



PATRICK TESTIN

STATE SENATOR

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Senate passes Testin's bipartisan seed potato legislation

MADISON, Wis. – Sen. Patrick Testin (R-Stevens Point) released the following statement after the Wisconsin Senate passed his bipartisan legislation that will help ensure the state remains a national leader in the production of potatoes:

“With last year’s total acreage valued at \$320 million, potatoes are one of the most lucrative cash crops we grow here in our state. In fact, Wisconsin is the third largest potato producer in the country and a top 5 state in generating seed potatoes.

“Part of the reason why Wisconsin’s potato industry has remained so strong over the decades is the use of clean, pathogen-free seed potatoes. These seeds are certified by the Wisconsin Seed Potato Certification Program to make certain that our yearly potato crop stays among the best of the best.

“But, just like in any industry, there are always a few bad actors out there who do not follow the rules. Such was the case recently when a couple of residents planted seed potatoes in violation of state statutes and endangered the viability of the entire crop across Wisconsin. However, under our state’s existing framework, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) did not have the teeth to successfully enforce our seed potato laws.

“Instead of implementing new regulations on potato farmers, Senate Bill 164 takes a practical and proactive approach by increasing penalties and providing DATCP with clear enforcement mechanisms to investigate and contain potential threats to certified seed potato crops. Ensuring their health, traceability and integrity are vital to maintaining both the quality and reputation of Wisconsin-grown potatoes.”

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