

Board Still Hopeful For A Successful Potato Days

By: Theresa Olson
It's been quite a year! Potato Days Board hopes that you have been healthy and doing well during this unprecedented time we are in! As I write this, we are still waiting on the Minnesota Governor to lift the bans that have been placed on outdoor Festivals such as Potato Days! Our hope is that he will lift



2019 Miss Tator Tot Olivia Schmitz has held the title longer than any other Miss Tator Tot due to last year's festival being canceled. She will be on hand for the 2021 festival to crown the newest royalty.



Mashed Potato Wrestling is always a popular event held during Potato Days. Whether you are coming to participate or just watch the excitement, you won't be disappointed.

those bans in enough time that we can still organize and hold this wonderful festival.
That is our goal at this time and working on this behind the scenes so that we do as much as possible to be ready to go.
This year, 2021, is our 30th Anniversary so we are really hoping all will work out! If we are able to hold the festival we are excited to bring back the tried and true favorites! Of course, events may change due to timeline but we are looking forward to seeing you enjoying the Food Court with all our favorite potato foods!
Looking for that special gift or something for the home? The Street

Fair will be a fun time to walk the streets and do some shopping all while being outdoors.
Looking to show off that classic or new car you have or have been working on? The Car Show in McGrath Park on Saturday is always a huge hit and especially now you can get back out and check out some new rides.
Of course, we'll be working on bringing back the popular potato events such as Potato Peeling Contest, Miss Tator Tot, Potato Picking Contest and so much more! Looking to wrestle in mashed potatoes? Get training!
Need to work off all those great potato foods? Start working towards

a 5k/10k. You can run the streets of Barnesville getting that fresh air and seeing our beautiful community.
Potato Festival souvenirs would be available both days. Each year a new logo is designed and used for t-shirts and sweatshirts. There are also aprons and the commemorative button, which is a real collector's item. We have a cookbook and many other potato kitchen items you won't want to go home without.
There are also many other souvenirs to check out at the Potato Days Souvenir Booth located inside our office right at the four-way stop.
The festival doesn't just happen. If it weren't for the organization of the nine-member Board of

Directors and hundreds of hours from volunteers, there wouldn't be a Potato Days Festival. It is successful because of corporate sponsors, businesses, churches, civic organizations and the volunteers all working together with the common goal being to make sure visitors have a s'mashing good time during the two day festival.
Watch Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/potatodaysfestival> for up-to-date festival information.
Whether spuds are part of the activity or not, combine all the food and events and you've cooked up a "spud"tacular Friday and Saturday while attending the Potato Days Festival in Barnesville, MN on

August 27 and 28, 2021.
If you would like more information please visit us at www.potatodays.com or call us on the "spud" line at 1-800-525-4901.
We hope to see you at Potato Days!



A good place to take a rest from all of the Potato Days Festival activities is right downtown in the food cart in front of the main stage downtown.

The Face Of Farming Is Constantly Changing



Corn has been king around here for the past few decades. Northern varieties of seed have given growers the ability to expect 200-bushel to the acre yields from good, well fertilized fields.



Small grains have been replaced by row crops as the preferred crop of many farmers. Soybeans, which can be planted relatively late and harvested usually in September, have proved popular with many farmers.

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has disappeared in the past few years is the Farmers Coop Elevator of Hawley. The assets of that hundred-year-old coop have been auctioned off and sold to three different entities.
The Farmers Coop Elevator of Pelican Rapids continues to service patrons and customers. However, one of the services of that coop that was the backbone of the business for decades was shut down with the closure of the feed operation. The feed mill was shut down in this past year and now longer grinds feed for

animals and birds.
Demolition of the Pelican Rapids Mill began in January of this year and the walls came tumbling down in a cloud of dust in February. However, bagged feeds are still available for sale. J&S Mills of Barnesville has picked up some of the slack in the ground feed market.
Locally the C-W Coop continues to operate with offices in Comstock and Wolverton. Under the leadership of Curt Bjertness, C-W Coop is a full service ag business that continues the legacy of the Comstock Farmers Elevator and the Wolverton Farmers

Coop Elevator that merged into C-W Coop about 20 years ago.
Another hundred-year-old coop that has local connections but is no longer with us is the Ashby Farmers Coop Elevator of Ashby, Minnesota. That coop was managed by Barnesville native Jerry Hennessey for decades. The ship hit the sand in that operation when notes were called last winter and it was found that well over a million dollars had been embezzled by Hennessey. The money had been spent on a lavish life style and hunting trips to foreign exotic destinations.
During his tenure as general manager, Hennessey was never required by the elevator board of directors to submit the business to a formal and complete audit of any kind. Hennessey now makes his home in a federal prison in the warm climate of a southern state.
As farmers look forward to planting their crops this spring there are more than a few rays of sunshine. The most promising of recent developments have been the prices. For the past few months they seem to have bottomed out and have actually shown some significant increases in both prices being offered right now

at receiving stations and also on contracts for future deliveries.
As we head into the spring planting season for 2021 there is some encouraging news for farmers. For the past six months prices have been on a determined upward swing. Corn, that for several years has struggled to get much past the \$3 per bushel level, has shown some real strength.
A bushel of corn at the beginning of March 2021 would return \$5.30 per bushel to the farmer. That price is quite steady through next fall when new crop corn will be hitting the market. That new crop corn is being contracted now for about a dollar a bushel less than today's spot price.
If you still have some soybeans in the bin you could make some money selling them today. The market at the beginning of March was commanding a very respectable \$13.35 per bushel. That's \$2 to \$3 higher than the market has been paying over the past several years. There may even be a leftover Trump subsidy program to sweeten the soybean deal. The place to check on that would be the ASCS office.

Beans drop off a couple of bucks per bushel from today's market price on the futures market. If you wanted to contract new crop soybeans out of the field for this coming fall, you're going to get a couple bucks less per bushel than today's price.
Wheat, the unwanted step child in the grain market has been dragged up right with the corn and soybean markets. For a very long time wheat has languished below the \$5 per bushel level. Right now wheat is commanding \$6 per bushel out about as far as the markets extend. You

can sell it today for \$6 per bushel or you can contract it for delivery at harvest for \$6 per bushel. Or you can harvest it in August, bin it and roll the dice on the markets.
All things considered, the markets look a lot more rosy now than they did a year or two ago as we move towards spring planting
The only thing we know for certain as we get close to spring planting season is that it will be different than last year and every year before that.

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