

State aid for potatoes

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The State Fund Agriculture has commenced the preliminary acceptance of applications for state aid to compensate costs incurred in implementing measures under the National Program for the Control of Soil Pests on Potatoes from the family Elateridae (Wireworms).

Bulgaria, a traditional potato producer, has in recent years become a major importer. At the end of 2014, Ventsislav Kaymakanov, Chairman of the National Association of Potato Producers (NAPP), expressed his concern that in the next season, many potato producers might abandon the cultivation of this agricultural product. Imports from countries like Poland exert significant pressure on the local market. Another reason for the reduced production is the unfavorable climatic conditions of the previous year and the consequent increase in soil pests on potatoes from the family Elateridae (Wireworms).

The State Fund Agriculture implemented a support scheme for farmers in the sector until the end of 2014, which involved compensating part of the producers' costs for purchasing plant protection products to control the pest. To enable the state aid to continue during the programming period until 2020, a draft state aid scheme to support the sector has been developed. The scheme is pending notification to the EC. The total budget of the aid for the new programming period, as well as the exact amount of support, will be determined following approval by the EC. For now, the financial aid amounts to BGN 600 thousand and is allocated under the "Subsidies to non-financial enterprises" line of the State Fund Agriculture's budget. The application deadline will extend until May 15th, as technological time for potato planting is foreseen, coordinated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency, and the potato producers' branch organization.

On April 1, 2015, the preliminary acceptance of applications for state aid to compensate costs incurred in implementing measures under the National Program for the Control of Soil Pests on Potatoes from the family Elateridae (Wireworms) officially commenced.

** You can read more about pests from the family Elateridae (Wireworms) on the website in the **pests menu**.*