

Project: Further Innovations and Expansions for Nova Scotia's Sweet Potato Industry

Objectives:

- Continue to identify varieties that are uniquely suited to growing conditions in Nova Scotia
- Compare yield and quality of slips from various points of origin

(Nova Scotia, Ontario, US)

- Determine best management practices (i.e. plant spacing) for the newly released varieties
- Explore season extension options for sweet potatoes

Why this is important:

Through the development of multiple varieties that are well-suited to the Canadian climate, growers are better able to mitigate risks associated with relying solely on a single variety. Additionally, the development of new varieties specifically designed to do well in more northern climates opens the door to further opportunities, i.e. Nova Scotia slip production to supply local demand or to export to the rest of Canada. There is little to no sweet potato slip propagation currently taking place in Canada. Not having slip production in Canada is a setback to this burgeoning industry as obtaining slips from the US is administratively and logistically burdensome. There is also a need to determine best management practices for new varieties in order to ensure that yield potential is maximized while minimizing costs of production. Sweet potatoes are responsive to day length, and an earlier planting date would maximize growth during longer photoperiods, which has been linked to increased sweet potato root numbers and increased sweet potato yield.

Project length:

Two years

Project co-operators and funders:

Perennia is working with Vineland Research and Innovation Centre and Horticulture Nova Scotia, with co-operator Charles Keddy Farms Ltd. Funding is being provided by the Farm Innovation Program funded under Growing Forward 2, the five-year framework agreement for agriculture which is cost-shared 60-40 between the federal and provincial governments.