

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. Replant Grant for Soft Fruit

North Region

Whereas apple replant grants provide 22.1% of total cost of preparation and planting, and

Whereas cherry replant grants provides 12.2% of total costs of preparation and planting,

Therefore Be It Resolved to increase the replant grant per tree for soft fruit.

4. Replant Waitlist Eligibility In Following Year

North Region

Whereas previous replant programs allowed growers to apply in years subsequent to their replant project, and

Whereas the current program's project eligibility is restricted to the year of replant,

Therefore Be It Resolved that growers on a replant waitlist but not funded in the year should be eligible in the following year.

5. Long-term Replant Funding

South and North Region

Whereas the replant program has been very helpful in the past and we have asked for a long term program, and

Whereas the Premier and the Agricultural Minister of BC announced on November 21st, 2014 that the provincial government has committed to a seven-year replant program,

Whereas there are only four years remaining for this replant program,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA continue to lobby for successful long term replant program.

6. Increase Replant Grant to Reflect Inflation

South Region

Whereas the cost of replanting has increased due to increased tree cost, increased labour costs, and increased irrigation and post and wire costs, the cost of water, as well as inflationary increases in cost of other inputs in general, and

Whereas the provincial Minister of Agriculture mandate letter specifies that the Minister “Establish Grow B.C. to help young farmers access land, and support fruit and nut growers and processors to expand local food production.”

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA request the government to increase the level of replant grant to reflect inflation.

7. Re-Introduce Transition Production Assistance Program

North Region

Whereas the first three to five after replant have little or no income, and

Whereas a previous Replant Program assisted with the cashflow deficit through a grant in the first three years after replant, called the Transitional Production Assistance Payment,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the government mandate the re-introduction of the Transitional Production Assistance Payment in the Replant Program.

8. National Packinghouse Infrastructure and 'Bare Land' Program

North Region

Whereas there is underutilized farmland in the Okanagan-Similkameen, and

Whereas there are untapped export markets for Canadian apples and cherries, and

Whereas bringing new land into production will create economic value, and

Whereas new, expanded packing facilities will be required for the increased production,

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGAs seek funding for a national infrastructure and 'bare land' planting program through a no-interest loan for the first five years.

9. Affordable Hail Insurance Premiums

North Region

Whereas Production Insurance provides some measure of coverage against risks of weather and other named perils, and

Whereas Production Insurance has saved many growers from financial disaster, and

Whereas increases in grower premiums will reduce growers' acceptance of and participation in the program, and

Whereas a continued high participation rate in Production Insurance will reduce the call for government assistance due to weather-damaged crops,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs work to maintain the current Production Insurance program at an affordable premium cost.

III. Trade, Taxes and Regulations

10. Local Government Hiring

North Region

Whereas local governments use zoning and bylaws to control activities within their jurisdictions, and

Whereas agricultural land comprises the majority of many local government's land area,

Therefore Be It Resolved that relationships be built with local governments to determine if appropriate staffing levels dedicated to agriculture are in place, and

Further Be It Resolved that local governments involve agriculture associations in their hiring processes for staff who have agricultural responsibilities.

11. Minimum Wage - Helping the Agriculture Sector Adjust

North Region

Whereas the Fair Wage Commission is studying and making recommendations on minimum wages to the provincial Government, and

Whereas the impact of minimum wage increases will impact industries differently, with the highest impact being industries with a greater amount of low-skill positions and industries that are competing with areas that provide greater support to their sectors and industries that are price takers due to retailer consolidation, and

Whereas agriculture is vulnerable on all three dimensions:

- a high proportion of operating cost is labour expense,
- other countries and provinces provide higher levels of support to their agriculture sectors, and
- there is great concentration in the retail sector of Canada, so that growers are price-takers,

Therefore Be It Resolved that government off-set the increase in minimum wage through increased funding of agricultural programs, introduction of tax credits for farming in relation to the employment of low-skill workers, and reducing regulatory costs for growers, and

Further Be It Resolved to provide options for worker housing to be built on farmland and to provide funding for worker housing - bunkhouse style.

