

### **Latest updates on the potato market:**

- **Overall crop estimated at 10.3% below 2009**
- **Smallest crop since 1990**
- **NW and MW crops negatively impacted by rain and early frost.**
- **Lower yields expected**
- **2010 crop storability a concern at this point**

### ***NAPMN forecasts a 40.6 million cwt decline in fall potato production.***

That reduces the crop to 352.9 million cwt. Forecast production is 10.3% below the 2009 crop. At that level, it would be the smallest fall potato crop since 1990.

### ***NAPMN's production estimate is based on a 404 cwt per acre yield.***

That is 5 cwt below the September forecast. It falls 25 cwt short of last year's record yield, and is 16 cwt below the 2010 trend yield. The forecast yield is the lowest since 2005.

### ***Potato crops in several key growing areas did not finish as well as had been expected.***

While new problems cropped up in a few growing areas, many of the losses resulted from underestimating the impact of earlier events. Frost did slow bulking in parts of Idaho and the Klamath Basin. Heavy rains in the upper Midwest impacted crops in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and to some extent, in North Dakota. On the other hand, rains in Maine improved late-season bulking in that state.

### ***The forecast production decline will create problems for all sectors of the potato industry.***

Chip companies and fryers already are attempting to jump start the 2011 growing season. However, limited supplies of the appropriate seed, land availability, and infrastructure issues will make it difficult to boost early production to levels that were possible 5-10 years ago.

## **US FALL POTATO CROP FORECAST AT 353 MILLION CWT**

### ***NAPMN has reduced its estimate of the 2010 fall potato crop by 5.9 million cwt.***

At 352.9 million cwt, forecast production is 40.6 million cwt less than the 2009 crop, a 10.3% decline. NAPMN is projecting a 404 cwt per acre yield on a harvested area of 873,100 acres. This year's yield would be the lowest since 2005. It is down from last year's record 429 cwt yield, and falls short of the 2010 trend yield, 420 cwt per acre.

Crops in Maine benefited from September rains, but the outlook deteriorated in several key growing areas, stretching from the PNW to Wisconsin. Supply conditions have deteriorated significantly. In addition, concerns about the storability of the 2010 crop have increased in a number of growing areas.

The table below outlines the changes in our September crop forecast. In the remainder of this article, we review the supply situation in each of the key growing areas, and analyze the impact that this year's crop is likely to have on major industry sectors.