



Better Potatoes for a Better World

MINUTES

109th Annual Member Business Meeting
Wednesday, July 30, 2025 | 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. CDT
2025 PAA Annual Meeting | Madison, WI

Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center | Ballroom AB

A. Call to Order (Whitworth) Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. CDT.

2024-2025 Board of Directors present: Jonathan Whitworth (President), Benita Matheson (VP), Dennis Halterman (Past President), Jeff Miller (Treasurer), Directors: Kasia Duellman, Ken Frost, Julie Pasche, Jacob Blauer, Carrie Wohleb, Jim Busse, Section Chairs: Brooke Babler, Bee Chim, Paul Collins, Luke Thurgood, Amber Walker; Incoming Board Member: Graham Ellis

Invited: Larry Hiller, Samuel Essah (*AJPR* EIC), Susie Thompson (Site selection chair)

PAA Staff (non-voting): Linda Schmitt

PAA members in attendance: around 30

B. Members in Memorium (Whitworth)

A moment of silence was taken in memory of Mercy Essah.

C. Approval of Minutes (Whitworth/All)

MOTION: to approve the 2024 PAA Annual Member Business Meeting minutes as received.

Seconded; motion passed.

D. Officer Reports for 2024-2025

1. President (Whitworth)

It has been a year of change for the Potato Association of America. Our membership numbers are at 457. This compares to 441 in 2023. We continue to look for ways to bring more potato specific researchers into the organization. For the *American Journal of Potato Research*, we have seen the number of open access articles go from 5 out of 42 in 2021 to 14 out of 34 in 2024. We remain a hybrid journal in the open access arena. We do receive royalty payments from Springer, the publisher of our journal. The 2025 payment was \$20,278.

Management changed from AMR to Scientific Societies. We have been with AMR for the last seven years and have appreciated the help that we received during that time. After lengthy conversations and approval of the board, we switched management to Scientific Societies, a non-profit co-op group based in St. Paul, MN. They have a deep bench of experienced professionals and manage seven other groups, including the American Phytopathological Society and International Society for Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions. I am grateful for their help.

The attendance at our 2024 meeting in Portland was lower than normal with other meetings drawing participants away such as the World Potato Congress in Australia and APS's meeting, Plant Health.

PAA had 89 talks and 24 posters presented in Portland and this year our meeting had 90 talks, and 38 posters scheduled.

Due to lower numbers and hotel contracted room blocks not being met, we ran a negative balance for the meeting in Portland and as a result had to cash in on one of the three CDs that PAA has. This year we anticipate still being in the negative but by a significantly smaller dollar amount. Some factors that have influenced the budget for this year include recent travel restrictions and economic uncertainties for some participants.

We look to trim where we can on meeting costs for the organization and are still striving to keep the registration costs down for participants. One of the hallmarks of this organization is the close collaboration among participants and the fostering of graduate students for the industry and the research disciplines of all things potato. This year we had 34 oral presentations and 3 posters from graduate students scheduled. This compares to the previous year with 17 oral and 9 posters. This is a great forum for students and helps tremendously with professional development and future career connections. The Frank L. Haynes endowment encourages and provides awards for these graduate student presentations. The traditional auction that is held each year feeds into this endowment and participation by members is phenomenal. This and other contributions by members to endowments help keep this organization strong. One note is a thank you to Paul Bethke who organized the graduate student competition for many years. With his retirement, Munevver Dogramaci had stepped in and we look forward to her work along with the dedicated committee members involved in this great tradition.

In the past, plans for meetings were set for three years in advance. The pandemic caused difficulties in following this schedule. We are working to get back on track but the realities of venue properties keeping to a set cost that far in advance have caused us and many other scientific organizations to change. For our 2026 meeting, we'll be hosted in New Orleans by a committee organized by PAA members representing industry instead of the traditional committees organized by state universities. We look forward to this change of pace and the exciting opportunity to experience some non-potato agriculture on our tours. Sometimes the best ideas come from outside of the box.

It is with great pleasure that I submit this report to the Potato Association of American Board of Directors. I am grateful to be a member of this great organization.

2. Treasurer (Miller)

Summary of Treasurer action items taken since the annual meeting in 2024:

1. Merged from 8 accounts to 4 (Table 1)
2. Closed the Canadian bank account (CIBC)
3. Pulled Idaho LAC, Certification Section funds into PAA account
4. Annual report with the state of Maine – filed February 4, 2025
5. Closed Capital One credit card account
6. Received donation from 2017 North Dakota LAC

7. Resolved outstanding invoices

Table 1. Summary of PAA account changes from August 2024 to July 2025.

