

Marketing the Four Corners Potato

- A. Challenges
- B. Advantages
- C. Productivity
- D. Publicity and public interest have been good
- E. High Nutritional benefit
- F. Refrigerated storage and quality control
- G. Served to enthusiastic crowds
- H. Organizational issues



- Co-op for distribution, pricing, storage, quality control?
- Legal protections – Tribal licensing of “appellations”?



Challenges

- ▶ Harvest before hard frost
- ▶ Seasonal or year-round? Steady supply needed
- ▶ Refrigeration to make available year-round
- ▶ Humidity during storage – not high, not too low
- ▶ Minimize damage and exposure to light (keep bitterness low)
- ▶ Quality control – test for bitterness
- ▶ Price per pound high

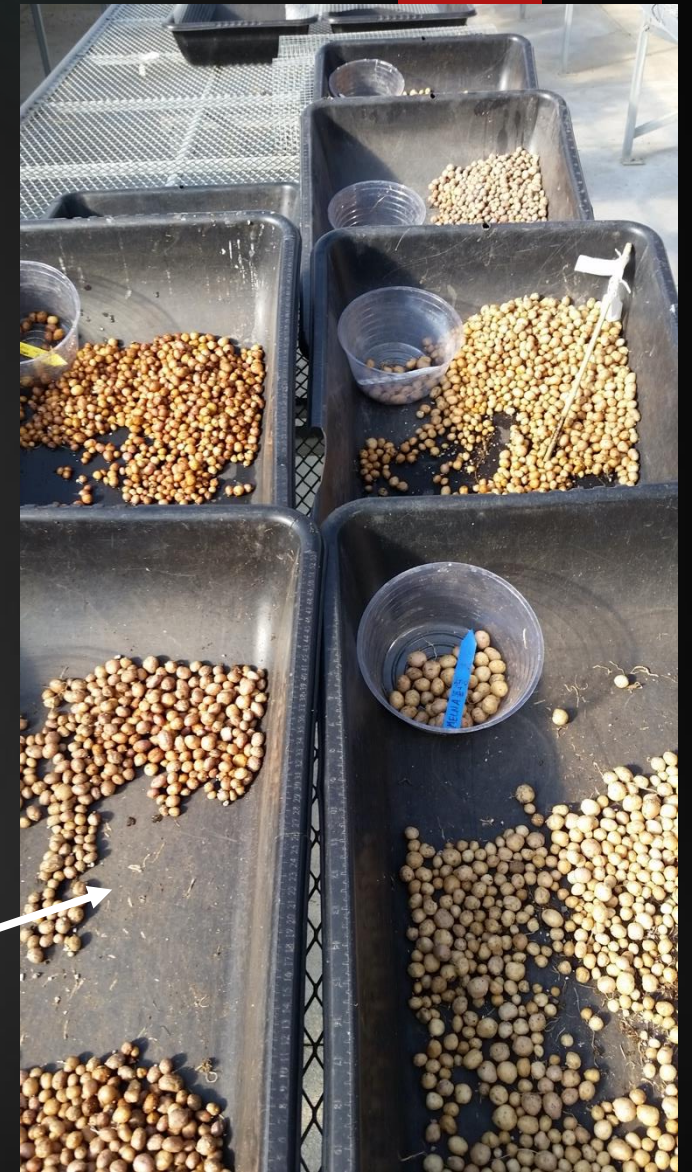


BUT, advantages as well

- ▶ Productive – one tuber can make 400 tubers in 4 months
- ▶ Publicity – world-wide interest but especially in Four Corners
- ▶ High nutritional value – exceeds white potato
- ▶ Stores well with refrigeration
- ▶ Served to hundreds already to rave reviews
- ▶ Tasty



PRODUCTIVE !



EACH TRAY CAME FROM 1 TUBER IN 4 MONTHS

Publicity and public interest – Exceptional!

- ▶ New food produces global press inquires and coverage
 - ▶ National Geographic Italia July 2019 - Italy
 - ▶ Independent July 2017- United Kingdom
 - ▶ Potato Grower October 2018 - USA
 - ▶ Salt Lake Tribune July 2017 and October 2018 - USA
 - ▶ Devour March 2019 - USA
 - ▶ Atlas Obscura Mar 2020 - USA
- ▶ Nutritional benefits are a major selling point

High nutritional value

– compared to organic red potatoes



Emphasize the positive!

