

## **I. Complimentary**

### **1. Appreciation**

Executive

Be It Resolved that the growers of this industry extend their appreciation through the Executive to all members of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; BC Ministry of Agriculture; Canadian Horticultural Council; Canadian Federation of Agriculture; BC Agriculture Council; AgSafeBC; BC Orchard Industry Museum; Okanagan College; University of British Columbia - Okanagan; Summerland Research and Development Centre; Pest Management Regulatory Agency; BC Investment Agriculture Foundation; Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program; BC Tree Fruits Cooperative; and members of the news media and all others who in any measure have assisted the industry during the past year.

### **2. Municipal Support for Tree Fruit Industry Priorities**

Executive

Be It Resolved that the BCFGa recognize and send appreciation to the regional districts and municipalities of the Okanagan for continued support of environmental programs for the tree fruit industry, including

- The Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program
- The Starling Control Program and
- Wood waste disposal (stump grinding) programs.

## **II. Financial Programs**

### **3. Transfer AgriStability Budget Savings to Other Programs**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas resources for the AgriStability Program are established in the federal and provincial budgets each year, and

Whereas AgriStability program expenditure is related to market conditions, and

Whereas the AgriStability budget is not fully expended in some years, and

Whereas this under-expended funding could be directed to provide further protection from future downturns and help the agricultural sector make plans to mitigate risks not adequately covered by AgriStability,

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**Transfer AgriStability Budget Savings to Other Programs (continued)**

Therefore Be It Resolved that the federal-provincial Agriculture Policy Framework create an AgriStability and Industry Development fund to receive the annual allocation of budgeted AgriStability at current levels of commitment, and

Further Be It Resolved that the AgriStability Fund be designed to first fulfil AgriStability needs and that any surplus funding be directed to industry programs to protect against future downturns and production risks.

**4. Increase AgriStability Margin Protection**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas AgriStability was previously triggered by a 15% decline in program margin and in Growing Forward 2 this was arbitrarily reduced to a 30% decline, and

Whereas participation in AgriStability has declined since the Growing Forward 2 changes and the program's viability is threatened by low participation,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the AgriStability margin coverage levels be reset to trigger at a 15% margin decline.

**5. Columbia River Treaty**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas the 1964 Columbia River Treaty (CRT) controls water flow to the US Columbia Basin, and

Whereas the CRT currently focuses on flood control and hydropower generation, and

Whereas the storage of Spring floodwaters and timed release of water in late Summer has resulted in massive expansion of tree fruit and vegetable production capability in Washington State, and

Whereas the changes to flood control provisions change in 2024 may restrict the ability of the US to demand certain water storage and water flows of Canada and which may lead the US to be more amenable to changes in the CRT, and

Whereas there are other interests such as Washington State agriculture, aboriginal and environmental (fish flows) interests that are not currently recognized in the CRT, and

Whereas the province of BC has established a position on the review of the CRT in September 2013, and Canada has committed to putting in place a lead negotiator for the treaty renewal, and

Whereas the CRT has had a negative effect on BC tree fruit, potato and field vegetable growers through the expansion of acreage in Washington State,

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**Columbia River Treaty (continued)**

Therefore Be It Resolved that the province determine the value of securing new US water interests in the CRT, and

Further Be It Resolved that affected BC commodities be compensated appropriately.

**6. Restore AgriInvest to the Previous Level**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas AgriInvest is one of the most desired and appreciated programs of Canadian farmers with a very high level of participation, and

Whereas the government's share of AgriInvest funding was cut in Growing Forward 2,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the federal government restore its contribution to AgriInvest from 1% to the previous level of 2% of Eligible Net Sales.

