



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report - public distribution

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## Mexico

### Fresh Potatoes

### SAGARPA'S New Import Requirements for U.S.

### Potatoes

### 2003

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**Report Highlights:**

On July 14, 2003, SAGARPA's General Directorate of Plant Health (SAGARPA-DGSV) announced through an internal communication that starting on July 30, 2003, and until further notice, inspection offices in Tijuana, Mexicali, Ciudad Juarez, Piedras Negras and Nuevo Laredo must hold all US potato shipments at the border to perform laboratory tests for nematodes, prior to entering Mexico.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Mexico [MX 1]  
[MX]

On July 14, 2003, SAGARPA's General Direction of Plant Health (SAGARPA-DGSV) announced through an internal communication that starting on July 30, 2003, and until further notice, inspection offices in Tijuana, Mexicali, Ciudad Juarez, Nogales, Piedras Negras and Nuevo Laredo must hold all US potato shipments at the border to perform laboratory tests for nematodes, prior to entering Mexico. Discussions with SAGARPA indicate that SAGARPA will hold the potatoes for no more than 48 hours to perform the required tests. If the results are negative, SAGARPA will release the shipment. In response to an objection from the Animal & Plant Inspection Service (APHIS), SAGARPA agreed to let USDA/APHIS/PPQ perform the tests in the US prior to shipment of the potatoes. APHIS scientists will be visiting the two SAGARPA approved labs in Monterrey and Mexico City to discuss testing methods.

Importers are concerned that the testing could take up to five days which will drive up the cost of importing and could encourage smuggling of potatoes. Imported potatoes are an important part of the diet in several border cities, many of which are far from producing areas in Mexico. For example, in Ciudad Juarez, where brown potatoes are preferred for their cooking properties and lower cost, monthly consumption is around 4,000 tons per month. Yet, the hot dry climate makes the area unsuitable for potato production.

The following table provides information on the location and timing of Mexico's potato production:

STATE	GROWING REGION	PLANTING SEASON	HARVEST	PRODUCTION %
SINALOA	NORTH	NOV-MARCH	FEB-AUG	21.99
SONORA	NORTH	NOV-MARCH	FEB-AUG	12.23
BAJA	NORTH	NOV-MARCH	FEB-AUG	0.42
GUANAJUATO	BAJIO	JAN-MARCH & JUL-AUG	APR-MAY & OCT-NOV	8.91
JALISCO	BAJIO	MAY-JUNE	NOV-AUG	5.68
AGUASCALIENTES	CENTER	JAN-MARCH	JUL-AUG	0.27
ZACATECAS	CENTER	JAN-MAY	MAY-AUG	3.11
COAHUILA	NORTH	MARCH-MAY	JUL-OCT	4.06
NUEVO LEON	NORTH	MARCH-MAY	JUL-OCT	0.84
CHIHUAHUA	NORTH	APR-MAY	AUG-NOV	14.2
STATE OF MEXICO	CENTER	MAY-JUNE	OCT-DEC	7.52
PUEBLA	SOUTH	MAY-JUNE	OCT-DEC	2.34
MICHOACAN	BAJIO	JUL-OCT	NOV-MARCH	8.06
TLAXCALA	SOUTH	OCT-DEC	MARCH-MAY	2.28
VERACRUZ	GULF	OCT-DEC	MARCH-MAY	4.8
			SUBTOTAL	96.71
SOURCE: CONPAPA AND SAGARPA			OTHER STATES	3.29
			TOTAL	100