12. Strengthen Farm Practices Protection Act and Educate Neighbours

South Region

Whereas the purpose of the Agricultural Land Reserve and Commission is to preserve agricultural land

- to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and
- to encourage local governments, first nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies, and

Whereas reducing the urban pressure to implement costly regulations is important to the ongoing viability of farming in the Okanagan, and

Whereas the Farm Practices Act can be used in a vexatious manner to place excessive legal costs and time commitments on growers defending themselves from spurious complaints, and

Whereas the provincial government needs to take positive action in ensuring awareness of normal agricultural practices by urbanites purchasing property in or bordering the ALR,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the provincial government strengthen the Farm Practices Protection Act to ensure it achieves its original intent, and

Further Be It Resolved that the ALC and Provincial government better educate the public about farming practices and commercial agriculture, and

Further Be It Resolved that properties bordering or in the ALR must have a attached in the registry requiring the realtor to obtain a signed consent form recognizing that the property is in the ALR and subject to the Farm Practices Protection Act, and that realtors provide a Ministry of Agriculture pamphlet on Normal Farm Practices to the purchaser, prior to transfer of the property, and

Further Be It Resolved that local governments and the ALR strengthen the protection of ALR lands by strengthening the buffer and set-back requirements of non-farm use bordering ALR properties.

13. Protect Worker Housing

South Region

Whereas the Farm Practices Protection Act allows the Minister of Agriculture to review and approve local government bylaws that impact agriculture, and

Whereas the Farm Worker Housing Bylaw Standard is out of date due to the growth of the SAWP program and the increased dependence of agriculture on foreign workers to meet unfilled jobs on the farm,

Therefore Be It Resolved that worker housing needs to be protected through the Farm Practices Protection Act and an updated Farm Worker Housing Bylaw Standard.

14. Taxation of Capital Gains Exemption

South Region

Whereas tax changes are proposed for incorporated companies,

Whereas capital gains are currently treated favourably for farms and the change could negatively impact incorporated family farms,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the CHC encourage the federal government to maintain the existing rules for farms in regards to the Capital Gains Exemption.

15. Trade Protections for the Canadian Apple Industry

South Region

Whereas Canada, Mexico and the United States are renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA),

Whereas Mexico has indicated that they will have tariffs on US apples, if NAFTA fails,

Whereas that would increase US apple imports into Canada and reduce the Canadian apple prices,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs work with the Canadian government to ensure that trade protections are implemented to protect the Canadian Apple Industry.

IV. Crop Protection

16. Funding for Invasive Pests and the National Plant and Animal Health Strategy

North Region

Whereas the federal and provincial governments have, in 2017, adopted a Plant and Animal Health Protection Strategy that if implemented, would greatly reduce the risk of invasive pests and “shifts emphasis from response to prevention and charts a path for governments, industry and other partners to collectively address evolving risks to plant and animal health”, and

Whereas Brown Marmorated Stink Bug and other invasive pests require more government funding to ensure the pests do not become established and the Plant and Animal Health Protection Strategy is implemented,

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

17. Grower Working Group on Invasive Pests

North Region

Be It Resolved that BCFGAs establish a grower-based working group to develop a plan to combat invasive pests.

18. Expand mandate of SIR to cover invasive pests

North 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

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 BCFGGA urgently investigate expanding the 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.

19. Urban Deer Cull

North 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 the BCFGGA seek support for urban deer cull and other practices (such as a new limited entry hunting program) to manage the problem urban deer population.

20. Availability of Product to Reduce Resistance of Pests to Treatments

North Region

Whereas it is a best management practice to rotate chemical groups throughout the year in a spray program to reduce resistance buildup in the targeted disease, and

Whereas Polyram, Dithane and Manzate are fungicides in the M3 chemical group, which is classified as being a low risk to develop resistance,

Therefore Be It Resolved that CHC lobby PMRA to maintain Polyram, Dithane, and Manzate as legal fungicides on tree fruits.

