

**NATIONAL  
POTATO  
COUNCIL**

# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Senate Action Sends USDA Clear Message to Place No Limits on Potatoes in Schools**

**Washington, D.C. (October 18, 2011)**—The following statement is from John Keeling, Executive Vice President and CEO, National Potato Council (NPC), on the U.S. Senate’s unanimous consent of a bipartisan amendment offered by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Mark Udall (D-CO) that prohibits the use of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds to implement rules that would set maximum serving limits on vegetables in school meal programs:

“Since publishing its proposed school meal changes in January, USDA has heard from tens of thousands of school districts, parents and taxpayers who are concerned about limiting healthy vegetable options for students, and the \$6.8 billion price tag of the regulation.

“The National Potato Council was pleased to support Senators Collins and Udall, who led a broad bipartisan effort to encourage USDA to revisit its proposal and remove vegetable serving limits from its school meal programs. Senators Collins and Udall provided vital leadership in calling attention to the nutritional and economic value of potatoes and other vegetables, as well as the positive role that potatoes play in the delivery of nutrients of concern to children.

“With this afternoon’s Senate action, we trust USDA will heed the significant concerns raised by schools, citizens and elected representatives alike, and maintain the flexibility local schools need to deliver healthy meal options to school children.”

The amendment as part of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill is expected to be conferenced with the House Agriculture Appropriations bill at a future date.

On January 13, 2011, USDA issued proposed federal regulations that would limit total servings of certain vegetables (potatoes, corn, green peas and lima beans) in the National School Lunch Program to one-half cup, up to two times per week. School districts would be prohibited from serving these vegetables altogether in the School Breakfast Program. USDA has indicated that final rules will be issued later this year.

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*The National Potato Council is the advocate for the economic well-being of U.S. potato growers on federal legislative, regulatory, environmental, and trade issues. Potato growers, along with the U.S. potato industry as whole, directly benefit from involvement in the National Potato Council. NPC supports the U.S. potato industry by monitoring issues affecting the strength and viability of the potato industry, influencing regulators and legislators on issues crucial to the industry's long term success, ensuring fair market access for potatoes and potato products, and bringing the unique issues and interests of diverse growing regions in the U.S. together on a national level. The National Potato Council is a voluntary organization supported by quota assessments from state organizations, allied industry memberships and sponsorships, and directly by potato growers through membership dues.*