



The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association

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Newsletter *An Early Season*

April 12, 2015

Labour

1. Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program update. BCFGGA provides assistance to members making SAWP applications. If we can help to answer your questions or clarify SAWP requirements, please contact Bunvir Nijjar, Corporate Secretary, at 250-762-5226, ext. 22. Also, if you are a BCFGGA member, Bunvir can help complete the forms and place internet ads - for a fee of \$50 for 2 workers, plus \$5 for each additional worker.
2. The Labour Orientation and Safety Training Program is operational again this year. Ron Forrest will be meeting groups of Quebecois and local youth in the South Okanagan to give them orientation and safety training so that they are prepared and productive when they start to work on farms. Ron can also attend your farm to provide a safety training 'refresher' for a group of workers starting at your farm. Call Ron at 250-849-7503 if you are looking for local workers or need a training session for your workers.

Ron can also put you in contact with Carol Reid, from the Farm and Ranch and Safety and Health Association (FARSHA) if you need specialized training or are interested in the Certificate of Recognition Program that provides reduced premiums when growers implement a safety program.

Ron's service is provided at no fee for BCFGGA members. Summerland Varieties Corporation is contributing 1/3 of the cost of the project, so thanks to SVC!

3. SAWP Transfers. If you have applied for SAWP transfers, but have not identified a farm that the workers will come from, then contact Bunvir Nijjar, who will seek to assist with transfers. The BCFGGA office often gets calls in August from greenhouses that have workers available for transfer to another farm in the Fall.
4. Minimum Wage. Minimum Wage is increasing to \$10.45 per hour on September 15, 2015. Piece rates also increase, but most growers currently pay above the minimum piece rate.

- Effective Sept. 15, 2015, the minimum wage, including 4% of gross earnings vacation pay, for farm workers who are employed on a piece work basis and hand harvest the following berry, fruit or vegetable crops, is, for the gross volume or weight picked, as follows:

Commodities affected in 2015:

- apples - \$17.39 a bin (27.1 cu. ft.);
- pears - \$19.58 a bin (27.1 cu. ft.)
- grapes - \$18.48 a 1/2 bin (13.7 cu. ft.);

Commodities affected in 2016:

- apricots - \$20.00 a 1/2 bin (13.7 cu. ft.);
- cherries - \$0.228 a pound;
- peaches - \$18.48 a 1/2 bin (12.6 cu. ft.);
- prune plums - \$19.58 a 1/2 bin (13.7 cu. ft.);
- raspberries - \$0.364 a pound;
- strawberries - \$0.350 a pound;
- blueberries - \$0.404 a pound;

Apple Clearwing Moth

Apple Clearwing Moth (ACM) is a current tree health issue. BCFGA and BCIAF funded a survey in 2014 to determine how the 2012 populations have changed. Maps are available at <http://oksir.org/ACMSurvey2014.asp>

The BCFGA expresses its thanks to the organizations that contributed to the 2014 trapping project:

- BC Investment Agriculture Foundation: up to \$31,040 (66%).
- BCFGA Research and Development Orchard Ltd.: up to \$15,990 (34%).

Our thanks to Gary Judd, Hugh Philip and the SIR crew for assisting with this project.

The following are items that the BCFGA is engaged in for 2015:

1. Tamara Richardson, a horticultural consultant based in Oliver, has been engaged to lead a small ACM project aimed at creating buffers into non-infested areas. Tamara will also be providing extension or outreach to growers. Thank you to Summerland Varieties Corporation for funding this project for 2015.
2. Mating disruption for ACM - lures are expected to be available at cost to growers for 2015. Growers will be provided information on how to hang the lures - Dr. Gary Judd reports that the lures do not have to be installed higher than head height. Tamara Richardson will be writing up an ACM information sheet on the use of pheromone lures and other control practices. Watch future editions of the newsletter for more information.

Next year, 2016, the BCFGA intends to develop an area-wide approach for ACM that can be delivered by SIR for the entire Okanagan-Similkameen. Such an approach will rely on government funding to control this serious pest of apple and pear trees. Watch the newsletter for more information.