21. Starling Control

South Region

Whereas Starlings are an invasive species that harm native bird populations, spread livestock disease, and consume economic quantities of feed and damage fruit through feeding, rendering it unfit for consumption, and

Whereas the Starling Control Program originated about 15 years ago for the purpose of reducing the Starling population in the Okanagan, and

Whereas there is recent research on starling movements that could further improve the effectiveness of the Starling Control Program,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA continue to support the Starling Control Program, and

Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA work to ensure the Starling Control Program continues to improve monitoring and trapping for areas where populations are increasing and for areas which are the source of starling populations that cause damage to tree fruit in the Okanagan.

V. Water and Environment

22. Adequate, Affordable and Reliable Water

North Region

Whereas irrigation districts normally provide agricultural irrigation water during 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

Whereas irrigation districts recently have not always reflected these climate change impacts on orchards and maintained or imposed arbitrary start and shut-off dates, and

Whereas decisions on the cost and allocation of irrigation water are under pressure from urban development,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA work with local governments to ensure adequate, affordable, and reliable water for agriculture irrigation and

Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA advocate for an Agricultural Water Reserve.

23. Funding to Expand Water Supply Systems

South Region

Whereas with climate change and urban development, demand for water is increasing, and

Whereas tree fruit production requires a adequate, affordable, and reliable water supply for agriculture irrigation

Therefore Be It Resolved that BCFGAs work with water purveyors to seek funding to expand water supply systems.

24. Carbon Credits

North, South Region

Whereas carbon is absorbed in fruit trees (including wood, roots and leaves), soil and orchard ground, and

Whereas growing tree fruit and other horticulture practices provide an environmental value to the society.

Therefore be it resolved that carbon credits be put in place for sequestering carbon in orchards and other horticulture.

25. Environmental Farm Plan Funding

South 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

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 increase the resistance of industry to making improvements,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the provincial government restore funding to expand the list of projects to include items such as irrigation, and

Further Be It Resolved that the BCAC lobby for more funding for EFP Beneficial Management Practices and a higher percentage of project costs to be funded in order to match the demand.

VI. Labour

26. Increase SAWP Housing Deduction

North Region

Whereas minimum wage is increasing and placing financial pressure on growers, and
Whereas labour costs are estimated to be 50-70% of the cost of producing tree fruit, and
Whereas other SAWP employment costs paid by growers such as airfare, housing, and statutory deductions are increasing, and

Whereas the SAWP program allows deduction of accommodations to a maximum of \$826 per worker per year,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the allowed housing deduction charged to SAWP workers be increased.

27. Grants to Employers of Workers from High-Unemployment Groups

North Region

Whereas the government wishes growers to hire employees from high unemployment groups such as aboriginal, disabled, and youth, and

Whereas there are additional supervision and productivity costs for many of this category of workers as they enter the workforce,

Therefore Be It Resolved that employers of employees from high unemployment groups receive a grant to compensate for the increase in minimum wage and greater discrepancy between productivity and minimum wage for this group of employees.

28. Worker Housing Bylaws

North Region

Whereas it is important that growers provide worker housing to meet SAWP program requirements, and

Whereas local government regulates farm worker housing through the use of bylaws,

Therefore Be It Resolved that BCFGAs strongly represent the industry to local governments when bylaw changes that affect worker housing are concerned.

29. Worker Housing Bylaw Standard

North Region

Whereas the right-to-farm legislation is important to the operation of farms by balancing rural-residential conflicts and

Whereas the right-to-farm legislation protects farm areas from unreasonable local government bylaws, and

Whereas the Minister can require that local governments follow farm bylaw standards mandated by the Minister of Agriculture,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Minister protect worker housing by updating the farm bylaw standard and

Further Be It Resolved that the Minister direct local governments to follow a new farm worker housing bylaw standard.