**III. Trade, Taxes and Regulations**

**7. Avoiding Unreasonable, Unscientific Food Safety Requirements by Canadian Retailers**

North Okanagan Region, South Okanagan Region

Whereas the public expects a safe food system with protection from food-borne illnesses, and

Whereas Canada's scientific approach to a national food safety system (CanadaGAP) ensures Canada's food supply is one of the safest in the world, and

Whereas the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has reviewed the CanadaGAP programs, that can be and often are favourably benchmarked against other international food safety programs, and

Whereas there is a new trend to add retailer-specific food safety rules that are not based on science or reviewed by CFIA, and

Whereas the concentration of retailers in the marketplace is leading to unequal market power in which retailers can abuse their dominant market position and impose unreasonable requirements on growers and their packers, and

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**Avoiding Unreasonable, Unscientific Food Safety Requirements by Canadian Retailers (continued)**

Whereas Great Britain and Australia have implemented a “Retailer Code of Practice” that could control the unreasonable imposition of retailer-specific requirements for food safety (see <https://www.accc.gov.au/business/industry-codes/food-and-grocery-code-of-conduct> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groceries-supply-code-of-practice/groceries-supply-code-of-practice>)

Therefore Be It Resolved that CHC urgently request that the federal Department of Justice and AAFC seek to have Canadian retailers recognize the CanadaGAP program (or a recognized equivalent) as the sole food safety program that is required in Canada, and

Further Be It Resolved that the CHC advocate for legislation to implement a broad-based retailer code of practice to avoid further abuse of the dominant market position of highly concentrated retailers.

**8. Keeping CanadaGAP Practical**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas the CanadaGAP food safety program is based on scientific food safety research and practical knowledge of farm practices, and

Whereas some impractical requirements can be inadvertently introduced into programs such as food safety, and

Whereas CanadaGAP for horticulture is under the purview of CanAgPlus, an independently managed corporation,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the CHC advocate for common sense, practical food safety programs under CanadaGAP, and

Further Be It Resolved that the CHC request CanAgPlus to establish an independent, science-based review mechanism to help resolve disputes on the scientific validity and the practicality of food safety rules.

**9. On-Farm Tourist Accommodation - Benefits and Impacts**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas on-farm tourist accommodation can diversify income for the farm, and

Whereas on-farm agritourism can help build public awareness of agriculture, and

Whereas on-farm tourist accommodation, if not planned properly, can have negative impacts by interfering with normal farm operations, and

Whereas a balance between the benefits and impacts of agritourism for agriculture is needed for local government planning,

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**On-Farm Tourist Accommodation - Benefits and Impacts (continued)**

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BC Agriculture Council discuss tourist on-farm accommodation rules with local government and provide input to municipalities that are reviewing their agriculture plans.

**10. Consistency of Agritourism opportunities for wineries and other agricultural operations**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas wineries have been permitted to build restaurants, meeting, and event facilities, along with the required infrastructure such as parking, and

Whereas these opportunities are not available under the same regulatory process to other types of farm operations,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the provincial government institute one set of rules for AgriTourism that does not discriminate against any sector.

**11. Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) Regulatory consistency between municipalities**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas some ALR regulations are delegated by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to local municipalities, and

Whereas more regional consistency is needed to avoid a patchwork of municipal regulations and different approaches and priorities to ALR applications for agri-tourism and other matters,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the ALC establish regional regulations for areas like the Okanagan.

**12. Homesite Severance**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas a homesite severance allows a property owner to subdivide their home from the larger agricultural lot, and

Whereas the ALR regulations only allows a homesite severance for a property owner who has continuously owned and occupied the property as their principal place of residence since December 21, 1972,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the ALC to allow owners who have owned an ALR parcel of land continuously for more than 30 years, to be eligible for a homesite severance.

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**13. Support for the ALR**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas the Agricultural Land Reserve protects arable land from residential and urban development, and

Whereas land is an essential resource for the agriculture sector, and

Whereas the BCFGAs vision is “a prosperous, sustainable, innovative tree fruit sector in BC”,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs continue to support the principles of the ALR.

**14. CRA Farm Equipment Depreciation Rates**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas growers should be allowed to opt for more rapid depreciation in years of higher profitability,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the CFA lobby for flexible CRA agricultural machinery depreciation options.

**IV. Crop Protection**

**15. IPM Funding**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas new invasive pests such as Apple Maggot, Spotted Wing Drosophila, Apple Clearwing Moth, and Brown Marmorated Stink Bug have been detected in recent years in the Okanagan, and

Whereas Integrated Pest Management (IPM) solutions have not yet been found for these new pests, and

Whereas IPM has a public benefit by reducing pesticide use,

Therefore Be It Resolved that federal and provincial governments increase funding to enhance Integrated Pest Management for tree fruits.

