POTATO SPROUT CONTROL – PAST AND PRESENT
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Potatoes rank third among major food crops worldwide. This is partly attributable to the fact that potato tubers can be stored for many months after harvest, extending their availability well beyond the harvest period. However, loss of dormancy and subsequent sprouting impacts tuber quality and limits the duration of storage unless sprouting is inhibited in some way. The most popular sprout control methods are low-temperature storage and treatment with chlorpropham (isopropyl n-(3-chlorophenyl) carbamate). There are several alternative treatments, including maleic hydrazide and newer compounds such as carvone, dimethyl naphthalene, and ethylene gas. The history and current status of potato sprout inhibitor use around the world will be reviewed, including positive and negative aspects of the various methods and highlights of regulatory status.