



**Idaho Farm Bureau Federation**

2/20/2026

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2084 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson,

I am writing on behalf of the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation to add our voice to those who are strongly supporting the University of Idaho's 2027 project funding request, which seeks \$5,000,000 from the USDA's Buildings and Facilities account to build a potato storage facility and new greenhouses at its Aberdeen Research and Extension Center.

Updates to the current infrastructure would return facilities at Aberdeen back to the forefront of potato variety research – an area that Idaho has led throughout the Pacific Northwest for the past 60 years.

Progress in all these key areas can only benefit Idaho's agricultural sector, a major driver of our state's overall economy. As you no doubt know, agriculture is responsible for one in every eight Idaho jobs and accounts for over \$30 billion in annual sales. Idaho farmers produce about a third of the nation's total potato crop, with cash receipts of over \$1.1bn.

You have been a strong advocate for Idaho agriculture and the state's potato industry, and I hope that you will support this latest funding request from the University of Idaho. We are pleased to support this project because we know it will provide innovative, needed leadership in addressing ongoing breeding needs and practices, benefiting our members and the potato industry.

Thank you for your service to our great state and for supporting this funding request from the University of Idaho.

Sincerely,

Matt Dorsey, President  
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



February 19, 2026

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2084 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson,

I am writing on behalf of the Idaho Potato Commission to add our voice to those who are strongly supporting the University of Idaho's 2027 project funding request, which seeks \$5,000,000 from the USDA's Buildings and Facilities account to build a potato storage facility and new greenhouses at its Aberdeen Research and Experiment Center.

Updates to current infrastructure would return facilities at Aberdeen back to the forefront of potato variety research where Idaho has led these efforts throughout the Pacific Northwest for the past 60 years. Additionally, these updates would put Idaho in the best position to accept a potential transfer of the USDA National Seed Potato Repository from Sturgeon Point, Michigan to Aberdeen, Idaho.

Progress in all these key areas can only benefit Idaho's agricultural sector, which is a major factor in our state's overall economy. As you no doubt know, agriculture is responsible for one in every eight Idaho jobs, and the potato industry alone contributes \$8.5 billion to Idaho's economy, supporting more than 29,000 jobs across the state.

You have been a stalwart supporter of Idaho's potato industry, and I appreciate your support of this latest funding request from the University of Idaho. The Idaho Potato Commission is pleased to support this project because it will allow for new and continued innovation and ensure that the Idaho potato industry maintains its position as a global leader in potato variety development.

Thank you for your service to our great state and thank you for supporting this funding request from the University of Idaho.

Sincerely,

James Higham  
President  
Idaho Potato Commission

IDAHO POTATO COMMISSION

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February 23, 2026

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
U.S. House of Representative  
2084 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson,

On behalf of the Idaho Potato Shippers and Growers Association, I am writing to express our support for the University of Idaho's request for 2027 project funding. Their proposal seeks \$5,000,000 from the USDA's Buildings and Facilities account to construct a modern potato storage facility and new greenhouses at the Aberdeen Research and Extension Center.

These improvements are key to Aberdeen's role as a premier hub for potato variety research—a position Idaho has proudly held across the Pacific Northwest for more than six decades. The proposed renovations would include a dedicated fry room to test new breeding lines and four walk-in coolers to test storability at different temperatures is necessary to allow Aberdeen to carry out the full range of new and emerging potato testing research critical for the Idaho potato industry and our Association members.

Advancing these research capabilities will directly benefit Idaho agriculture, a cornerstone of our state's economy. Agriculture supports one in every eight jobs in Idaho, and the potato sector alone contributes \$8.5 billion annually while providing more than 29,000 jobs statewide.

We deeply appreciate your longstanding commitment to Idaho's potato industry. Your support for this funding request will help secure the research capacity needed to drive future breakthroughs and maintain Idaho's global leadership in potato variety development.

Thank you for your dedication to Idaho and for considering this important request from the University of Idaho.

Sincerely,



Shawn D. Boyle  
Executive Director



## Idaho State Senate

### SENATOR JULIE VANORDEN

February 19, 2026

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
U.S. House of Representative  
2084 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson,

I am writing to add my voice to those who are strongly supporting the University of Idaho's 2027 project funding request, which seeks \$5,000,000 from the USDA's Buildings and Facilities account to build a potato storage facility and new greenhouses at its Aberdeen Research and Extension Center, which is in my District. I grew up and worked on a farm where my parents raised potatoes and wheat. My husband and I began our own farming operation in 1982, which is now a multi-generational family farm with our two oldest sons as partners. I am also a former Idaho Potato Commissioner. I write this letter both as a potato farmer and as a proud state senator of District 30.

Updates to current infrastructure would return facilities at Aberdeen back to the forefront of potato variety research – an area that Idaho has led throughout the Pacific Northwest for the past 60 years. Additionally, these updates would put Idaho in the best position to accept a potential transfer of the USDA National Seed Potato Repository from Sturgeon Point, Michigan to Aberdeen, Idaho. This would be a significant victory for our district and the state and strengthen Idaho's leadership in agricultural innovation.

Progress in all these key areas can only benefit Idaho's agricultural sector, which is a major factor in our state's overall economy. As you know, agriculture is responsible for one in every eight Idaho jobs and accounts for over \$30 billion in annual sales and represents over 17% of Idaho's total economic output. According to the recent University of Idaho report on the *Financial Condition of Idaho Agriculture*, the state of Idaho, as the nation's top potato producer, is estimated to see cash receipts of \$1.1bn for 2025.

You have been a stalwart supporter of Idaho's potato industry, and I know you will support this latest funding request from the University of Idaho. I am pleased to voice my support of this project because it will provide innovative and needed continued leadership in addressing continued potato research focusing on breeding needs and practices, which will benefit my district constituents, the potato industry and the State of Idaho.

Thank you for your service to our great state and thank you for supporting this funding request from the University of Idaho.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie VanOrden".

Senator Julie VanOrden