**16. Expand the Role of SIR**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas the SIR program has developed expertise and infrastructure for monitoring, clean-up of host trees, and control measures (i.e. sterile insect release and pheromone distribution), and

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**Expand the Role of SIR (continued)**

Whereas these services could lead to an economic improvement in control costs and damage caused by pests other than Codling Moth, and

Whereas the use of SIR to apply an area-wide IPM to other pests could realize significant economy of scope by making better use of SIR infrastructure and expertise,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGA urgently investigate expanding the legal mandate of SIR to monitor and have bylaws on pests other than Codling Moth - such as Apple Maggot, Spotted Wing Drosophila, Apple Clearwing Moth, and Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.

**17. Invasive Pest Funding**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas Apple Maggot, Spotted Wing Drosophila, Apple Clearwing Moth, and Brown Marmorated Stink Bug have been detected in recent years in the Okanagan, and

Whereas invasive insect pests are an economic and horticultural threat to the viability of the Okanagan tree fruit sector

Therefore Be It Resolved that the federal and provincial governments properly fund the monitoring and control of invasive pests.

**18. Okanagan Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program - Extra Spray Costs**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas many farms have achieved <0.2% end-of-season Codling Moth damage to fruit, but a few continue to spray insecticides due to higher Codling Moth populations, and

Whereas the program is mature, but needs to gain control of occasional Codling Moth outbreaks at particular sites, and

Whereas such growers pay for the Sterile Insect Release Program through a property tax and also have an additional spray cost,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGA request OK SIR to consider reintroducing a compliance grant, for growers who still need to spray and comply with instruction on the control of codling moth.

**19. Okanagan Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program - efficiency and communication**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas growers appreciate the cost control that the OKSIR program has been able to implement, and

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**Okanagan Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program - efficiency and communication (continued)**

Whereas SIR rates have not increased for 7 years due to the efficient and effective operation of the program,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the SIR management continue to seek program efficiencies to keep cost to growers as low as possible, and

Further Be It Resolved that the OKSIR program continue to demonstrate how the funding is spent, and quantify the benefits for growers.

**20. Deer Cull**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas deer fencing is expensive and only relocates the wildlife problem, and

Whereas without controlling the population of urban deer, fencing is one of the only protections currently available for deer damage to orchards, and

Whereas the problems associated with urban deer are increasing, including damage to orchards, damage to vehicles due to collisions with deer, and the suffering of injured and dying animals as a result of these collisions, and

Whereas the excessive urban deer population is a responsibility of the government,

Therefore Be It Resolved that municipalities institute a deer cull and other practices (such as a new limited entry hunting program) to manage the problem urban deer population.

**21. Accessing the Grower Requested Own Use Program**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas the Grower Requested Own Use (GROU) program is administered by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and allows Canadian growers to import and use foreign versions of Canadian registered products at a lower cost, and

Whereas a total of 15 products can be placed on the GROU list per year, including renewals of products expiring from the list (each product remains on the list for 2 years unless renewed) - i.e. there is a maximum of 30 products on the GROU list for all commodities grown in Canada - and

**Resolutions**

Whereas products are ineligible for GROU if

- The data exclusive period has not ended (New products have an exclusive use period for 10-12 years).
- The product is a “restricted use product”.
- There is no matching product in the U.S. (The company that sells the product in Canada must be the same as the company in the U.S.)
- The product is not materially identical to U.S. version. (The product must have the same active ingredient % as the U.S. version.)

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA consult with members to identify priority products to request adding to the GROU list, such as Spinosad (Success) which was approved about 2001.

## **V. Water and Environment**

### **22. Research on the Impact of Climate Change**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas climate change appears to be leading to earlier seasons and greater variability in weather,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the province fund research to determine how climate change will affect horticulture, and how horticulture production may adapt to take advantage of climate change.

### **23. Climate Change - Fund Weather Stations**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas information provided by weather stations is even more critical with the increased variability of weather and more extreme weather conditions due to climate change,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the province increase funding for weather stations by providing increased funding to the Environmental Farm Plan Program.

