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The Potato Chips in £700,000 to the Edinburgh Economy

The humble potato is set to serve up a mouth watering £700,000 boost to the Edinburgh economy.

The Edinburgh Convention Bureau has announced that the 8th World Potato Congress will be staged in the city in 2012.

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 into the local 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. 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."

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Editors Notes/

Potato/

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- ECB helped win 257 conferences during 2009/10 worth £74.2 million to the economy.
- Edinburgh is the most popular UK city after London for hosting international association meetings and is the 36th most popular business tourism destination in the world.
- In order to count towards ICCA ranking an event must rotate its location between a minimum of two countries and have at least 50 (international) delegates.
- The annual total value of Edinburgh's business tourism is estimated at almost £300 million.
- The Edinburgh Ambassadors Programme matches recognised leaders in the city's many areas of academic and commercial excellence with the professional marketing support of ECB staff who together work as a team to help them bring their international association's conference to Edinburgh. Since 1996 the programme has helped bring more than 210 major events, worth almost £100 million, to the city.
- Edinburgh is a founder member of the international **www.bestcities.net** strategic alliance, which aims to guarantee the meetings industry the world's best service experience in each of the member cities (Cape Town, Copenhagen, Dubai, Edinburgh, Melbourne, San Juan, Singapore, Vancouver).



To learn more about ECB visit www.conventionedinburgh.com

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