



## **The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**February 23, 2015**

### **BC Fruit Growers' Association Election Results**

(Kelowna) – The BC Fruit Growers' Association held its annual election for the leadership of the BCFGA. The members of the 2015 BCFGA Executive are:

Fred Steele, President  
Bhupinder Dhaliwal, Vice-President  
Niel Dendy  
Surjeet Nagra  
Tony Nijjar  
Ravinder Bains  
Sukhdeep Brar  
Denise MacDonald

“It is an honour to have the confidence of the membership”, said Fred Steele, President of the BC Fruit Growers' Association after the election. “I am looking forward to working with the executive - we will miss the contributions of Peter Simonsen and Sukhdev Goraya, who were not re-elected. I am excited to be able to work on behalf of growers and to work with both the new and returning members of the Executive. Almost all of the resolutions were approved by the membership, and I am looking forward to a productive and positive time in the coming year,” he concluded.

The BCFGA represents 520 commercial tree fruit growers in BC.

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Approved resolutions, BCFGA February 20-21, 2015 Convention, appended.

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## **BCFGA Resolutions Approved at Annual Meeting, February 20-21, 2015**

### 1. Appreciation

Be it resolved that the growers of this industry extend their appreciation to all who in any measure have assisted the industry during the past year.

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

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

### 3. Replant Program

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGa express its appreciation to the province for its seven-year replant program investment in the Tree Fruit Industry.

### 4. Replant Program Design

Therefore it be resolved that the province be flexible in shifting replant funding between fiscal years.

### 5. Vacant Land Eligibility for Replant Program

Therefore be it resolved that the province cooperate with the BCFGa in developing a federal export-oriented program.

### 6. Production Insurance - Newly planted orchard yield

Therefore be it resolved that the production insurance branch study yields in young, newly planted orchards and revise the production guarantee for early production years, and

Further be it resolved that the branch ensure that growers are informed of the process for updating their coverage levels on all plantings.

### 7. Production Insurance Arbitrators

Be it resolved that the arbitrators in Production Insurance have experience in tree fruit production and farming and to clarify the rules that allow growers to have input into the selection of arbitrators.

### 8. Agri-Invest

Therefore be it resolved that the Federal government be encouraged move to return AgriInvest to the previous level of benefits.

#### 9. Columbia River Treaty Renewal Process

Therefore be it resolved to support the government's position on the CRT to recognize the value of irrigation water to the US and the harmful impact on BC producers.

#### 10. Agriculture Land Reserve

Therefore be it resolved that the agricultural sustainability fund be created to promote the active use of farming from revenue generated from ALR exclusions.

#### 11. The Buy Local Program

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGA express its appreciation for the provincial budget announcement of an additional \$2 million for the Buy Local Program, and Further Be It Resolved that the provincial government adequately and continuously fund the Buy Local Program.

#### 12. Environmental Farm Plan Program

Therefore be it resolved that adequate funding be restored for BMPs such as deer fencing, pesticide storage sheds, irrigation, etc and Further be it resolved that EFP program funds be fairly allocated among regions of BC and all commodities.

#### 13. Environmental Farm Program

Therefore be it resolved that the BC Agriculture Council review and fix the EFP Program to restore the significant environmental benefit to both growers and the public.

#### 14. Food Safety Program

Therefore Be It Resolved that adequate funding be provided for the Food Safety program.

#### 15. Merging Food Safety and Environmental Farm Practice

Therefore be it resolved that the governments investigate merging the Food Safety and EFP programs.

#### 16. Provincial Sales Tax Exemption

Therefore be it resolved that a system be developed to allow growers to be exempt from Provincial Sales Tax on all farm purchases of services and supplies.

#### 17. Farm-to-table Opportunities within the Agriculture Land Reserve

Therefore be it resolved that the BCAC advocate to broaden allowable farm-to-table food preparation activities within the ALR.

#### 18. Genetically Modified Organisms

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGA oppose the registration and introduction of GMO tree fruits.

#### 19. Research at the Pacific Agriculture Research Centre

Therefore be it resolved that federal government develop a succession plan for the apple and cherry breeding research positions at PARC.

#### 20. Promoting the Environmental Benefit of the SIR Program

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGA explore the promotional benefit of the SIR program and promote the environmental friendliness of the industry.

[resolution 21 was not approved, but tabled]

#### 22. Municipal Land and Water Use Decisions

Therefore be it resolved that the municipal governments consider water allocation and pricing decisions based on the needs of agricultural land and water use.

#### 23. Grower Own Use (GROU) Import Program

Therefore be it resolved that GROU program allow access to more crop protection products.

#### 24. Sterile Insect Release Program - Support

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGA continue to support an efficient and effective Sterile Insect Release (SIR) Program.

#### 25. Deer Fencing and Problem Urban Deer

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGA make a priority of advocating for the re-introduction of deer fencing as a Beneficial Management Practice eligible for EFP funding, and

Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGA cooperate with municipalities to manage the problem urban deer populations.

#### 26. Starling Control Program

Therefore be it resolved that BCFGA continue to provide financial support for the Starling Control program.

#### 27. Wood Chipping program

Therefore be it resolved that there be government funding to fully service the chipping of all orchard wood waste.

#### 28. Drought Management Plan

Be it resolved that BCFGA support the development of a valley wide drought management plan.

29. Use of Composted Biosolids from municipal effluent treatment plants

Be it resolved that the BCFGA explore the use of composted biosolids as an orchard fertilizer.

30. Election Vote Counts

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Therefore be it resolved that a consistent policy be put in place on the disclosure of the vote counts at the annual election.

Late Resolution #1

Therefore be it resolved that the province take responsibility and fund the activities identified in the Critical Pest Control Plan for Apple Maggot.

Late Resolution #2

Therefore be it resolved that the term “organic” be reserved for product sold within BC that meets organic certification requirements.