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### **North Carolina Potato Festival Turns Elizabeth City, N.C. into Wild West Town, May 21 *Annual Festival Celebrates with Western Flair***

(Elizabeth City, N.C., April 11, 2011) – Saddle up your horses cowboys—it’s time to head to the ‘tater patch! This year’s North Carolina Potato Festival, May 21, will transform [Elizabeth City](#) into a rootin’ tootin’ Wild West town. Festival organizers have adopted a western theme for this year’s event, recognized by the N.C. Main Street Program with a 2010 award of merit for “best downtown special event.”

“Look for plenty of cowboy boots, hats, and western accents,” said Cindy Williams, event coordinator. She and her husband, Tim Williams, are active in both the [North Carolina Potato Festival](#) and [Elizabeth City Downtown Inc.](#), the festival’s sponsoring organization.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of volunteers, committee members, sponsors, and vendors, folks can look forward to a fun-filled, family festival that celebrates one of Northeast North Carolina's largest crops. With an exciting line up of events, festival-goers can look forward to activities including:

- The Little Miss Tater Tot Pageant
- National Potato Peeling Contest
- "Anything But Fries" Restaurant Challenge
- Cornhole Tournament
- Potato Sack Races
- Lucky Duck Derby

Trophies for individuals and teams will be awarded, as well as a crowning and sash for this year's Little Miss Tater Tot Pageant. Festival highlights will feature a car and motorcycle show, arts and crafts lining the Main Street thoroughfare, amusement rides and games for children, including a coloring contest, bounce houses, the Hopeline rubber duck derby, and live musical entertainment.

One of this year's sponsors, Wachovia, a Wells Fargo company, shares an authentic history with the western theme. The Wells Fargo brand is linked with the image of a six-horse stagecoach, and Williams is excited about securing one of the corporation's stagecoaches to display at the event.

"Wachovia has really embraced the theme, and we're thrilled to be able to exhibit a Wells Fargo stagecoach," said Williams.

Unlike ghost towns of the west, last year's festival nearly doubled 2009 attendance with 22,000 people. The event was recognized for its excellence in the 2010 [N.C. Main Street](#) awards competition, receiving an award of merit in the category of "best downtown special event."

"It will be an exciting Potato Festival this year, thanks to the support of Wachovia and Perry Auto Group as major sponsors, along with many other great community partners," said Rebecca Cross, executive director for Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc.

Williams agreed. "It really *is* a community affair, and we couldn't do it without our devoted volunteers and core committee members," she said.

"But this is a potato festival, right? Among North Carolina's 100 counties, Pasquotank County has been ranked number one in Irish [potato production](#). So whether they're mashed, baked, boiled, or au Gratin, be ready for the spuds to do their thing!

The kick-off party is the evening of, May 20, and the festival runs May 21 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Back by popular demand, the band UBU will return this year to fire up the festival spirit, along with other great acts. For more information and a complete lineup of live entertainment check the festival's Facebook page or visit online at [www.ncpotatofestival.com](http://www.ncpotatofestival.com).

## About Elizabeth City

Elizabeth City is located in Northeastern North Carolina on the Intracoastal Waterway, halfway between Virginia Beach and the Outer Banks. Known as the “Harbor of Hospitality®,” the city has six National Register Historic Districts and is home to the Museum of the Albemarle, The Center at Arts of the Albemarle, Elizabeth City State University Planetarium, Port Discover Hands-on Science Center and the nation’s largest U.S. Coast Guard base. Nature-based travelers are drawn to the area’s proximity to Dismal Swamp and the abundance of outdoor recreational offerings. For additional information, call Elizabeth City Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-866-ECity-4U (1-866-324-8948) or (252) 335-5330 or visit www.DiscoverElizabethCity.com. For up-to-date info on area happenings and events, visit www.ElizabethCityHASit.com

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