Account Name	Financial Institution	Purpose	Action
UCU Custom Checking	UMCU	None identified to date	Closed
UCU CD 14	UMCU	Cash Reserves	Maintained
UCU CD 15	UMCU	Cash Reserves	Maintained
UCU Prime Share	UMCU	Needed for CDs	Maintained
PNC Checking	PNC	Operating Account	Moved to ONB
PNC Checking Certification Sect. 4075	PNC	Certification section	Moved to ONB
PNC Idaho LAC Res. 4067	PNC	Idaho LAC	Moved to ONB
CIBC	CIBC	Canadian needs	Closed

The summary of the PAA Financial Position as of June 2025 is presented in Table 1 and the summaries of the two endowments are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. PAA Endowment Fund – University of Maine Foundation

Principal value – December 31, 2024	\$323,396.00
Beginning market value – January 1, 2024	\$406,949.31
Contributions and additions	\$8,550.18
Distributions and withdrawals	(\$11,385.00)
Investment income (gain or loss)	\$48,822.46
Ending market value – December 31, 2024	\$452,936.95
Distribution for fiscal year 2025-2026 (7/1/25-6/30/26)	\$12,700.00

Table 3. PAA Endowment Fund – University of Maine Foundation

Principal value – December 31, 2024	\$146,946.44
Beginning market value – January 1, 2024	\$174,895.74
Contributions and additions	\$450.00
Distributions and withdrawals	(\$5,082.00)
Investment income (gain or loss)	\$20,796.57
Ending market value – December 31, 2024	\$191,060.31
Distribution for fiscal year 2025-2026 (7/1/25-6/30/26)	\$5,357.00

Figure 1. Potato Association of America Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2025.

Potato Association of America
Statement of Financial Position
As of June 30, 2025

	06/30/2025	05/31/2025	Year Ending December 31, 2024
Assets			
Cash			
Cash Accounts	221,622	180,971	130,776
CD Accounts	215,691	215,505	214,573
Total Cash	437,313	396,476	345,349
Accounts Receivable			
Accounts Receivable Current	5,958	2,756	800
Accounts Receivable Other	18,057	18,057	0
Total Accounts Receivable	24,015	20,813	800
Prepaid Expenses			
Prepaid Expenses Other	1,875	2,063	0
Prepaid Expenses Meetings	71,121	53,270	6,260
Total Prepaid Expenses	72,996	55,333	6,260
Total Current Assets	534,324	472,622	352,409
Total Assets	534,324	472,622	352,409
Liabilities and Net Assets			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable - Current	1,000	108	2,784
Accounts Payable - Intercompany	21,095	27,518	5,278
Funds Held For Districts/Divisions/Sections	51,324	51,325	49,057
Accounts Payable - Other	3,777	2,177	16,712
Accounts Payable EE Credit Cards	1,650	500	2,934
Total Current Liabilities	78,846	81,628	76,765
Deferred Revenue			
Deferred Revenue Dues	0	0	33,000
Deferred Revenue Meetings	221,610	149,513	0
Total Deferred Revenue	221,610	149,513	33,000
Net Assets			
Unrestricted	242,644	242,643	342,510
Unrestricted Change in Net Assets	(8,776)	(1,162)	(99,866)
Total Net Assets	233,868	241,481	242,644
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	534,324	472,622	352,409

A brief discussion of the challenges associated with costs associated with the annual meeting was shared with the membership.

E. Committee Reports

1. Bylaws & Standing Rules (Matheson)

RECEIVED proposed bylaw changes.

Highlights of bylaw changes include:

- Article III Members. Section 2. Rights of Membership
 - Statement added to note that PAA Student Members are not eligible to serve on the Board of Directors as an Officer or Director.
- Article IV. Section 2. Nominations & Elections
 - Removed previous requirement of having a minimum of 2 candidates per position.
- Article VII Officers & Agents of Assoc.
 - Section 1. General Conditions: Deleted reference of officers signing official documents and contracts.
 - Section 4. Duties of Secretary: Updated with communication duties
 - Section 5. Duties of Treasurer: Updated language around duties
 - Section 7. Officer Election Process: Updated language around minimum requirement of candidates on ballot to allow for flexibility.
 - Section 9. Administrator Role: Added reference on authority to execute contracts on behalf of the board. Added statement about serving as non-voting, ex-officio on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee.
- Article XII Execution of Instruments...
 - Section 2 Deposits: Reference deleted.

