



News Release

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Standing Up for Potatoes on Capitol Hill

NPC's Potato D.C. Fly-In to be held Feb. 25-28, 2013

Washington, D.C. – Potato growers and industry partners from across the country will travel to the nation's capital this month as part of the National Potato Council's (NPC) 2013 Potato D.C. Fly-In, Feb. 25-28 at the Madison Hotel. The annual event is open to all growers and industry partners eager to advance the potato industry's most pressing federal policy debates.

This year's Fly-In features advocacy and lobbying training sessions and concludes with face-to-face meetings with congressional lawmakers, key staff, and federal regulators. Attendees will also hear from prominent political pundits, including renowned political strategist and commentator Donna Brazile, and former Republican Congressman Tom Davis from Virginia.

"The Potato Fly-In is very important. I think that the legislators in Congress want to hear from the farmers, they want to hear from the people doing the work," [commented Randy Mullen, NPC's President](#) and owner of Mullen Farms, Inc., in Pasco, Wash. "I believe it's very important for them to hear from us."



During meetings with policy decision makers, growers will discuss key industry priorities, such as:

- Ensuring the continuation of long-term research and pest and disease funding levels in the 2013 Farm Bill;
- Shielding farms from burdensome environmental regulations;
- Fighting for fair estate and capital gains tax laws; and
- Improving immigration laws to allow farms to hire the workers they need when they need them.



U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently stated that "U.S. agriculture is quickly losing its voice in Washington, D.C.," noted [Randy Hardy, NPC's Vice President of Trade Affairs](#) and owner of Hardy Farms in Oakley, Idaho. "It's going to have to be growers, producers who maintain that voice. So I just encourage all growers to step up and become involved because if they don't, nobody will," said Hardy.

[Dan Lake, NPC's Vice President of Environmental Affairs](#) and co-owner of Lake Seed in Ronan, Mont., noted the need for grower involvement in the Fly-In. "We still need to keep our involvement high. Of course the NPC is our legislative voice for the industry, and that's just become so important for the environment that we've got now in our legislative situation in our government. So we're going to have to continue to keep the pressure up," said Lake.



Registration and more information about NPC's Potato D.C. Fly-In can be found online at www.nationalpotatocouncil.org.

Registration includes the welcome reception, all scheduled breakfasts and lunches, grassroots training sessions, and the Congressional Potato Luncheon on Capitol Hill.

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The National Potato Council is the advocate for the economic well-being of U.S. potato growers on federal legislative, regulatory, environmental, and trade issues. NPC supports the U.S. potato industry by monitoring issues affecting the strength and viability of the potato industry, influencing regulators and legislators on issues crucial to the industry's long term success, ensuring fair market access for potatoes and potato products, and bringing the unique issues and interests of diverse growing regions in the U.S. together on a national level.