



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MAINE**  
Cooperative Extension

*Potato Program*

59 Houlton Road, Presque Isle, ME 04769, (207) 554-4373; Fax (207) 554-4373

Best Management Practices for  
Buying Seed for the 2017 Planting Season

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Potato seed tubers harboring *Dickeya dianthicola* and *Pectobacterium wasabiae* are the only confirmed source of these pathogens. At this point, there is no evidence that either of the two pathogens overwinter in the soil. The generally accepted length of survival time in the soil for these pathogens is 1 week to 6 months, climate dependent. Longer survival is possible on plant matter in the soil. With that, the source of the inoculum, and hence the source of the disease, is seed. Any Best Management Practices efforts on *Dickeya dianthicola* or *Pectobacterium wasabiae* must start with the seed.

Select seed from farms where *Dickeya dianthicola* or *Pectobacterium wasabiae* have not been detected and seed marketed in previous years has not been associated with *Dickeya dianthicola* or *Pectobacterium wasabiae*.

Check North American Certified Seed Potato Health Certificates before purchasing seed and select seed that had not been increased on a farm associated with *Dickeya dianthicola* or *Pectobacterium wasabiae*.

Select seed with zero blackleg levels reported on the North American Certified Seed Potato Health Certificate.

[www.umaine.edu/umext/potatoprogram](http://www.umaine.edu/umext/potatoprogram) [www.umext.maine.edu](http://www.umext.maine.edu)

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Select seed that has been PCR tested by an independent laboratory and confirmed to be free of *Dickeya dianthicola* and *Pectobacterium wasabiae*.

Select seed from farms where a zero tolerance approach to *Dickeya dianthicola* and *Pectobacterium wasabiae* is being implemented.

Seed lots with field readings of blackleg present should have reports that suspect plant samples were taken for testing and found to be *Dickeya dianthicola* and *Pectobacterium wasabiae* free.

Avoid seed from fields where symptoms of *Dickeya dianthicola* or *Pectobacterium wasabiae* were observed, even if affected plants were rogued out.

Where possible, avoid irrigated seed crops.

Where possible, avoid planting whole-seed lots that were stripped from multiple lots.