3 times the protein

2 times the dietary fiber

2 times the minerals and B1

Half the sodium

But remember – keep the bitterness low

	positive attributes		negative attributes	
food	protein	3X	calories	2.4X
	dietary fiber	1.6X	sugars	2X
minerals	calcium	2X		
	phosphorus	2.5X		
	magnesium	2X		
	manganese	2.7X		
	zinc	5X		
	iron	2X		
	sodium	<0.5X		
vitamins	vitamin B1	2X	niacin	0.5X
			folate	0.3X

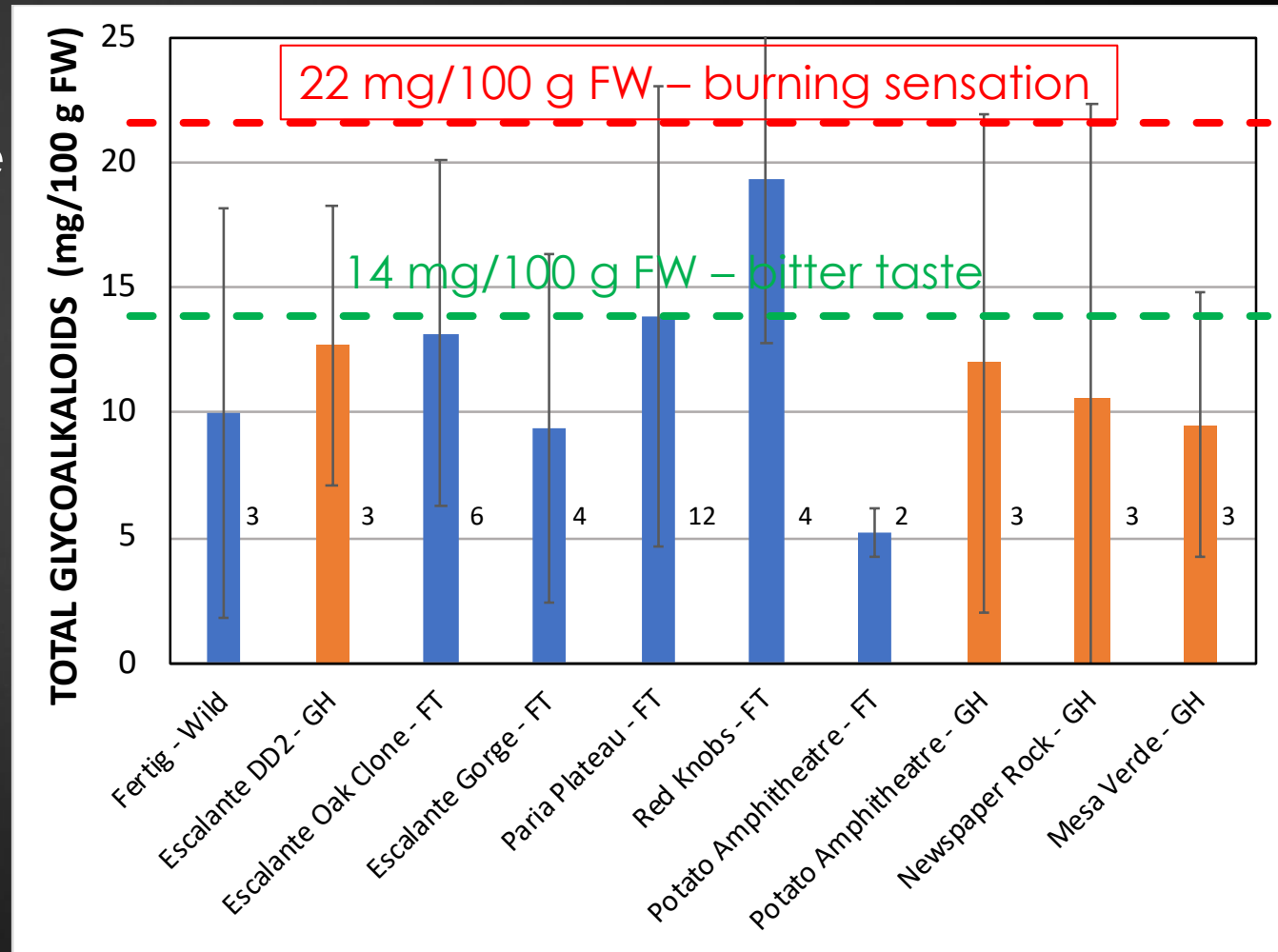
Stores well with refrigeration

- tubers stored at 38 F served 1 year after harvest and tasted great
- refrigeration keeps them from sprouting
- refrigeration keeps bitterness low
- **caution:** humidity levels need to be kept low to prevent mold

Quality control may be necessary

- Check crop for total glycoalkaloid levels to ensure they are low (below 14 mg/100 g FW)
- Simple and cheap lab procedure

Levels vary with source, growing conditions and harvest



EVENT – Utah Diné Bikéyah's Traditional Foods Dinners

October 2018 and 2019 (300 people each)



Chef Karlos Baca



Four Corners Potato w/ Pinion Crème on River Trout



Four Corners Potato w/ Bison Steak



President Nez

EVENT - Friends of Cedar Mesa March 2019

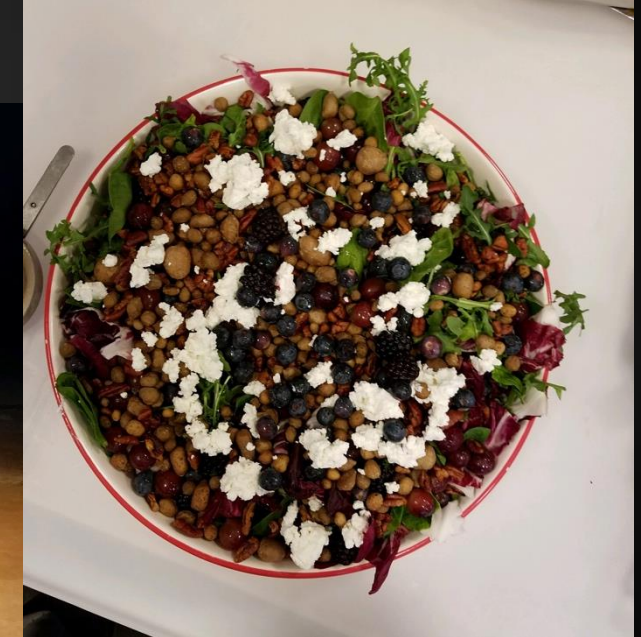