30. SAWP Funding and Communication with Local Consulate Representatives

North Region

Whereas demographics of the Canadian population are leading to fewer Canadians being available and willing to work on farms, and

Whereas the SAWP program has been effective in providing farmers with a stable workforce from Mexico and the Caribbean Commonwealth countries, and

Whereas the farmer participation in the SAWP program is increasing in rural areas and effective communication amongst the employers, employees and the participating countries is important,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCAC work with the consulates from the participating countries to improve effective communication channels and that the BCFGALobby for an additional worker deduction to set up local consulate representatives in the regions where there are large concentrations of workers.

31. SAWP Trusted Employer

South Region

Whereas the SAWP program requires employers to conduct certified annual housing inspections, and

Whereas these inspections are an additional cost to growers,

Therefore Be It Resolved that a “trusted employer” program be established to exempt employers who have passed inspections several years in a row.

VII. Research

32. Invasive Pest Research Funding

North 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 BCFGGA seek funding for research projects to manage new invasive pests.

VIII. Industry Development

33. Columbia River Treaty Renewal - Impact on BC Agriculture

North Region

Whereas the BC tree fruit and vegetable sectors have been harmed by the expansion of apple, cherry, potato and onion crops in Washington State, and

Whereas this expansion of intensive crop production in Washington State is made possible by the reliable water flows provided by dams constructed in BC to store and control the flow of water into the Columbia River, and

Whereas the province has indicated that the 50-60 year renewal process of the CRT currently underway must recognize impact on BC producers and the value of the irrigation flows to the US,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA encourage the province to include the impact on BC agriculture in the Columbia River Treaty renewal and

Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA seek funding from the re-negotiated Columbia River Treaty for industry development projects.

34. Work With the BC Cherry Association

North Region

Whereas the BC Fruit Growers' Association and the BC Cherry Association are separate, independent associations, and

Whereas each association has separate fees,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs and the BC Cherry Association work together, and that all growers pay a fair share to operate their associations.

35. Obtain New Varieties

North Region

Whereas there are a limited number of apple and soft fruit varieties that are best suited to growing conditions in the Okanagan and in other apple-growing regions of Canada, and

Whereas growers need several successful varieties to choose to replant, so as to reduce the risk of any one variety and to extend the harvest dates, and

Whereas growers have expressed a need to access varieties that are developed in other areas of the world and

Whereas new types of variety access agreements with plant owners require an industry-wide approach in BC, and

Whereas Summerland Varieties Corporation (SVC) has expertise in world variety markets and has knowledge of and interaction with variety owners on the international stage,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs and SVC place extra effort into obtaining new varieties for the industry.

36. Develop New Club Varieties

North Region

Whereas new varieties are the lifeblood of the tree fruit industry, and

Whereas there is a need to coordinate and connect the breeding programs in the world to access new varieties, especially the limited-access or club varieties, and

Whereas an industry strategy involving all BC tree fruit organizations could assist in bringing other values to the table that would assist in negotiating an access agreement with international club variety owners,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs work with other apple growing regions of the world to come up with new club varieties of tree fruits.

37. Work With BC Tree Fruit Cooperative on New Varieties

North Region

Whereas new varieties are the lifeblood of the tree fruit industry, and

Whereas access to new club (or limited-access) varieties requires coordination of agreements, monitoring-compliance and fruit quality guarantees, and effort in the area of marketing,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA place priority on accessing new varieties and
Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA work with BC Tree Fruits Co-op to secure any new
varieties of tree fruits.

38. Common Sense Food Safety

South 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,

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

IX. Governance

39. Test Orchard Lease Term

North Region

Whereas the Test Orchard is currently leased for the term of 15 years plus a five year
renewal, by BCFGGA Research and Development Inc. to Summerland Varieties Corporation,
and

Whereas the Test Orchard lease provides the BCFGGA subsidiary BCFGGA Research and
Development Orchard Inc. with funds for projects including Starling Control, Apple
Clearwing Moth Pilot Project, BCFGGA Labour Orientation and Safety Program, and
Research projects, and

Whereas SVC is utilizing the Test Orchard to prove new varieties and establish
demonstration plots,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Test Orchard should not be leased more than 3 years.

