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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
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MERCHANTABLE POTATO STOCKS LARGE ON MARCH 1 DESPITE CONTINUED HEAVY MARKETINGS IN FEBRUARY 1/

March 1 stocks of merchantable potatoes held by growers and local dealers in or near the areas where produced were 3 percent below the record-large March 1 holdings a year ago, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. Combined grower and dealer stocks on March 1, 1951 are estimated at 87,640,000 bushels, compared with 90,580,000 bushels on hand a year earlier. Potatoes held for use as food, seed or livestock feed on farms where grown and those purchased by the Government under the price support program but resold to the grower are not included in these estimates of merchantable stocks.

Movement of potatoes from storage continued heavy during February. Government purchases were stepped up and processors in Maine and Idaho continued to utilize large quantities of potatoes. Movement from some areas has been delayed by a shortage of cars.

Compared with a year earlier, March 1 stocks are somewhat smaller in the East, but higher in the central part of the country and in the West. The smaller stocks in the East reflect reduced holdings in Maine where Government purchases continue at a rapid rate. In North Dakota and Minnesota, stocks were smaller than March 1, 1950 holdings, but increased supplies in Wisconsin and South Dakota a little more than offset this reduction. Except in Wyoming and Nevada, holdings in each of the Western States exceed March 1, 1950 stocks. Record-high March 1 stocks are estimated for Idaho. Storage losses in Montana and Wyoming have been very large.

For the 37 late and intermediate potato States, disappearance (including Government purchases) during January and February is estimated at 73,010,000 bushels, compared with a disappearance of 60,010,000 bushels during the first two months of 1950. Government purchases accounted for about 24.5 million bushels during the past two months, compared with slightly over 14 million bushels during January and February of 1950. Rail and boat movement during January and February of 1951 was 22.8 million bushels, compared with 27.2 million bushels in the first two months of last year. A reduction in the quantity of Government purchased potatoes shipped by rail accounted for some of the sharp drop in carlot shipments.

1/ This special report of merchantable potato stocks is made possible under funds provided by the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.

POTATOES (IRISH): MERCHANTABLE STOCKS HELD BY GROWERS AND LOCAL DEALERS JANUARY 1, FEBRUARY 1, AND MARCH 1 IN THE 37 LATE AND INTERMEDIATE STATES, 1949, 1950 AND 1951

GROUP AND STATE	January 1			February 1			March 1		
	1949 Crop of 1948	1950 Crop of 1949	1951 Crop of 1950	1949 Crop of 1948	1950 Crop of 1949	1951 Crop of 1950	1949 Crop of 1948	1950 Crop of 1949	1951 Crop of 1950
	Thousand bushels								
Maine	41,440	50,020	42,260	35,210	43,940	34,930	27,390	36,490	25,500
New York	9,000	11,700	9,680	6,270	8,640	6,600	3,200	5,530	5,350
Pennsylvania	7,060	8,000	9,120	4,390	5,400	6,850	1,880	3,170	3,700
Michigan	6,470	7,400	7,820	5,480	6,400	6,620	3,800	5,000	5,000
Wisconsin	2,700	3,160	4,600	1,890	2,410	3,800	1,180	1,650	2,600
Minnesota	7,790	9,200	9,690	6,100	8,150	8,060	3,960	5,900	5,600
North Dakota	8,900	11,390	10,710	7,080	10,410	8,500	4,600	7,290	6,400
South Dakota	980	540	1,100	810	480	970	380	270	580
Nebraska	4,240	4,200	5,830	3,360	2,950	4,230	2,050	1,720	2,650
Montana	1,340	1,220	1,430	1,180	1,070	1,250	870	790	950
Idaho	20,720	16,600	25,820	15,600	13,260	19,800	11,720	9,980	14,100
Wyoming	1,090	1,040	1,030	920	800	680	520	500	400
Colorado	6,660	7,370	7,980	4,820	5,470	6,000	2,800	4,000	4,400
Utah	1,190	1,420	1,670	1,030	1,170	1,370	610	750	900
Nevada	180	250	260	150	220	200	90	150	140
Washington	2,250	1,780	3,310	1,550	1,380	2,860	800	840	1,700
Oregon	3,940	4,600	5,200	3,050	3,750	3,900	1,720	2,800	3,000
California (Late)	2,860	3,370	4,720	1,960	2,200	3,250	940	1,050	1,660
TOTAL 18 SURPLUS LATE	128,810	143,260	152,230	100,850	118,100	119,870	68,510	87,880	84,630
TOTAL 11 OTHER LATE	6,270	6,610	7,520	4,170	4,800	5,370	1,950	2,500	2,800
TOTAL 8 INTERMEDIATE	800	720	900	400	430	500	160	200	210
TOTAL 37 LATE AND INTERMEDIATE STATES	135,880	150,590	160,650	105,420	123,330	125,740	70,620	90,580	87,640