MOTION: to approve the proposed bylaw changes to Article II Section 2, Article IV Section 2, Article VII Sections 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, and Article XII Section 2, as received. *Seconded; motion passed.*

ACTION: Staff to update bylaws on [PAA website](#).

2. Leadership Identification & Development Committee (Haltermann)

Noted the increased difficulty in getting members to run for office.

The 2025 election had the officer positions of Vice President and Secretary running unopposed with Jacob Blauer being elected as Vice President, who will serve as President in 2026-2027, and Dennis Haltermann elected as Secretary for the 2025-2028 term. Candidates for Director included Graham Ellis, Chakradhar Mattupalli, Han Tan, and Alan Westra. The two elected Directors for the 2025-2028 term were Graham Ellis and Ek Han Tan.

3. Honorary Life Members (Haltermann)

Review committee received two nominations for the 2025 Honorary Life Member award, and both were reviewed and deemed eligible and worthy of the award. The 2025 Honorary Life Memberships were awarded to Kent McCue and Walter De Jong.

4. Frank L. Haynes Graduate Student Research Award (Dogramaci)

Presentations were good overall, and the review committee selected five oral presenters and one best poster for the 2025 awards. Awardees were selected based on performance, data analysis, and research.

- 1st Place: Olee Hoi Ying Lam, University of Wisconsin- Madison, *Advancing early disease detection with imaging spectroscopy: potato early blight as a case study*
- 2nd Place: Sabina Budhathoki, University of Florida, *Evaluating the effects of cover crops on plant-parasitic nematode suppression and free-living nematodes in potato production*
- 3rd Place: Sophie Verkoulen, University of Wisconsin- Madison, *Characterization of Neuropeptides in the Colorado potato beetle using RNAi*
- 4th Place: Morgan Weissner, University of Wisconsin- Madison, *Transgenerational effects of a dsRNA-based insecticide on the Colorado potato beetle*
- 5th Place: Joseph Ulasi, Michigan State University, *Introgression and Pyramiding of Novel Resistance Genes for Diploid Potato Breeding*
- Best Poster: Gashaw Alemu, University of Wisconsin- Madison, *Highly transmissible Andean pandemic Ralstonia solanacearum lineage consistently colonizes potato tubers better than endemic African Ralstonia strain*

5. Editorial Board (Essah)

- Impact Factor (IF) of *AJPR*
 - The journal's impact factor (IF) improved from 1.2 in 2023 to 1.8 in 2024.
 - The 5 Year IF has also improved from 1.725 in 2023 to 2.3 in 2024.
 - The journal has also moved from the 3rd Quartile to the 2nd Quartile for Agronomy
 - This is a great improvement, and all the credit goes to the distinguished Senior Editors.
 - I want to reinforce that we need to commission special issues and other articles such as reviews, opinion papers or commentaries to help in the continued improvement of the journal's IF.
- Article Downloads
 - 2020 = 109,585; 2021 = 125,542; 2022 = 126,820; 2023=166,240; 2024=177,348
 - This indicates a high level of interest in *AJPR* for researchers in the potato community.
- Manuscript Acceptance, Rejection, and Withdrawal Rates
 - Acceptance rate: 2020 = 47%; 2021 = 47%; 2022 = 48%; 2023=41%; 2024=32.3%
 - Rejection rate: 2020 = 38%; 2021 = 37%; 2022 = 37%; 2023=45%; 2024=51.2%
 - Withdrawal rate: 2020 = 15%; 2021 = 15%; 2022 = 14%; 2023=13%; 2024=0.6%
- Average days to first decision
 - 2020 = 79 days; 2021 = 57 days; 2022 = 59 days; 2023=52 days; 2024=19 days.
 - Senior editors continue to do a good job in reducing the days to first decision.
- Average days to final disposition
 - Accepted: 2020 = 185 days; 2021 = 105 days; 2022 = 166 days; 2023=151 days; 2024=134 days.

