

**BC Fruit Growers' Association
Friday File**

July 1, 2015 - Canada Day Edition



Summer Storms

Summer storms have hit in the past day. Contact the Crop Insurance branch if you have been impacted and are insured.

Labour

A flyer for the BCFG BC Labour Project. On the left is the Facebook logo with the text 'bc.cherries' below it. In the center, the text reads 'BCFGA BC LABOUR PROJECT' in large, bold letters. Below that is 'Ron Forrest, Facilitator', '(250) 859-7503', and 'rforrest.bcfga@gmail.com'. On the right is the BCFG logo, which includes '125 YEARS' and 'est. 1889'. At the bottom, the words 'WORKSHOPS!' and 'EMPLOYMENT!' are written in large, bold letters.

Federal Election

The BCFG and sister organizations Canadian Horticulture Council, Canadian Federation of Agriculture and BC Agriculture Council are taking forward positions on agricultural programs as part of the federal election process. Core items include:

- AgriInvest: increase the basic maximum matched producer contribution rate to 1.5% of Allowable Net Sales.
- AgriStability: Restore the program's payment trigger to when program year margins fall below 85% of a farmers' historical reference margins.

To encourage and support beginning farmers, the agriculture organizations are discussing of more flexible and positive program rules:

- provide a government-only unmatched (kickstart) deposit of 3.25% of Allowable Net Sales spread over the first 5 years for a new Agri-Invest account for new participants.
- waive the AgriStability fee for first 5 years of enrolment in the program.

- reduce crop insurance premiums for the first 5 years of coverage.

Also being discussed are improvements to the EFP program. BCFGGA has received many, many complaints about the cutbacks of important, effective on-farm projects, such as irrigation improvements, pesticide storage sheds and deer fencing, to name a few. There is also great frustration with the reduced and insufficient funding of the EFP program. Some of these EFP and Food Safety Program issues are short-term, that can be fixed in the current program, while other issues will take longer to resolve - for the next Growing Forward set of programs.

Replant Update

The first round of approved projects are being inspected. A second round of approval letters (and inspections) is expected to be sent out soon will be done as quickly as possible.

The BCFGGA has active requests for additional funding, as the program launch was delayed and the number of applications exceeded the amount of funding available for 2015. Information and updates will be provided in a future editions of the Friday File.

Pest Issues

With the rapid growth in Spotted Wing Drosophila populations this Spring, and with the ongoing problem of tackling Apple Clearwing Moth populations, pest management solutions are becoming more important. Summerland Varieties Corporation is funding an SWD project this summer, and it is hoped that this year's project will help prepare for a larger, area-wide demonstration project in future.

Work is also underway under the auspices of the "Tree Fruit Committee" of the "BC Plant Protection Advisory Committee (BCPPAC)" - which deals with collaborating the activities of various government departments (federal and provincial) to identify new incursions and to combat the emergence of new pests. An example of similar work is the monitoring and response to Gypsy Moth incursions in the Lower Mainland area of BC. Tree Fruit is not as fully prepared to respond to new incursions today, but with the work of the Tree Fruit Committee, progress is being made.

Also to do with invasive pests, General Manager Glen Lucas is participating in the development of a "Tree Fruit and Nut Biosecurity" guidelines, along with Susanna Achaempong from the BC Ministry of Agriculture and cherry grower Christine Dendy. The concept of biosecurity is to give producers practical steps to take to avoid the spread of invasive pests, including new pests such as Apple Maggot that may arrive here in the BC tree fruit sector in future, and to prevent the re-emergence of other 'plant pests', such as Little Cherry Disease.

The Biosecurity guidelines will be circulated for input and comment later this summer and fall. Watch this newsletter for more information.

Happy Canada Day!