accurate, or amended following discussion with the grower.

Plant Populations – calculations of percentages of faults in the growing crop will be based on a population of 60,000 plants per hectare. Growers who claim to have a higher plant density must contact their Area Office **immediately the crops emerge**. The grower must be able to demonstrate to the inspector in the field that the density is higher. Similarly, the plant population may be reduced should it be demonstrated to be lower. This will be checked by the inspector. No claims will be considered unless submitted prior to the first inspection.

Separations – crop separations will be checked in accordance with the requirements – where crops are drilled in the same direction and side by side, a separation equal to 2 drill widths should be left between the crops. A gap of 3 metres should be left when an end rig is planted at right angles to another crop. These separation requirements will apply to all adjacent ware crops which must be grown from officially inspected or classified Pre-basic or Basic seed potatoes.

Adequate separation between crops is necessary to reduce the risk of disease being spread to adjoining crops and to avoid admixture at lifting. Applicants are advised against planting crops with seed potatoes from more than one source. Serious consideration should be given to entering areas as separate crops for growing crop inspection, to reduce the risk of larger areas being downgraded or rejected. **Subsequent splitting of crops because of disease will not be permitted.**

Ware Crops – a check will be carried out on the health status of all non-seed crops on the unit. If there is a potential problem, the grower will be alerted and advised to take measures to prevent the spread of disease. Crops which pose a plant health risk to other potato crops may be subject to compulsory destruction (see section 29). A check may also be carried out to ensure that crops do not contravene the PCN requirements for ware potatoes.

Potato Dumps – will be inspected for late blight and, if this disease is present, will be subject to a notice under the Plant Health (Potatoes) (Scotland) Order 2006 which will require action to be taken to protect seed potato crops.

Faults – each crop will be checked for any early indications of problems and, where virus infected plants are seen, the grower's attention will be drawn to them and the grower will be advised to remove these sources of infection.

18. INSPECTION PERIOD

Growers will be notified of the start of inspections. The first inspection will usually be towards the beginning of July, depending on crop growth, and may vary between different areas of the country. Second inspections will normally take place two weeks later. Late applications may result in crops being found unsuitable for inspection.

Third inspections will be carried out at SASA's discretion. **However, all PB crops, and any SE or E grade crops in which the level of blackleg observed at the second inspection is greater than 25% of the tolerance for the grade, will be subject to a third inspection if the crop is not burned down within two weeks of the second inspection.** This includes any S grade crops that were downgraded at first or second inspection. Seed potato inspectors will aim to inspect crops at the appropriate time but will not accept any responsibility where, owing to the stage of growth, they are unable to inspect the crop. A Crop Inspection Report cannot be issued in this instance.

New inspection conditions have been introduced for SE and E grade – If at 2nd inspection the crop is more than 1/3 PVA/PVY/PLRV tolerance for the entered grade;

- Haulm destruction is compulsory in 14 days, with no green matter visible after 21 days.
- If haulm destruction not complete crop will be downgraded one grade. Grade E crops will be downgraded to ware.

or

- Grower can take the option for 3rd inspection:

If the crop is not inspectable (eg. too large and tangled) the crop will be subject to a post burndown tuber test which will determine grade. This process does not apply to PB or S grades.

Arrangements should be made for a responsible person to meet the inspectors to point out the crops to be inspected and to be notified of the result of the inspection, as recommended by the inspectors.

19. ONGOING INSPECTION

Although the Crop Inspection Report will normally be based on the findings of the two growing crop inspections, crops will be subject to on-going assessments throughout the growing season. Seed potato inspectors will continue to monitor crops after the second inspection until they are burned down and growers should continue to rogue crops during this period. Where this monitoring identifies a deterioration of crop health, a further inspection of the crop will be required. The issue of the Crop Inspection Report **will be**

based on the findings of this further inspection, or a post-harvest tuber test where this is necessary.

