

World Potato Congress 2012 to be held in Edinburgh

At least 600 potato specialists from around the world will attend the event 417 years after Sir Walter Raleigh, the Elizabethan explorer, introduced the vegetable to England. Since then potato harvesting has grown into a major global industry with more than 325 million tonnes a year being produced. The three day World Potato Congress will be staged at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) in June 2012 and is one of twenty new events won for the city with the assistance of the Edinburgh Convention Bureau. These events which were confirmed between 20 April and 19 May will be attended by up to 4,557 delegates in total and will inject an anticipated 6.4 million pounds Sterling into the Edinburgh economy. The largest of the news events is the conference of the National Association of Pension Funds with 800 delegates and an economic value of 1.1 million pounds Sterling. The venue for the three day meeting in March 2011 is the EICC. Sue Stuart, Chief Executive of ECB, commented: "When you realise the contribution the potato makes to the diet of people around the world it's not so humble after all. We will be delighted to welcome the delegates and let them sample some of Scotland's best potato produce." She added: "It is important to see the return of the National Association of Pension Funds conference as it recognises the continued importance of Edinburgh as a financial centre particularly in these difficult economic times."