

**BC Fruit Growers' Association**  
**Friday File**

July 17, 2015



**Canadian Horticultural Council - Apple Working Group agenda items**

The CHC Apple Working Group (BCFGA and apple associations from Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) meet each summer at the beginning of August. Representatives from BC will include Fred Steele and Glen Lucas from the BCFGA and Frank Kappel of Summerland Varieties Corporation. We are looking forward to working with the other provincial apple associations on:

- Possible punitive tariff on US apples and cherries. What do Canadian Beef and Hog exports to the US have to do with Cherries and Apples? The US has lost all appeals in defending their Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) regulation, which effectively kept Canadian Beef and Hogs out of US slaughter plants. The US has so far not removed the COOL regulation. If the US does not comply with removal of the COOL regulation, Canada will be authorized to apply a punitive tariff on US imports. A proposed list of punitive tariffs includes US apples and cherries exported to Canada. The tariffs could be in place as early as October, if the US does not remove its COOL legislation.
- Labour. Recent change in the way the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) workers obtain a Social Insurance Number. Other SAWP items will be discussed.
- Crop updates from each province.
- Summerland Varieties Update.
- National research projects.
- National Apple Research and Promotion Agency.
- CHC's 2015 federal election priorities.

A full update on discussions will be provided in this newsletter after the meetings.

**Bursary Applications Available**

The deadline for the BCFGA Joe Sardinha Memorial Bursary and the BCFGA Golden Jubilee Bursary (each \$1,000) is November 1, 2015. The Golden Jubilee bursary requires that the applicant be a close relative of a BCFGA member. The Joe Sardinha Memorial bursary requires a short essay. Applications are available on-line - visit [www.bcfga.com](http://www.bcfga.com) and select the link on the lower right-hand corner.

**Starling Program**

Starling trapping in May and June indicates a very low population of starlings from Kelowna South, as well as a lower population in the North Okanagan.

Look for a grower survey on Starlings, to give the program feedback on your experience with Starlings.

## **Labour**

The BCFGA Labour and Safety Project, carried out by Ron Forrest, has been dealing with the early year. Less time was spent on workshops prior to the start of cherry harvest, mainly because the cherry harvest was so much earlier this year. Ron also reports that facilities on farms are improving, as all of the farms with campsites have at least the minimum facilities of chemical toilets and potable drinking water. It is the BCFGA approach suggests that making some improvement to campsites each year is important in showing continuous improvement and avoiding a regulatory approach . Also, all Mexican housing is inspected and exceeds the proposed regulatory requirements of the Ministry of Health.

On July 16, BCFGA Vice President Pinder Dhaliwal and General Manager Glen Lucas participated on conference calls on the topic of Social Insurance Numbers for SAWP workers and Workcamp Regulations. SAWP workers are no longer provided with SIN numbers when they enter the country - workers must be taken to the local Service Canada Centre in Kelowna or Penticton, or the grower may call their Member of Parliament to arrange for a Service Canada representative to attend the farm to issue the SIN numbers.

The province is considering Workcamp regulations, which could impact growers. The BCFGA is advocating for an educational and incentive approach, before a regulatory approach is considered. At a conference call with Health Minister Terry Lake and Agriculture Minister Norm Letnick, the BCFGA advocated for a non-regulatory approach to work camps in the agriculture sector. Further discussions are being scheduled.



A promotional graphic for the BCFGA BC Labour Project. It features a blue square logo with a white 'f' and the text 'bc.cherries'. To the right is a circular logo for the BC Fruit Growers' Association, which includes a basket of fruit and the text 'BC FRUIT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION' and '125 YEARS est. 1889'. Below these logos, the text reads 'BCFGA BC LABOUR PROJECT'. Underneath that, it says 'Ron Forrest, Facilitator (250) 859-7503 rforrest.bcfga@gmail.com'. At the bottom, there are two large, bold, sans-serif words: 'WORKSHOPS!' on the left and 'EMPLOYMENT!' on the right.

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.



## **Replant Update**

Several growers have called the BCFGA to request the status of their applications - specifically, was the application received and is it being considered? The short answer is, if your application has not been returned by the BC Ministry of Agriculture, then it is being considered.

The BC Ministry of Agriculture received applications and forwarded completed applications to the BCFGA-administered Project Review Committee. Since we have had more applications than funding, we have had to approve projects in steps, and we are part way through that process.

We have decided to send out a letter to applicants, for those who have not yet received information about their project application, to confirm that their application is received and being considered. These letters will be delivered the week of July 20.

The BCFGA has been seeking additional funding to allow more projects to be approved this year, based on the higher-than-expected number of applications.

## **Privacy of Your Information**

The BCFGA follows the provincial privacy laws for companies.

The BCFGA is confirming in this newsletter that a benefit for producers, namely the free subscription to agricultural publications, will require that we provide an updated list of producers to the publications. We are confirming that we intend to provide several agricultural publications with an updated mailing list of BCFGA members (currently members receive BC Fruit Grower Magazine and Orchard and Vine Magazine, but we are investigating the addition of Country Life in BC newspaper and The Grower newspaper (an Ontario based horticultural publication). Individual members may opt out of the free subscription for any or all of the publications by contacting the BCFGA before August 7, 2015.

The BCFGA will have agreements with publishers that the only purpose for which the BCFGA information and growers addresses may be used is the mailing of the publication, and that any other use by the publisher is not allowed under the agreement. Growers may opt out anytime after that date, and the BCFGA will arrange for the publication to delete the growers' mailing address from their mailing list.

The BCFGA privacy policy is available on our website, or you may contact BCFGA Corporate Secretary Bunvir Nijjer to discuss the privacy policy.

## **Did you know?**

... the first BC applications for the Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program were made in 2004. In that year, a total of 4 workers from Mexico came to the Okanagan. In 2014, ten years later, about 1,500 Mexican workers and 200 Caribbean Commonwealth workers came to the Okanagan.

## **Friday File**

A new initiative of the BCFGA is to email growers an update of BCFGA activities and current topics of interest each week. This week, we are mailing the newsletter to those members that have not yet given us an email address. If you receive this in the mail and do not wish to miss out on future editions, provide us with your email address. If you do not have access to a computer or internet, we would be happy to guide you to a local library where you can establish an email account and access internet.