



**NATIONAL POTATO COUNCIL**

50 F Street, NW, Suite 900

Washington, DC 20001

(202) 682-9456 phone

[www.nationalpotatocouncil.org](http://www.nationalpotatocouncil.org)

Edward Messina  
Director, EPA Office of Pesticide Programs  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

October 2, 2023

**Re: Pesticide Product Registration; Receipt of Application from GreenLight Biosciences to Register Ledprona as a New Active Ingredient (94614-R; 94614-E) [Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0271-0003]**

Director Messina:

On behalf of America's potato growers and industry, the National Potato Council is in support of the FIFRA registration of Calantha. If cleared to enter the market, Calantha would be an effective tool for potato producers across the United States struggling to protect their crops from the damaging Colorado potato beetle.

NPC grower members are responsible for the production of more than 95 percent of the potatoes grown in the United States. The economic contribution to the U.S. of that production is more than \$10.8 billion dollars at farm gate. Further processing, distribution, domestic and international sales and related activities increase that [economic contribution](#) for the U.S. economy to \$100.9 billion annually, supporting over 714,000 domestic jobs.

The Colorado potato beetle accounts for more than \$500 million worldwide in annual crop losses. Managing this destructive pest presents a unique challenge: it is quick to develop resistance to mitigation efforts and many existing options have lost their efficacy. As such, new tools, like Calantha, are needed.

If approved by EPA, Calantha would be the first-ever RNA-based foliar crop protectant to be made available to U.S. growers and would provide a much-needed resistance management tool for potato growers. This new and innovative pest control technology will allow growers for the first time to treat for Colorado potato beetle in a highly selective way that respects beneficial species and the health of farm workers. It also respects the environment as RNA degrades in soil and water within three days.

We urge EPA to approve and finalize the FIFRA registration of Calantha and appreciate the hard work by your team to review this novel and groundbreaking crop protectant.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Wenkel  
Chief Operating Officer  
National Potato Council