(350 people)



Twin Rocks Café,
Bluff UT

Chef Frances Van der Stappen

Four Corners Potato Salad



Primary Market - Eager Restaurants in the Four Corners Region



MONTEZUMA CREEK RESTAURANT



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POTATO CO-OP could help

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Organizational Issues

- ▶ A Four Corners Potato Cooperative?
 - Storage and refrigeration facilities
 - Quality control
 - Ensure fair pricing
 - Marketing and distribution
 - Legal protections – Tribal licensing of “appellations”?
 - “Bears Ears” “Mesa Verde Blue” “Escalante Gold”



Thank you

Our Funding Sponsors:



**NATURAL HISTORY
MUSEUM OF UTAH**

Rio Tinto Center | University of Utah



Our Collaborators:

USDA Potato Genebank, Madison

Alfonso del Rio

John Bamberg

David Kinder, Northern Ohio U

NutriData, Laguna Beach, CA

Utah Diné Bikéyah

Cynthia Wilson

Gavin Noyes

Woody Lee



Utah Department of Ag and Food

Hells Backbone Grill, Boulder

Twin Rocks Café, Bluff

North Creek Grill, Escalante

Fourth West Pub, Escalante

Our Farmers:

(so far)

Frances Sheppard

Lucretia Holiday

Britt Tallis

Bill Edwards

Elouise Wilson

Jasmine Felipe

Dale Toya

Alastair Bitsoi