A crop which is downgraded at an inspection cannot be upgraded at any subsequent inspection. Crops downgraded to ware at an inspection will not receive a further inspection.

All crops are also liable to an unannounced supervisor's check and the report recommended by the inspectors at a previous inspection may consequently be amended.

20. APPEALS

A grower may appeal to a supervising inspector against the result of any inspection by contacting their local Area Office within 24 hours of the original inspection. **The crop must not be rogued before a supervisor's check is carried out.** SASA's decision following an appeal will be regarded as final.

21. PRE-BASIC – MINIMUM INSPECTION

For PB FG 1 crops the inspector will look at 100% of plants on each of the inspections. For PB FG 2 50% will be inspected and for FG 3 and 4 the inspector will normally look at a minimum of 25% of plants at each inspection but may examine more than the minimum number of plants if required.

22. RECORDING OF VIRUS DISEASES

Virus diseases will be recorded as one of two categories:

- PVY, PVA and PLRV (potato leafroll virus) will be recorded as one category – "PVY/PVA/PLRV";
- All viruses (including the above) will be recorded as another category – "Total virus".

The tolerances for both virus categories are summarised in Annex 1. There will be no difference in the way that plants with severe and mild mosaic symptoms are counted.

If any of the potatoes from your crops are intended for export to a country that specifies a tolerance for a virus different from those specified in the scheme rules, you must inform SASA in writing prior to inspection. Where needed, leaf samples will be taken from any virus infected plants and tested. Area Office staff will inform the person in whose name the application for inspection was made of the virus identified.

23. FURTHER CONTROL MEASURES

SASA reserves the right to introduce further control measures during the growing season (including laboratory testing) should the need arise after publishing this guidance. The final Inspection Report may be dependent on these measures.

Tuber testing for virus

A tuber test may be necessary to confirm compliance with the statutory tolerances for virus in the direct progeny, i.e. the succeeding crop. The tolerances are 0.5% for PB seed potatoes, 1% for S, 2% for SE and 4% for E. Whilst SASA will endeavour to inform growers of this requirement prior to planting, it may be necessary to introduce such testing during growing season. There will be a charge of £165 per crop tested.

Dickeya controls

There is a nil tolerance for all *Dickeya* species in crops of seed potatoes grown in Scotland. This requirement is enforced by mandatory inspection of all crops planted with seed potatoes (including farm saved seed for ware production) derived from non-Scottish sources with laboratory testing of tissue samples from plants showing blackleg symptoms. This requirement is also supported by a surveillance programme of domestically produced crops to confirm that Scottish derived potatoes remain free from this pathogen. The inspectors will take stem samples from any field where one or more crops in that field have blackleg symptoms. The samples will be lab tested for *Dickeya* spp.

If any crops test positive for *Dickeya* spp they must be disposed of as ware potatoes and any harvesting and grading equipment which comes into contact with these potatoes must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected under the supervision of an inspector. These measures apply to ware crops as well as seed crops.

24. ROGUING

The removal of virus infected plants at the earliest opportunity is an essential element of any effective virus management programme.

GB grades S, SE & E – This should commence as soon as crop growth allows and should continue throughout the growing season. Growers should ensure that their crops are adequately rogued before the date of inspection given by the inspector. **Rogued plants, including tubers, must be physically removed from the field and destroyed.** Where tubers have been left in the ground after roguing, the rogued plants will be recorded under the PVY/PVA/PLRV tolerance. Chemical control of groundkeepers is not acceptable. To prevent admixtures, growers should take care to keep potatoes from different crops separate at planting, lifting, storing and dressing.

GB grade PB – plants should not be removed without the authority of the inspector. Admixtures and off-types may be removed without restriction; for aphid-transmitted viruses, affected plants may only be removed after agreeing appropriate action with the inspector who will make a recommendation for the final inspection result.

There is a nil tolerance for blackleg affected plants in Pre-basic crops; however, in PB FG 3 and 4 crops, the occasional blackleg affected plant may be removed before inspection. Any crops which the grower knows to have contained blackleg should be lifted as early as possible and tubers dried by positive ventilation to minimise the chance of infection and development of soft rots.