- We need to improve on the turnaround time for final acceptance, which will entice authors to submit articles to AJPR.
- Submission of Manuscripts to AJPR
 - 2020 = 82 articles submitted; 2021 = 77 articles submitted; 2022 = 58 articles submitted; 2023 = 77 articles submitted; 2024 = 130 articles submitted.
 - Submission of articles to AJPR is increasing. A positive sign.
- Number of Published Articles
 - 2021 = 42; 2022 = 40; 2023=39; 2024=34.
 - Articles accepted for publication continue to decline. Springer is concerned about the number of articles received for publication.
- 2024 Best Paper Awards from *AJPR* were presented to the following authors during the 2025 PAA Awards Banquet:
 - Outstanding Paper Award in Extension, Production & Management:
 - Senior Author: Francisco Gonzalez Tapia for “Reduced Late-Season Irrigation Improves Potato Quality, Often at the Expense of Yield and Economic Return” Volume 101:202-225 (2024)
 - Outstanding Paper Award in Plant Protection:
 - Senior Author: Helen Tai for “Rapid Screening of Colorado Potato Beetle Resistance Derived from *Solanum okadae*” Volume 101:356-367 (2024)
 - Outstanding Paper Award in Breeding & Genetics
 - Senior Author: Noelle Anglin for “A Genome Wide Association Study (GWAS) Identifies SNPs Associated with Resistance to Tobacco Rattle Virus (TRV) and Potato Mop-Top Virus (PMTV) in a Tetraploid Mapping Population of Potato” Volume 101:1-16 (2024)
 - Outstanding Paper Award in Physiology
 - Senior Author Lakesh K. Sharma for “Optimizing UAV Hyperspectral Imaging for Predictive Analysis of Nutrient Concentrations, Biomass Growth, and Yield Prediction of Potatoes” Volume 101:394-413 (2024)

6. 2025 Annual Meeting (Halterman)

- 310 attendees (14 countries represented)
- 88 oral speakers (32 student presentations)
- 33 posters
- 31 sponsors
- PAA live auction brought in \$8,567 that will go to support student travel awards for next year’s meeting.
- One day symposium on Potato Storage was well attended for Monday.
 - Look at industry forum style or stakeholder focus to improve demographic.

7. 2026 Annual Meeting (Miller)

- Meeting will be in New Orleans, Louisiana from July 26-30, 2026, at the Marriott on Canal St.
- The 2026 Organizing/Arrangements Committee is chaired by Jeff Miller along with committee members: Bee Chim, Nathan Gelles, Darin Gibson, Fahrettin Goktepe, Matt Maughan, and George Newberry.

8. Site Selection Committee (Thompson)

- Committee is composed of current and past Local Arrangement Committee members, PAA president, and PAA Staff. Committee members met on Monday, July 28, 2025, and also held several email discussions following the 2024 PAA meeting in Portland.
- The 2026 PAA Annual Meeting will be held in New Orleans, July 26-30. Jeff Miller is chairing the Arrangements Committee and will share more details during the 2025 Member Business Meeting.
- Recommend changing PAA Standing Rules document to remove reference of securing site locations 3-5 years in advance as we do not need to have a list of sites out too far due to a changing business environment since 2020. Noted there is a group interested in hosting 2027.
- Committee discussions continued about the difficulty securing host sites; however, Staff assured committee members that we do not need/want to have a list of sites out too far due to a changing business environment since 2020. Shared background on past discussions including thoughts about meeting at different times of the year, piggy backing with other meetings and/or alternating years. A change noted this year was due to so many late registrations our hosts had had to commit to meals and thus in order to be fiscally responsible they had to cut our breakfasts. Other societies provide few or no meals during their annual meetings and their registration is much higher than our PAA registration charge. The committee's focus is on ways to keep our society members coming and to include our students, growers and industry personnel actively involved and looking forward to attendance.
- After chairing the Site Selection committee for the past 10-12 years, Susie is stepping down as chair at close of the 2025 PAA Annual Meeting. Jeff Miller was appointed as the new Site Selection Committee Chair and will assume his position at the close of this year's meeting.

F. Section Reports

1. Breeding & Genetics (Collins)

- The Breeding & Genetics Section will host the 2026 symposium. Noted that the section will need to work with PAA staff member, Tori Clark and the 2026 PAA Arrangements/Organizing Committee.
- Incoming officers for 2026 include:
 - Caroline Gray, Chair
 - Mario Andrade, Vice Chair
 - Marcio Resende, Secretary

2. Certification (Babler)

- Section does not normally meet during the PAA annual meeting. Their next meeting will be in-person in DC on December 4, 2025. A call for meeting topics will open online in August 2025.
- Incoming officers for 2026 include:
 - Tami Brown, Chair
 - Benita Matheson, Vice Chair
 - Gordon Henry, Executive member
 - Adam Winchester, Secretary/Treasurer (ongoing)
- Highlights of 2024 section meeting:
 - 40 attended
 - Talked about Direct Testing for potato certification.
- Received state and province certification updates
 - Discussed current challenges and solutions
- Direct Tuber Testing (DTT) Presentation and Discussion
 - Highlighted research across different programs
 - Established a DTT sub-committee to evaluate potential to use in future post-harvest testing
- Received USDA/Canadian updates on PCN and Potato wart
- Reviewed the Necrotic Virus Management Plan
- Discussed future of the post-harvest grow out
- Created a subcommittee to update PAA Cert website content

NOTED Future Webinar idea on Direct Tuber Testing (DTT).