Printed Spray Schedules and Electronic Tree Fruit Production Guide

The web-based Tree Fruit Production Guide is now available at www.bctfpg.ca Access to the electronic guide is free.

There are several ways to get your printed Spray Schedules:

1. BC Tree Fruit growers will receive their spray schedules from their fieldman. The BCFGGA is providing these documents at no charge to members.
2. Other BCFGGA members will receive their spray schedules in the mail in the next two weeks. The BCFGGA is providing these documents at no charge to members.
3. Growers who wish additional copies of the spray schedule may go to the Spray Schedule section of the on-line guide, select a commodity, and select the print icon in the upper right-hand corner, which opens a pdf version of the spray schedule The next step is to print onto a printer connected to your computer, making sure to select 'landscape' and 'flip on long edge' if you are printing double-sided. Thank you to Susanna Achaempong and Gayle Jespersen, as well as Hugh Philip for reviewing the spray schedules this year.
4. Growers may order printed versions of the guide from the following website:
<http://www.bcfga.com/orderform.php?pageID=318>

Help us improve the web-based TFPG. If you have any comments on the TFPG electronic format, please email us at info@bcfga.com - there is also a link to this email in the bottom left corner of most of the web-based TFPG pages.

You may view the web-based guide on your cell phone - make sure that you have a reasonably priced data plan before accessing internet on your cell phone.

Environmental Farm Plan Program

ARDCorp has announced application intake is now open for the 2015 Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program. Funding runs out quickly, and growers need to have an EFP in place before applying for project funding (advisor services needed to prepare the plan are paid 100% by the program).

[Visit bcefp.ca to find out more.](http://bcefp.ca)

[Click here for this year's BMP list](#)

The Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs, or environmental projects eligible for partial funding from ARDCORP) that are of the most interest to tree fruit growers are:

Category number (Practice Code)	Title, type	Percentage funding (Funding Cap)
08 (02B)	Cost difference between mower and mulching mower.	30% (\$5,000)
08 (03)	Composting manure, vegetable waste	30% (\$25,000)

08 (05)	Portable chippers, air assisted burner	50% (\$25,000)
16 (1601 A)	improved efficiency, parts and alteration to sprayers.	30% (\$1,500)
16 (1601 B and C)	Tower sprayers, specialized new sprayers to reduce volume of spray (e.g. optical sensors)	30% (\$10,000)
16 (1601 D)	Cost difference between mover and mulcher.	30% (\$5,000)
18 (1802)	Weather stations.	50% (\$5,000)
19 (1901 and 1902)	Buffer, hedgerow, shelterbelt	60% (\$15,000)
25 (2501)	IPM Plan	(\$1,000)
25 (2901)	Irrigation planning	(\$1,000)

Wildlife Management Tips for Agricultural Workers - A workshop

Time: 9:00 am to Noon

Date: Friday, April 24, 2015

Place: NkèMip Desert Cultural Centre, Osoyoos

Cost: \$30 per person.

Topics: Managing bears and attractants and use of bear spray demonstration, Wildlife management property assessments (take home materials and mitigation poster for posting in employee area), manage attractants to reduce rodents, Black rats - newly introduced to the Okanagan, Snake smart, other wildlife: deer, cougar, and coyotes, spiders and ticks, bats.

Pre-register by contacting Louise Corbeil, 250-767-2534, or email bcwgc@shaw.ca

The BC Fruit Growers' Association Office is Moving

The BCFGGA office is moving to 880 Vaughan Avenue - the previous site of the BC Fruit Packers office. BC Tree Fruits requested BCFGGA to move to make room for BCTF personnel that are being located at the 1473 Water Street site. While moving is always a challenge, the following benefits were identified:

- greater cooperation with the packinghouse
- for purposes of hosting visits, proximity to the new BCTF fruit store and cidery
- also for hosting visits, proximity to active packing lines (pear and cherry)
- on-site storage.
- ease of parking and free street parking for visiting growers.

Staff are positive about the move, but also recognize the challenge in extra time required in re-locating the office. The final date of the move is not established, but is expected to be complete in the next 2 months. Telephone and email contacts remain the same.

You may access a calendar of events on the front page of the BCFGAs website, www.bcfga.com