25. BURNING DOWN (PRE-BASIC ONLY)

Growers should note that all crops should be burned down no later than 14 days after the second or final inspection. The haulm must be effectively destroyed within that period. The haulm desiccant should kill foliage quickly to minimise the opportunity for spread of viruses or bacteria. Regrowth of the haulm should also be destroyed to prevent infection by aphid-borne viruses. In cases where effective haulm destruction has not been achieved within the 14-day period, a further 7 days may be allowed in consultation with the inspector. Such crops will be subject to an additional field inspection, which will determine the classification grade.

If burning down is carried out before the second inspection, no Crop Inspection Report will be issued.

These burning down measures are intended to improve the overall health of Scottish seed. To achieve maximum benefit, it is important that this is combined with early lifting to reduce the risk of disease build-up on the progeny tubers.

When Potato Virus X (PVX) is confirmed in crops, precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of PVX on machinery or clothing to neighbouring crops and the inspectors should be notified.

26. CHEMICAL TREATMENT BY SPRAYING

In view of the range of chemicals which can be applied to seed potato crops, growers should be aware of the possible consequences if chemicals are used injudiciously. Growers should take care, particularly as regards contamination of spray tanks when applying chemicals to seed potato crops. Chemicals may affect the foliage appearance such that it may be impossible to assess the trueness-to-varietal type or presence of disease in the crop. In such cases, inspectors are entitled to refuse to inspect the crops.

For Health and Safety reasons, all chemical spraying operations must be carried out at least 24 hours before the date of inspection. Growers should also be aware of the effects that spraying may have on staff in their employment e.g. roguers.

27. HYGIENE

Potato Virus X (PVX) can be transmitted between crops by contact, e.g. by a person walking through an infected crop and then subsequently walking through a healthy crop. To reduce the risks of spreading PVX potato inspectors will disinfect protective clothing and equipment between farms, or crops if there is a health problem in a particular crop.

You should ensure that anyone that may enter your crops takes every precaution to avoid the transfer of virus.

28. APHID MONITORING AND CONTROL

The SPCS Aphid Monitoring Programme will not be fully implemented in 2024. However, due to the sharp increase in potato leafroll virus (PLRV) observed in 2023 there will be an increased vigilance for colonising aphids during inspections. Post-harvest tuber tests will be required for crops where control has not been deemed adequate on inspection.

The incidence of crops displaying PLRV, the cause of leafroll symptoms, showed a 3-fold increase in 2023 from the previous season (an increasing trend since 2020). Peach-Potato aphids that transmit PLRV were recorded at lower levels in 2023. However, due to the high level of PLRV inoculum in seed crops last season, the expectation is for PLRV to increase in the 2024 crop. Following milder average temperatures over the 2023-24 winter, Peach-Potato aphid populations are likely to be earlier and slightly more numerous than average during the 2024 growing season, increasing the risk of further PLRV transmission and leafroll incidence.

The levels of mosaic-causing virus species (mainly Potato virus Y, PVY^N species) present in the 2023 seed crops, which provide the inoculum for virus infection in 2024, have also significantly increased from 2022, and remain well above average. As the aphid vectors that transmit PVY^N were less abundant in 2023, mosaics symptoms are expected to continue to decrease in the 2024 crop. At present we are not confident of the accuracy of making long range forecasts of the abundance of the aphid vectors of the viruses that cause mosaic symptoms.

SASA recommends that growers take advice from their agronomists over virus risk and management programmes for this season. We also recommend that growers consult with the guidelines on "*The Six Steps to Effective Virus Management in Certified or Home Saved Seed 2024*" issued by the Scottish Aphid-Borne Virus Working Group. A link to this

will be available via SASA's aphid monitoring webpage www.sasa.gov.uk/wildlife-environment/aphid-monitoring.

