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By Michael Barker

Thursday 24th September 2020, 12:18 GMT

Potato race postponed

Great Ely Potato Race, which celebrates the humble spud, falls victim to coronavirus restrictions



Coronavirus has claimed another victim in the shape of the Great Ely Potato Race.

The annual relay race celebrating the humble potato has been postponed for the first time in its eight-year history.

The contest, which is organised by Isle of Ely Produce with the help of over 30 local potato farmers, sees teams racing to the Market Place and back to the end of the High Street, near Ely Cathedral.

Each competitor has to run with a bag of potatoes on his or her back, and organisers describe the

event as "the only city centre street potato race in the world."

Oliver Boutwood, director of Isle of Ely Produce, said: "Last year's race was amazing - more than 1,000 people lined the streets, but with the course being narrow, we couldn't see a way of running the race safely for competitors and spectators alike."

The race fits in with the company's campaign highlighting the journey the Fens potato makes from the field to the chip shop and last year even gave away free chips. It also brings agriculture into the city, drawing good crowds.

The event was to coincide with Ely Cathedral's harvest festival and usually features a schools' race.

The races are due to return in 2021 with organiser Austen Dack promising a bumper day including a brand-new race.