

REGIONAL REP DISPATCH TASMANIA

We are excited to introduce our new magazine segment *Regional Rep Dispatch*.

Each issue we will provide a spotlight on what is happening in the main potato growing regions of Australia, including topics of interest, concerns, and events in different parts of the country. This new segment will be an excellent addition to the PotatoLink magazine and encourage our readers to stay tuned for future updates from our regional representatives.

Our first dispatch comes from Tim Walker in Tasmania.

EVENTS

Earlier in the year, over 40 Tasmanian growers and other industry members took the opportunity to join Professor Andy Robinson (North Dakota State University, US) and the PotatoLink team for a field walk in North Motton, Tasmania.

Topics included herbicide and weed management, and the similarities and differences of the American and Australian potato systems.

The event was a great opportunity for the industry to get out, meet, talk, and tour a fantastic potato crop.



Attendees at the field walk

LATE SEASON ISSUES

Weather: crops looking good, but will the yields be decent?

The weather in Tasmania has resulted in late plantings for much of the industry, which will result in difficulties obtaining yields similar to earlier plantings as sunlight becomes limited later in the year.

Oxalis weed: come clean, go clean.

Oxalis, a weed with a similar appearance to red clover, is becoming a problem on a few properties in Tasmania. If ignored, the problem can become severe and have an impact on yield and harvesting. Potato operations significantly spread the weed by disrupting and moving the bulbs.

Oxalis is easily spread and can quickly get out of control.

To bring some focus to this challenge and make farmers aware of the weed and the importance of quick action, PotatoLink held an event in late March in nearby Gawler. Topics included identification tips, management strategies, and the potential severity of the weed.

In the meantime:

- Consult your agronomist for control options and be aware of biosecurity on farm.
- Do not ignore the problem. Ensure biosecurity protocols are updated - the best way to manage Oxalis is to prevent it.

Early senescence: Leaf tip blackening?

Noticing some unusual leaf tip blackening and early senescence in potatoes, Tim sent away some samples for pathological analysis.

Results currently only show the normal pathology expected for dying potatoes, with no clear indicator of what could be causing the black leaf tips.

This raises a few questions, including whether the issue has environmental causes, and if interventions make sense in a cost/benefit analysis context.



EXPLORE FURTHER

AUSVEG has several biosecurity resources for potato growers

<http://bitly.ws/BURT>

Soilwealth factsheet on oxalis management
<http://bitly.ws/BURW>

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