We also advise growers to consult the SASA website to keep up to date with aphid activity to inform timing of aphid control in crops. Additional information on local risk and 'hotspots' will be available through the aphid monitoring network co-ordinated by FERA, and growers are advised to visually inspect crops after treatment to ensure that control is effective. You can also sign up to receive a weekly aphid E-mail update by contacting zoology@sasa.gov.scot.

29. COMPULSORY BURNING DOWN

Plant health risk

Article 4 of The Plant Health (Potatoes) (Scotland) Order 2006 provides an explicit power to require that the grower of a potato crop (seed or ware) takes immediate action (within 72 hours of the service of a notice) to ensure the destruction of the haulm of a potato crop which has been determined by official inspection to present a clear plant health risk to other potato crops due to high levels of virus in the crop.

30. CROP INSPECTION REPORTS

GB grades PBTC, PB, S, SE & E – Crop Inspection Reports for those crops that have met all of the conditions of the SPCS, will be issued before the end of September. Crop Inspection Reports must only be used in connection with the sale of seed potatoes from the crops specified. Producers are requested to carefully check all reports **on receipt** and to notify SASA immediately of any inaccuracies. All growers and merchants must maintain records of the disposal of the seed obtained from each inspected crop and must, on request, furnish SASA with full particulars of disposal.

Producers are reminded that they must use the crop number when making application for labels or in any correspondence/communications.

SASA reserves the right to withdraw any Crop Inspection Report if it is found that the conditions of the Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2015 or SPCS rules have not been complied with. In such circumstances, the report will cease to be valid as from the date of notification of withdrawal and must be returned to SASA.

GB grade PBTC – The Crop Inspection Report will confirm the crop identification number, the number of plants in the crop and the Nuclear Stock crop identification number of the stock used to grow the crop. The latter will allow Producers to differentiate between crops of the same variety and number of plants.

Approved Stocks – Applicants will be sent a crop inspection report confirming the crop identification number and the equivalent grade. Where Approved Stocks are grown on a pre-basic unit, they will be inspected to the appropriate tolerances and may be re-planted if they comply with the normal requirements.

When a variety has been added to the GB Variety List, those Approved Stocks that met the requirements of a particular inspection grade will be accepted for further classification at the next lower grade.

Test and Trial – Applicants will receive an Approved Stocks crop inspection report for these applications but where the conditions outlined in section 1 are met the option to market using the orange Test and Trial label will be open to the applicant.

31. BULKING OF CROPS

Crops will not be bulked by SPCS. Each crop entered for inspection will receive its own unique crop identification number and corresponding crop inspection report. When crops are marketed they will be treated separately for labelling.

32. STORAGE OF SEED POTATOES

Tubers from different crops must be stored separately. **Each stock must be clearly identified to show at least the variety, grade, field identity and farm of origin.** Where storage is in one tonne boxes **each box** must carry identification. To reduce the risk of cross-contamination, ware potatoes from land that has not been tested for PCN should be handled and stored separately from classified seed. Failure to observe these conditions will result in the withdrawal of the Crop Inspection Report for all crops where the harvested tubers cannot be identified, or the refusal to issue labels for any lots or part lots where identification has not been maintained. Consequently the potatoes will be ineligible for classification in the following year. Where boxes or other containers are used for storage, they should be thoroughly cleaned by power hosing so as to be free from soil and any tuber residue before being used in order to avoid the risk of contamination with PCN or disease. Potato stores must be clean and tidy.

Pre-basic – All harvested stocks must be clearly identified. In particular, pallet boxes and sprouting trays should be labelled or marked showing the variety, year of multiplication and clone number. As dry dust in stores has been shown to harbour many pathogens that can be spread to tubers in store, it is important that high standards of store hygiene are maintained. If possible, **seed from different generations should be stored separately.** Additionally, Pre-basic stocks **must** be kept separate from seed harvested from crops that are not permitted to be grown on a PB farm (see Section 7). Seed should be stored in clean, disinfected trays and boxes, in well-ventilated stores. Stores should also have been cleaned and washed down between each season. At grading, any rots should be removed before a stock is passed over the grader. Grading equipment should be cleaned regularly using an appropriate disinfectant.

