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**national farmers union**

***In Union Is Strength***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NFU URGES CHANGES TO NEW BRUNSWICK CROP INSURANCE POLICY  
TO HELP SEED POTATO FARMERS DEAL WITH RING ROT OUTBREAK**

The National Farmers Union in New Brunswick is asking the provincial government to help seed potato farmers whose plants have been hit by Bacterial Ring Rot (BRR) infection.

In a letter to New Brunswick Agriculture Minister Ronald Ouellette, NFU District Director Jean-Eudes Chiasson of Rogersville, says a small number of seed potato lots have been identified as being infected with BRR. Under the current crop insurance policy, BRR infected lots must be marketed through packing lines or processing plants, an option that not only helps spread the infection, but also seriously under-estimates the true market value of seed potatoes.

“This policy creates a very serious contamination problem,” stated Chiasson in the letter. He added it also is unfair to seed potato growers because “crop insurance pays a differential reimbursement to the affected grower if the table market is less than the seed market price.”

Chiasson said the NFU is urging the provincial government to direct the NB Crop Insurance Commission to change the existing policy regarding BRR infected seed potato lots. “Owners of these lots must be allowed to dispose of them in a timely fashion and not have to market these infected lots into non-seed potato markets,” he said. “Disposal could be to cattle feed or burial in the soil. This would be a major step forward in the eradication of the pathogen and would eliminate future re-contamination situations.”

The NFU in New Brunswick is an accredited organization under the province’s *Agricultural Producers Registration and Farm Organizations Funding Act*. The NFU has actively represented family farmers in New Brunswick since 1969.

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