40. SVC Board Composition

North Region

Whereas the SVC Board is currently appointed by the BCFGGA Executive and terms are 3
years, with a maximum of 2 terms or 6 years in any one position on the SVC Board, and

Whereas the SVC Board is composed of

- 6 growers who are members of the BCFGGA and have expressed interest in being a Board member or been proposed by the BCFGGA executive, and selected as Board members by meeting minimum standards for the understanding of business planning, the role of Board members, horticultural practices and interest in new varieties,
- 1 grower from another apple growing region in Canada who serves on the Board of an apple association, and
- 1 or 2 retired AAFC managers from the Research Branch,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the SVC Directors be elected half from the South delegates and half from the North delegates.

41. Guidelines for Resolving Disputes Between SVC and Growers

North Region

Whereas the Plant Breeders Rights Act encourages plant breeding - as well as promotion and development of new varieties - by allowing plant breeders to own and charge royalties for newly developed varieties, and

SVC is an agent for breeders with agreements in place requiring it to provide best efforts to collect royalties on behalf of plant breeders, and

Whereas there are sometimes disputes over the payment of royalties,

Therefore Be It Resolved that BCFGGA develop guidelines to resolve disputed matters between SVC and growers, and

Further Be It Resolved that BCFGGA request SVC to follow the guidelines and request that the guidelines be applied equally to all growers.

42. Budwood Sales

North Region

Be It Resolved that the BCFGGA request SVC to inform BCFGGA members of the amount of budwood sold and where sold.

43. Number of BCFGGA Information Sessions

North Region

Whereas there are 2 Regional Annual Meetings in November, 2 District Council Annual Meetings in January, as well as meetings held on specific issues (recently a Special General Meeting on bylaws and a meeting in Keremeos on the Test Orchard lease),

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs should hold more than 2 information meetings per year.

44. SVC Minutes

North Region

Whereas SVC is a subsidiary of the BCFGAs, and

Whereas the SVC Board minutes are available to the BCFGAs Board, and

Whereas SVC operates in a competitive environment and that certain competitive information be protected,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGAs request that SVC minutes be accessible to all growers.

45. Summerland Varieties Corporation (SVC) Governance Resolution

Jeet Dukhia

That all disputed matters between growers and SVC be withdrawn from the legal system and all legal costs be paid by SVC, and

That the SVC Board of Directors should consist of 3 members from the North, 3 from the South and these members be elected from the delegates, and

That following the Annual Convention a meeting of delegates be called to implement new policies to govern the appointment of the SVC Board of Directors.

46. Summerland Varieties Corporation (SVC) - Contractual Obligations and Independent Governance

Fred Steele

Whereas SVC provides services to variety owners and gains access to new varieties for BC and Canadian tree fruit growers, and

Whereas SVC has entered into contracts to provide licensing and royalty services to variety owners, and

Whereas SVC must perform its obligations under these contracts free of political interference or risk having contracts cancelled and losing access to new varieties for BC growers, and

Whereas it would be unfair to forgive some growers' royalties, as all other growers must pay their fair share of royalties and

Whereas SVC will also, as a result of not fulfilling its contractual obligations and losing contracts, no longer have earnings that support research projects and BCFGAs projects such as replant supplementary funds, starling control, Apple Clearwing Moth Demonstration Project, and the BCFGAs Labour Orientation and Safety Project, and

Whereas SVC's contribution to new varieties is known around the world and this intangible value will be lost if SVC succumbs to political interference, and

Whereas the BCFGAs receives regular updates from SVC and also provides input to SVC for its consideration in making independent decisions,

Therefore Be It Resolved that SVC uphold royalty payments, fairly, for all growers accessing new varieties, and

Further Be It Resolved that the Directors of SVC be appointed by the BCFGAs based on merit and according to their abilities, and

Further Be It Resolved that SVC remain an independently operated and directed company free of political interference.