33. MARKETING

GB grades PB, S, SE and E – All consignments of seed tubers being moved from a grower's premises must be submitted for inspection, labelling and sealing prior to marketing (including any stocks destined for marketing to non-EU countries). Classification of a crop occurs when an inspector passes a lot in the final labelled containers. Applications can be made for labelling at the class stated on the inspection report for a crop, or any class below that. **Once an official label has been issued at a grade that is lower than the grade at which the potatoes were inspected, the lot cannot be re-instated to a higher grade for growing crop inspection.** Where seed from an inspected crop is retained by the producer the stock will be eligible for inspection in subsequent seasons at the relevant class.

Bags or other containers in which the seed is to be despatched must bear an official label issued by the local potato labelling office who must be notified of the place and the dates of dressing of all lots of seed potatoes so that arrangements for official examinations may be made.

If a grower is proposing to transport seed in "bulk loads", the prior approval of the Area Office must be obtained. Approval will only be given if the arrangements for dressing, loading, inspection and sealing of the stock concerned are acceptable and written confirmation has been received that delivery in bulk is acceptable to the buyer, who must be the end-user of the seed. However, if the commercial documentation already used by a company confirms the end-user's agreement to receive a load in bulk, it will not be

necessary for an end-user letter to be submitted, provided SASA has received confirmation from the seller, in writing, that such commercial documentation is used in all cases. Any seller who wishes to use his commercial documentation in place of an end-user's letter must apply, in writing, to the Area Office for formal approval before submitting a request for labels. When SASA's written approval is given, all Area Offices will be informed, labels will be issued and no further requirements for either a copy of the documentation or an end-user letter for any further applications for labels for seed lots moving in bulk will be required. Seed potato inspectors will carry out spot checks on applications by sellers who have received this type of approval.

Where stocks are transferred "as grown" or "rough dressed" to a co-operative or central store, full details of such transfers should be notified, in writing, to the local Area Office. Growers who wish to sell complete crops of seed potatoes must request permission from their local Area Office to do so. Failure to comply with the conditions of the Labelling Scheme (full details of which are issued separately) may lead to refusal by SASA to consider future applications for Growing Crop Inspection.

Conditions governing the marketing of seed potatoes are prescribed in the Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2015. The Regulations also provide for control measures to be imposed on consignments that are found on inspection by seed potato inspectors to contain diseases, dirt and/or damage in excess of the tolerances specified in the Regulations. Failure to comply with the terms of a statutory notice issued by an inspector renders a grower liable to prosecution.

Only pre-basic and basic seed potatoes may be produced in Scotland of the following grades:

GB Grades PB, S, SE & E

It is permissible to market varieties not on the GB Variety List to non-EU countries using a pre-basic or basic label provided the destination country accepts the variety and the crop meets the necessary standards (see section 13). If such marketing is intended the applicant should contact SPCS Administration in advance to confirm the details prior to entering the crop for classification.

Varieties undergoing NL testing may be moved but lots must be officially inspected and labelled. These varieties will be issued with an Approved Stocks label.

Varieties that are not on the NL and not undergoing NL testing may be moved but lots must be officially inspected and labelled. These varieties will be issued with an Approved Stocks label.

Disposal outside these conditions must have SASA's prior approval.

Test and Trial

The marketing of seed potatoes for test and trial purposes is allowed in the UK. This decision is intended for the marketing of potatoes to be planted for end use testing (not further multiplication). Orange labels will be issued for this purpose and all consignments must meet the minimum tuber inspection requirements for basic seed potatoes.

GB Grade PBTC – All consignments of tubers to be marketed must meet the requirements of Table I of Schedule 6 of The Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2015. This stipulates a Nil tolerance for all listed diseases, pests, damage and defects with the exception of: -

Dirt or extraneous matter – 1%.

