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### **UNITED Potato Growers of America Announces Permanent CEO**

UNITED Potato Growers of America board chairman Albert Wada, is pleased to announce the selection of Julia E. Cissel as Chief Executive Officer of the UNITED Potato Growers of America. Cissel takes over from interim CEO Jerry Wright, who led the coop since its inception in March of this year. Wright will now focus his efforts in leading the UNITED Potato Growers of Idaho. Part of his role in Idaho will be to ensure that the Idaho coop works closely with the new national office.

“The UNITED coop system has grown so fast across North America, and there are so many exciting programs being planned and implemented that it is now time to move to the next level,” said Jerry Wright. “A separation of the Idaho and national offices has been planned from the beginning. The fact a national CEO has been hired after only nine months is testimony of the rapid growth and acceptance of the new coop,” Wright added.

“I’m thrilled to be chosen for this position,” said Ms. Cissel. “I’m very impressed with UNITED’s vision and the growers I have met,” added Cissel. “There is a lot of work to be done to implement the UNITED vision and I look forward to the challenge.”

One of Cissel’s first tasks will be to locate and set up an office in Salt Lake City for UNITED of America. Salt Lake provides easy access for board members from all major potato growing regions via the Salt Lake International Airport, and is where many UNITED of America board meetings are held, to be near UNITED’S legal council, Randon Wilson. Cissel will spend much of her time traveling to the various UNITED Cooperatives to learn the industry and plan the steps for implementing the strategic plan the UNITED board has outlined.

As the new CEO, Cissel brings over 20 years of expertise in designing strategies, business ventures, and products for domestic and international markets. With extensive “on the ground” experience in marketing / brand management, field sales, and supply chain functions, Cissel spent over 12 years at Monsanto, working closely with growers, retailers, and other industry partners.

In addition to her professional experience, Ms. Cissel provides a strong technical and business background with a B.A. in chemistry and biology from the University of Chicago, a M.A. in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Wisconsin, and an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Born and raised in Idaho Falls, Idaho, Cissel enjoyed growing up in a community with strong agricultural and technological industries. She enjoys outdoor sports, photography, and international travel. She has lived in several places in the US and has traveled extensively. Cissel currently lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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