**Evaluating Past and Current Processes Related to Grower Evaluations of Advanced Potato Selections from the Colorado Potato Breeding and Selection Program and Implications for the Future**

**Mentor Information:**

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Jessica Chitwood-Brown, Horticulture and LA, Potato Breeding and Selection Program (onboarding as an Assistant Professor, Horticulture and LA on March 21, 2022)

Larry Brown, San Luis Valley Area Extension Director, [L.Brown@colostate.edu](mailto:L.Brown@colostate.edu)

**In what Region will the student be working?** The intern will be based in Center, Colorado and work will relate to the larger San Luis Valley Region and areas of Northern Colorado

**Please describe the proposed internship goals, scope, and objectives.** The principal research activity of the Potato Breeding and Selection Program at CSU focuses on developing potato cultivars adapted for the San Luis Valley and Northern Colorado potato growing regions. Colorado is the second largest production region of fresh potatoes in the US. Since 1975, there have been 34 potato cultivars released by the CSU potato breeding program representing several market classes including russets, reds, and specialty cultivars. Having potato growers involved in the evaluation and adoption processes is crucial to the success of a cultivar. The intern will examine the past and current processes and identify barriers growers face with trialing advanced selections and new cultivars in order to develop new protocols to overcome these barriers and increase grower involvement.

**How was this applied research identified?** This project was identified to provide an understanding of the challenges growers face when trialing advanced selection and new cultivars and to develop processes which will help overcome these challenges and facilitate greater grower involvement in the potato cultivar development process.

**With which stakeholder group(s) will the intern work?** CSU Extension, Colorado AES, and the Colorado potato industry.

**What student learning outcomes do you anticipate and are there opportunities for professional development?** Primary and secondary data collection methods, communication skills, systems-based thinking.

**Do you have a specific mentor style that you would like to share with potential interns?** It is important that they know they are a contributing member of a team that wants them to be successful in their internship and in their preparation for a career.  We stand ready to provide guidance, direction, and support throughout the process.

**Are there travel funds available? Opportunities to provide student assistance with housing?** Travel funds are available. Housing is available at the San Luis Valley Research Center.