Further information about marketing is contained in the SPCS Marketing Leaflet which is available on the SASA website – www.sasa.gov.uk/spcs-marketing-documents.

34. RECORDS OF SALES

Each grower must maintain records of the crops grown and the marketing of the produce of these crops and must, if requested, provide details to SASA of the disposal of the crops.

35. REGISTER OF PRE-BASIC AND BASIC SEED POTATO CROPS

A Register of those crops that were inspected and for which a Crop Inspection Report has been issued by SASA will be published at the end of September each year. Any crops certified after this date will be included in the Register on the date of certification. PBTC and Approved Stocks Crops are not included in the Register.

The Register is available on the SASA website at www.sasa.gov.uk/potato-register. Previous versions of the Register can be found on the Seed Potato Register archive page at www.sasa.gov.uk/seed-potato-register-archive.

36. PLANT BREEDERS' RIGHTS

Growers are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that they have all necessary consents to the growing of potato varieties that are subject to Plant Breeders' Rights.

37. DECLARATION

When making an application for the inspection of growing crops of seed potatoes within the SPCS the applicant is declaring that they have read the requirements contained in this Leaflet and agrees to comply with them and The Seed Potato Regulations

38. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Handling procedures for information received in relation to the classification of seed potatoes have been designed to take into account legislative developments, particularly the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and the Data Protection Act 2018. Applicants should be aware that it is the Certifying Authority's intention to publish details of all crops in the Register of Pre-basic and Basic Seed Potato Crops.

The Certifying Authority may be required to release information, including personal data and commercial information, if requested under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 or the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The Certifying Authority will not permit any unlawful breach of confidentiality nor permit breach of obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018.

39. SPCS CONTACT DETAILS

Enquiries can be directed to SPCS, contact details are shown below, or to your local Area Office.

e-mail	Telephone
spcs@sasa.gov.scot	07825 935010
	07825 935365

Details of Area Offices are available on the Scottish Government website at www.ruralpayments.org/topics/contact-us/

Enquiries about exports and non-EU country requirements should be directed to your local Area Office or to the Export Manager, tel. 0131 244 8963 or 07824 499332/07920 274483, e-mail: potatoexports@sasa.gov.scot.

Further information about the SPCS, seed potatoes and an electronic version of this memo can be found on the SASA website at www.sasa.gov.uk/seed-ware-potatoes. MySPUDS can be found at: www.sasa.gov.uk/spcs-myspuds.

Seed Potato Classification Scheme Administration
Potato Section
SASA HQ
Roddinglaw Road
EDINBURGH EH12 9FJ

CLASSIFICATION TOLERANCES

Classification Tolerances	Pre-basic Seed Grades		Basic Seed Grades		
	PBTC	PB	S	SE	E
<i>Pre-roguing</i>	0	Only in consultation with Inspector	1.00	1.00	2.00
<i>Deviations from variety and type</i>	0	0.01	0.10	0.10	0.10
<i>PVY/PVA/PLRV</i>	0	0	0.02	0.10	0.40
<i>Total Virus</i>	0	0.10	0.20	0.50	0.80
<i>Blackleg caused by pectobacterium spp.</i>	0	0	0.10	0.50	1.00
<i>Blackleg caused by Dickeya spp.</i>	0	0	0	0	0
<i>PCN</i>	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS

If you have a complaint about the service we provide in relation to the Seed Potato Classification Scheme, you should proceed as follows:-

First get in touch with the person dealing with the crops concerned. You can register a complaint by letter (including email), by telephone or in person. You may request a second opinion inspection by the supervisor covering the crops concerned. It will help us to investigate your request/complaint if you set out the facts as fully as possible. We will acknowledge your complaint by return, investigate it properly, and aim to reply within 2 weeks.

