

**BC Fruit Growers' Association
Friday File**



August 28, 2015

Wind Damage in Oliver-Keremeos - Info Session Organized

The intense wind on Saturday August 16 caused severe damage to crops and trees in local areas around Oliver and also in the Keremeos area. Apple crops were blown off trees, severely scuffed and cut from limb rubs, and some trees were blown over. Speaking to growers several days after the event, the BCFGAs Executive noted that growers needed information on the AgriStability and Production Insurance Programs. The BCFGAs and the Agriculture Risk Management Branch of the BC Ministry of Agriculture are organizing a meeting to make sure everyone has the information that they need.

Grower Meeting on AgriStability and Production Insurance

Time: 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Date: Thursday, September 3

Place: Meeting Room #2

Oliver Recreation Centre

6359 Park Drive, Oliver

If you had wind damage on August 16, mark your calendar and attend this information session.

Replant 2015

Minister Letnick met with BCFGAs President Fred Steele and General Manager Glen Lucas on August 20. The BCFGAs provided an update on the administration of the program. Appreciation was passed onto the Minister for providing the \$8.4 million, 7 year program to the tree fruit sector.

The first two batches of projects have been inspected. Letters were delivered last week to growers who are not in the first two batches to let them know that the program is fully subscribed, but that slippage in projects and the additional project funding obtained from SVC for the 2015 program may allow additional projects to be funded.

Replant Program 2016

Project applications for the 2016 Replant program will be available in late September 2015 on the BCFGAs website, www.bcfga.com. The deadline for applications will be October 30, 2015. Projects will be adjudicated (given a mark for the quality of the application) and placed on a priority list, according to the mark assigned to the application. The funding will be allocated to the projects with the highest marks. In the winter, prior to planting in 2016, growers will be provided with project offers.

An information package on grading and a sample application are being prepared to assist growers in completing the application. In February 2015, grower information sessions were held on the new program, but none are planned for the 2016 Program. A training session for horticultural advisors is being considered.

CHC Apple Working Group

At the mid-summer meeting of the CHC Apple Working Group, held August 4, BCFGAs reps provided an update on the crop growing conditions in BC this year. We learned that in other provinces, the huge snowfalls and cool spring weather delayed the start of the season, but the crop is now near normal. Nova Scotia is getting control of a fireblight infestation, following damage to trees from the July 5, 2014 'Hurricane Arthur', which had winds up to 138 km/hour. Nova Scotia's response to the fireblight infestation was informative and provides a framework for responding to similar outbreaks. Ontario and Quebec suffered some tree death from a cold winter. There was frost damage at blossom-time in Ontario, and the crop may be off by as much as 50% from the 2014 crop.

Canadian Apple Market Situation and Trends were reviewed by Farid Makki of Agriculture and AgriFood Canada. Since 2010, apples have been second in farm gate value to blueberries. The dominant factor in Canadian apple pricing is the size of the Washington State crop, which was at a record in 2014. Ontario apple producers feel they are getting hurt the most by low-priced apple imports from Washington State, and are interested in pursuing an anti-dumping duty. No decision has been made to proceed with an anti-dumping case, but information on pricing will be collected. There is also a possibility that US apple and cherry imports into Canada could be subject to a tariff as a result of the beef and hog issue over US regulations on Country Of Origin Labeling (COOL).

Also at the Apple Working Group meeting, Summerland Varieties General Manager Frank Kappel discussed the national scope of SVC testing of new apple varieties. Related to development of new varieties, national research projects were discussed. The Apple Working Group has been successful in establishing a research program under Growing Forward 2. Areas researched are apple storage, HoneyCrisp rootstocks, and the effect of growing season weather on storability of apples. It was agreed that new national research priorities be established.

Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick continue to seek BC and Nova Scotia support for a national Research and Promotion Levy. There was discussion on the broad range of commodities in the US and a growing list of commodities in Canada that are using a national levy, as well as discussion of studies which document the manyfold benefit of research and promotion activities funded with levies. Nova Scotia and BC noted that at present there is no plan to hold discussions with growers on a national levy.

Other issues discussed at the Apple Working Group:

- Labour (including the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program).
- Financial protection for produce sellers.
- Increased consumption of fruit and vegetables.
- The consultation on the voluntary Fruit and Tree Nut Biosecurity Standard.

Other Meetings attended, where BCFGA represented the interests of tree fruit growers:

- August 12 meetings with Agricultural Land Reserve, Chair, Frank Leonard and with New Variety Development Council, Chair, Bruce Currie, attended by President Fred Steele and Vice-President Pinder Dhaliwal.
- August 13 Okanagan Basin Water Board Workshop, attended by President Fred Steele and Corp. Secretary Bunvir Nijjer.

Events attended to promote BC tree fruit:

- August 21-22 Kelowna Apple Triathlon, attended by President Fred Steele and General Manager Glen Lucas.
- September 2-6 Interior Provincial Exhibition, Armstrong. Come visit the BCFGA booth if you have time.

Our Labour Project is winding up for the year. Ron Forrest will remain available until the end of September for worker placements.



The image shows a white sign with a black border. On the left is a Facebook logo with the text 'bc.cherries' below it. In the center, the text reads 'BCFGA BC LABOUR PROJECT' in a large, bold, serif font. Below this, it says 'Ron Forrest, Facilitator', '(250) 859-7503', and 'rforrest.bcfga@gmail.com'. On the right is a circular logo for the 'BC FRUIT GROWERS ASSOCIATION' featuring a basket of fruit and the text '125 YEARS est. 1889'. At the bottom, the words 'WORKSHOPS!' and 'EMPLOYMENT!' are written in a bold, sans-serif font.

Summerland Varieties Corporation and the BCFGA Research and Development Orchard Ltd. provide funding for the BCFGA Labour Project - thank you to these BCFGA subsidiaries for supporting growers.