### **24. Environmental Farm Plan Program - Increase Funding**

South Okanagan Region

Whereas the EFP program should pay a higher percentage of project cost for environmental projects which do not provide a financial benefit (such as rebuilding a pesticide storage shed), and

Whereas the EFP program funding has been reduced, with a resultant reduction in the types of eligible projects for orchards and vineyards, and

Whereas the EFP program encourages projects that create positive environmental benefits, and

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**Environmental Farm Plan Program - Increase Funding (continued)**

Whereas the EFP program is thought of positively and creates a cooperative atmosphere for climate change and environmental improvements, and

Whereas the alternative for government to the EFP Program is regulation and compliance activity, which come at a greater cost and increases the resistance of industry to making improvements,

Therefore Be It Resolved that BCAC lobby for more funding for EFP Beneficial Management Practices and a higher percentage of project costs to be funded.

**25. Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program - Funding for Irrigation Improvements**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas drought conditions have been a concern in recent years, and

Whereas irrigation improvements can help conserve water, and

Whereas the EFP program arbitrarily cut funding for irrigation improvements in orchards and vineyards, but not field crops, and

Whereas these arbitrary funding cuts to on-farm irrigation improvement do not recognize the need for climate change adaptation and are unfair to orchardists and grape growers,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the provincial government restore funding in the EFP program for irrigation improvements to use water more efficiently on orchards and vineyards.

**26. Water for Irrigation**

South Okanagan Region

Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs increase its efforts to ensure access to irrigation water for tree fruit producers, and to ensure that water is provided at affordable and competitive rates.

**27. Water Turn-On and Turn-Off Dates**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas irrigation districts do not normally provide agricultural irrigation water outside of the growing season, and

Whereas climate change has caused very early growth in some seasons and

Whereas drought has caused a greater need for late-season irrigation flows, and

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**Water Turn-On and Turn-Off Dates (continued)**

Whereas irrigation districts generally have inflexible and unresponsive rules on agricultural irrigation turn-on and turn-off dates,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the province of BC mandate that irrigation districts have horticultural advisory boards to determine agricultural irrigation turn-on and turn-off dates.

## **VI. Industry Development**

### **28. Cherry Breeder Scientist Position at Summerland Research and Development Centre**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas the apple-cherry breeder at Summerland Research and Development Centre recently retired, and

Whereas the AAFC cherry breeding program is renowned around the world and is the result of a focused, individual breeder, and

Whereas the Canadian Apple Breeding Network needs an Apple Germplasm Development Scientist at Summerland Research and Development Centre,

Therefore Be It Resolved that new apple and cherry breeders be hired by AAFC.

### **29. Weed Scientist Position at Summerland Research and Development Centre**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas invasive weeds in orchards and vineyards (such as puncture vine) require biology and control research, and

Whereas the Tree Fruit Production Guide, outlining the use of regulated products, has not been reviewed by an AAFC Weed Specialist,

Therefore Be It Resolved that a Weed Scientist position at Summerland Research and Development Centre be re-established.

### **30. Programs to Support the Introduction of New Varieties and the Success of Replanted Acreage**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas growers plant orchards that take 5-7 years to come into full production and have a lifespan of only 20 - 25 years, and

Whereas deciding on which variety to plant is challenging for individual orchardists, and

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**Programs to Support the Introduction of New Varieties and the Success of Replanted Acreage  
(continued)**

Whereas there is a need to establish best horticultural and storage practices for new varieties, and

Whereas the most successful new varieties are not only superior in quality, but also have a strong marketing plan behind their introduction, and

Whereas there is a need for resources during the introductory period of a variety, and

Whereas the Tree Fruit Industry Development Fund was established as a companion program for new variety introduction and replant program, and is now depleted,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the provincial government provide funding to support new varieties through market planning, horticultural research and storage research.

## **VII. Governance**

### **31. BC Agriculture Council Farmer Identity Card**

North Okanagan Region

Whereas BCFGAs members appreciate the convenience of the Farmer Identity Card, and

Whereas the cost of the Farmer Identity Card is \$100 per year or \$285 for 3 years, and

Whereas the cost includes 2 cards and additional cards are \$60 each, and

Whereas many growers feel that this cost is excessive,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the cost of BC Agriculture Council's "Farmer Identity Card" be reduced and that multiple cards be issued to farmers for family member's use at a reasonable cost.