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STATE OF MAINE

ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY

MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Kevin L. Raye, Chair of the Legislative Council
 Representative Robert W. Nutting, Vice Chair of the Legislative Council

From: Sen. Roger L. Sherman, Senate Chair
 Rep. Peter E. Edgcomb, House Chair
 Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Re: Review of the Seed Potato Board under the State Government Evaluation Act

We are writing to inform you that in April of 2011 the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry voted to waive review of the Seed Potato Board under the Government Evaluation Act during the 125th Legislature. Oversight and management responsibilities for the Seed Potato Board were transferred from the Department of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Resources to the Maine Potato Board under PL 2009, chapter 379. This transition was completed in 2010.

The ACF Committee had reviewed the Seed Potato Boards' responsibilities for production, distribution and sales of seed potatoes immediately prior to the transfer. In 2010 and early in 2011, the committee received briefings on the transition from Don Flannery, Executive Director of the Maine Potato Board and from Seth Bradstreet, then Commissioner of Agriculture. Mr. Flannery has continued to provide updates on seed potato operations. We are directing the Maine Potato Board to report to the joint standing committee having jurisdiction over agricultural matters no later than January 15, 2012 with a summary of the production, distribution and sales of seed potatoes in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

The Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry is recommending that the Seed Potato Board no longer be subject to review under the Government Evaluation Act. The Legislative committee of jurisdiction can and will continue to communicate directly with the Maine Potato Board on seed potato operations and request information specific to seed potato operations and facilities as needed.