Policy Statement

Number: PS-14-0001

Subject: Quarantine Pest in Seed Potatoes – *Candidatus liberibacter*


Supersedes: Not applicable

Resource Contact: Thomas Wessels

Approved By: Don R. Hover, Director

Date Approved: September 2, 2014

Description: The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is establishing by policy *Candidatus liberibacter* to be a quarantine pest in seed potatoes. WAC 16-324-398 establishes tolerances for seed potato field inspections including a zero tolerance for potato spindle tuber viroid and other quarantine pests. WAC 16-324-361 defines a quarantine pest as “a pest of potential economic importance and not yet present in the state, or present but not widely distributed and being officially controlled.” *Candidatus liberibacter*, the causal agent of zebra chip disease, is a pest of economic importance because potatoes infected with zebra chip are unsuitable for processing. Zebra chip is occasionally detected in Washington State but is not widely distributed. Therefore, WSDA considers *Candidatus liberibacter* to be a quarantine pest and will record its presence during seed potato inspections and withhold certification on infected lots until infected plants are rogued or discarded. The policy does not amend or replace applicable laws and rules and in the event of a conflict or inconsistency the laws and rules supersede this policy.