

BC Fruit Growers' Association

Friday File

May 7, 2016



Minimum Wage

The province announced on May 4 that minimum wage will increase on September 15, 2016, from its current level of \$10.45 to \$10.85 per hour.

The BCAC issued a press release supportive of the increase: “Increasing the minimum wage in September will help entry level workers and allows farmers time to prepare for the change.”

The Minister of Agriculture engaged a few weeks ago with the BCAC Labour Committee on a industry’s outlook on minimum wage (Pinder Dhaliwal and Glen Lucas from the BCFGA participate on the BCAC Labour Committee). Industry associations noted that an increase beyond the inflationary component would not be welcomed with ‘open arms’, but there was an understanding that BC made a commitment not to be the lowest province for minimum wage. BCFGA requested that the change in minimum wage not be scheduled for the middle of harvest. We were advised to make a formal request for any future changes and will be doing so.

Working on farms has often been a young person's entry into the workforce. BCAC has called for the government to develop programs that support young people entering the workforce. One proposal that is being discussed and promoted to the Provincial Chamber of Commerce (since it cuts across all industries) is a tax credit for employing young, aboriginal or disabled people.

We look forward to working through the details with government and developing training programs for our farms and ranches.

Cherry Exports to California

New procedure

Program registration for exporting BC origin cherries to California is now open. The program is no longer run by CFIA. The BC Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) and the BC Cherry Association (BCCA) have taken on the responsibility of oversight.

In order to ship cherries to California in 2016, each company must register before May 12th, 2016. To register, download the document and send it back as soon as possible. Details on registration costs can be found within: **[2016 BC2CA Registration Package](#)**

If you have any questions regarding the changes to oversight, please contact Carl Withler at carl.withler@gov.bc.ca or 250-861-7229

How to contact the BCFGa Office

BCFGA Office - 250-762-5226
Toll free -1-800-619-9022



- Brenda Zarr, Member Services and Replant Admin, local 1.
- Glen Lucas, General Manager, local 2.
- Sheila MacGregor, Accountant, local 3.
- Bunvir Nijjer, Corporate Secretary and Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program, local 4.

Dates and Events- check the [BCFGA Calendar](#) on our website for more information