During a Drought Year

Potato

Wisconsin

Drought Concerns
Management Decisions
Outcome Observed

Aquifers in this region recharge quickly with adequate winter snow. Because it recharges quickly, short droughts are not too concerning to producers. However, when aquifers do not replenish, it shows up in surface water supplies.

DECEMBER

- Inspect wells & irrigation nozzles.
- Plant potato seeds. Weed control.

JANUARY

- Wind erosion is a concern if cover crops did not overwinter.

FEBRUARY

- Water stress to crops if wet & dry increase risk of early blight.

MARCH

- Pest and disease damage.

APRIL

- High daily ET rates may exceed capacity of irrigation system. Dry heat increases risk of leaf blight if crop moisture at 65% or less. Growers should plan irrigation accordingly.

MAY

- Dry conditions may delay planting due to soil moisture deficit. 
- Irrigate to keep seeds hydrated. Begin fertilizing & pest control.

JUNE

- Dry conditions increase leaf blight. May stunt plants & increase risk of seedling mortality.

JULY

- Inspect pivot for tuber bulking. 
- Irrigate to keep soil moisture above 65%.

AUGUST

- Pest & disease increase. Take preventative measures.

SEPTEMBER

- Terminate vine growth. Harvest crop.

OCTOBER

- Least moisture demand by crop. 
- Plant cover crops.

NOVEMBER

- Inspect crops for frost. 
- Plant for cover crop establishment & survival into the winter.

DECEMBER

- Sprout development

Sprout development

- Winter killed fields.

Vegetative growth

- Moisture is necessary for cover crop establishment & survival into the winter.

Tuber bulking

- Tubers developing for harvest.

Maturation

- Tubers developing for harvest.

Crop Phenology

Management Decisions

Outcome Observed

Drought Concerns

Wisconsin Irrigated Potato Production Decisions During a Drought Year

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