

## Idaho Potato Conference's Spanish session highlights culinary uses of potato varieties

### AT A GLANCE

University of Idaho Extension educators offered a potato taste test with culturally relevant dishes to educate Spanish-speaking audience during the 2023 Idaho Potato Conference.

### The Situation

The Idaho Potato Conference intends to provide research-based workshops containing content from a basic foundational level to advanced topics. These sessions are structured to educate those who work in Idaho's potato industry. While most workshops are offered in English, there are many attendees at the conference who may be monolingual-Spanish speakers. The conference has been assembling since 1968, and for the past 25 years, workshops taught in Spanish have been available to Spanish-speaking participants to make this conference more accessible for all that work in Idaho's potato industry.

### Our Response

As the 2023 Idaho Potato Conference offered a variety of workshops and seminars for Spanish-speaking participants, one session "El Sabor de las diferentes variedades de papas (The Taste of Different Varieties of Potatoes)," emphasized the importance of understanding the differences of potato varieties and their impact in different side dishes or entrees. To create a presentation that was relevant to the audience, UI Extension educators provided content with examples of culturally relevant dishes while discussing the



Four different potato varieties sampled during the panel.

differences that potato varieties can have on the outcome of an intended potato dish.

To highlight the points discussed during the presentation, a potato taste test activity was incorporated into the one-hour session. By allowing participants an opportunity to taste test four Idaho potatoes, presenters hoped to increase participant knowledge about the unique qualities of potatoes and their culinary uses.

During the taste test, participants were given four different varieties of plain baked potatoes: Russet Burbank, Teton Russet, Cerata Red and Huckleberry Gold, which were all baked in the oven. The four different varieties are commonly grown in the eastern region of Idaho and are common varieties to the audience present in the session. To demonstrate the

importance of different potato varieties and their qualities, participants were encouraged to consider flavor, texture and appearance as they sampled each of the four varieties, reinforcing the different culinary uses of potato varieties.

After the presenters discussed different potato varieties and led participants through the taste test, familiar potato-based dishes common in Latin America were highlighted. By using culturally relevant dishes, presenters hoped that participants would better understand the differences in potatoes and their unique uses in recipes.

## Program Outcomes

Of the 90 participants that attended this session, 73 completed the post-workshop evaluation. When asked, “Esta presentación cumplió tus expectativas? (Did this presentation meet your expectations?)”

- 100% of respondents stated “Sí (Yes)”

When asked, “Después de su participación en esta actividad, aumentó su conocimiento de las variedades de papas en relación de cocina? (Following your participation in this activity, did you increase your knowledge of potato varieties in relation to cooking?)”

- 96% stated “Sí (Yes)”

This trend was seen even with long-term employees who had seen more than 10 years working in the industry (See Table 1). This suggests there are future

opportunities to provide Spanish-speaking audiences with educational cooking presentations.

Table 1. Participants self-reporting to the question “How long have you worked in the potato industry?”

Spanish	English Translation	Responses	Response Rate
Menos de un año	Less than one year	1	1%
1-2 años	1-2 years	5	7%
3-4 años	3-4 years	1	1%
5-6 años	5-6 years	7	10%
7-8 años	7-8 years	2	3%
9-10 años	9-10 years	3	4%
10+ años	10+ years	54	74%

## The Future

Following the engagement of participants in this lesson and taste-test activity, this team intends to explore additional opportunities to educate monolingual-Spanish speakers during the Idaho Potato Conference. Future workshops can include hands-on activities, sampling or demo activities.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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