NOTED Special Issue Topic Idea: Seed Potato Certification Research. Noted brainstorming is planned during the 2025 December section meeting

3. Extension, Production & Management (Chim)

Proposed webinar topics were shared:

- Drone spraying of herbicides (Andy Robinson potential speaker)
 - Drone flyers not pesticides experts, droplet size
- Managing potato crop in the new “normal” – mitigating impact on production (Ajay as potential speaker)
- Highlighting a new variety and management based on region
- PotatoUSA – consumer preference by region (John as presenter/possible sponsor)

Proposed *AJPR* special issue topic on management by region of new varieties.

Suggested Pennsylvania as a future PAA annual meeting site location.

Noted the Outstanding Extension Award has not been awarded since before Covid. Section is working with staff to make a call for award nominations for the 2026 award. Noted awardee receives an award certificate and recognition at the PAA award ceremony.

Incoming 2026 officers include:

- Andy Robinson, Chair
- Kutay Ozturk, Vice Chair
- Jonathan Price, Secretary

4. Physiology (Busse)

- [Hosted 2 webinars](#) this year. 107 reg 60 attend; 2nd one 60 reg and 40 attended. Surveys sent out had positive reviews.
 - Potential future webinar topics suggested included wound healing, tuber greening and glycoalkaloids. Noting that Roy Navarre would be a great person to lead a webinar on glycoalkaloids and suggested tapping the expertise of Physiology section members Jacob Blauer, Gustavo Teixeira, and Munevver Dogramaci for the wound healing webinar.
- AJPR special issue suggested topics included:
 - Potato storage based on the NAPSO symposium
 - Global Scientific Results for Potatoes
- Site suggestions for future PAA meetings included Ontario, Canada and North Carolina.
- Incoming 2026 officers include:
 - Gustavo Teixeira, Chair
 - Aymeric Goyer, Vice Chair
 - Munevver Dogramaci, Secretary
 - Nora Olsen, Section Director continuing through 2026
 - Sastry Jayanty, Section Director, serving a two-year term for 2025-2027

5. Plant Protection (Thurgood)

- Discussed engagement in section meetings and at annual meetings
- Webinar topics discussed - PP Section interact with other organizations
- Coordinate with local growers and stakeholders to have them participate in section meetings to share what their local challenges are in the region,
- Opportunities to meet with local stakeholders who grow sweet potatoes. Jeff will lead initiative. Luke reached out to Blackhills Gold Farms and will Bryan Bowen, Agronomy, interested and attend section meeting in New Orleans.
- Focus on quality of content – create more a buzz on section meetings
- Do a better job of communicating section meetings are open to everyone.
- Special topics for AJPR – symposium invitations to individuals to contribute to special topic/edition to the journal. Not always peer reviewed, short article.

- 2026 Section Officers include:
 - Harlene Hatterman-Valenti, Chair
 - Mohamad Chikh-Ali, Vice Chair
 - Shae Jamison Taylor, Secretary/Treasurer

6. Utilization & Marketing (Walker)

- There were only four members at the section meeting so no quorum was met.
- Noted that current section officers Amber Walker (chair), Colby Robertson (vice chair), and Addie Waxman (Secretary) will continue on in their roles until the section completes their electronic voting for officers for 2026.

G. Recognition of outgoing board members (Whitworth)

- Thanked outgoing director Julie Pasche and the 2025 PAA section chairs who served on the Board this past year.

H. Passing of Presidential Gavel (Whitworth/Matheson)

- Presidential Gavel passed from Jonathan Whitworth to Benita Matheson who will serve as President for the 2025-2026 term.

I. Welcoming Remarks from President (Matheson)

- Welcomed incoming Board members for 2025-2026:
 - Directors: Han Tan and Graham Ellis
 - Vice President: Jacob Blauer
 - Secretary: Dennis Halterman

Meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m. CDT.