If your complaint relates to the actions of Area Office staff and you want it to be considered initially by a more senior officer, please write to the Principal Agricultural Officer at the relevant Area Office.

If for any reason you remain dissatisfied then please write to Chief Agricultural Officer, The Scottish Government Directorate for Agriculture & Rural Delivery, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD.

Alternatively, **if your complaint is about the handling of your application, fees, test results or the rules covering the SPCS**, please write to the SPCS and Export Manager at SASA, Roddinglaw Road, Edinburgh, EH12 9FJ.

If for any reason you remain dissatisfied then please write to the Head of Potato Section, at SASA, Roddinglaw Road, Edinburgh, EH12 9FJ.

If you have used the complaints procedure set out above and are still not satisfied, you may ask the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman to consider your complaint. Your complaint must usually be submitted to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS, within 12 months after the day on which you first had notice of the matter which you are complaining about. Further information is available at www.spsso.org.uk. The telephone number is 0800 377 7330.

Comments

On the other hand, if you are satisfied with the service we have provided, or wish to highlight some particular performance, we would be happy to hear from you. Should you have suggestions about how we can improve the service we provide, these will also be welcomed.

COST OF INSPECTION OF GROWING CROPS OF POTATOES

FEEES ARE PAYABLE AT THE RATE OF **£29.00** PER 0.50 HECTARE OR PART THEREOF

HECTARES	£	HECTARES	£	HECTARES	£	HECTARES	£
0.10	29.00	10.50	609.00	25.50	1,479.00	40.50	2,349.00
0.20	29.00	11.00	638.00	26.00	1,508.00	41.00	2,378.00
0.30	29.00	11.50	667.00	26.50	1,537.00	41.50	2,407.00
0.40	29.00	12.00	696.00	27.00	1,566.00	42.00	2,436.00
0.50	29.00	12.50	725.00	27.50	1,595.00	42.50	2,465.00
0.60	58.00	13.00	754.00	28.00	1,624.00	43.00	2,494.00
0.70	58.00	13.50	783.00	28.50	1,653.00	43.50	2,523.00
0.80	58.00	14.00	812.00	29.00	1,682.00	44.00	2,552.00
0.90	58.00	14.50	841.00	29.50	1,711.00	44.50	2,581.00
1.00	58.00	15.00	870.00	30.00	1,740.00	45.00	2,610.00
1.50	87.00	15.50	899.00	30.50	1,769.00	45.50	2,639.00
2.00	116.00	16.00	928.00	31.00	1,798.00	46.00	2,668.00
2.50	145.00	16.50	957.00	31.50	1,827.00	46.50	2,697.00
3.00	174.00	17.00	986.00	32.00	1,856.00	47.00	2,726.00
3.50	203.00	17.50	1,015.00	32.50	1,885.00	47.50	2,755.00
4.00	232.00	18.00	1,044.00	33.00	1,914.00	48.00	2,784.00
4.50	261.00	18.50	1,073.00	33.50	1,943.00	48.50	2,813.00
5.00	290.00	19.00	1,102.00	34.00	1,972.00	49.00	2,842.00
		19.50	1,131.00	34.50	2,001.00	49.50	2,871.00
5.50	319.00	20.00	1,160.00	35.00	2,030.00	50.00	2,900.00
6.00	348.00						
6.50	377.00	20.50	1,189.00	35.50	2,059.00		
7.00	406.00	21.00	1,218.00	36.00	2,088.00		
7.50	435.00	21.50	1,247.00	36.50	2,117.00		
8.00	464.00	22.00	1,276.00	37.00	2,146.00		
8.50	493.00	22.50	1,305.00	37.50	2,175.00		
9.00	522.00	23.00	1,334.00	38.00	2,204.00		
9.50	551.00	23.50	1,363.00	38.50	2,233.00		
10.00	580.00	24.00	1,392.00	39.00	2,262.00		
		24.50	1,421.00	39.50	2,291.00		
		25.00	1,450.00	40.00	2,320.00		