

BCFGA**Bulletin**

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March 12, 2012

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Spring Ahead

Production Guide Meetings are being held at the start of April. The meeting will provide you with current information on pest management in your orchard.

Place	Date	Time
Cawston Hall	Monday, April 2, 2012	9:30 am
Oliver Parks and Recreation Complex	Monday, April 2, 2012	1:30 pm
Pacific Agri-Food Research Station, Summerland	Tuesday, April 3, 2012	1:30 pm
Vernon Lodge,	Wednesday, April 4, 2012	9:30 am
Coast Capri Hotel, Kelowna	Wednesday, April 4	1:30 pm
Erickson Room, Creston Recreation Centre	Thursday, April 12, 2012	7:30 pm

Agenda:

1. Introduction and Overview
2. SIR and pesticide use – Hugh Philip
3. Diseases – Gayle Jespersen
4. Insects – Susanna Achaempong
5. Pesticide Certification and points – Glen Lucas
6. Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association – Carol Reid
7. Field Service Report for area – Gayle Krahn (Vernon), Molly Thurston, Hank Markgraf (Kelowna), Steve Brown (Summerland), Charlotte Leaming (Cawston, Oliver), Duane Holder (Creston)

Farm Safety Week

All year round!

Farm safety week was proclaimed in Kelowna on March 6. Farmers get an A+ when it comes to protecting children on their farms, the Farm Credit Corporation reported on a survey of 948 Canadian farmers in 2011.

The A+ grade was earned when 91% of growers indicated they very often take precautions for children.

More improvement is needed in other areas, according to the survey. Only 77% indicated they often supervise new workers, falling to 73% who often train new workers. A dismal 16% post an emergency plan, which lists actions and phone numbers for emergencies.

Most accidents in orchards involve working on ladders. The most serious accidents involve tractor roll-overs. The good news is that accident rates in the orchard industry are declining – let's keep improving!

AgriStability – deadlines for growers, delays for claims?

Why do growers face firm deadlines to apply for the AgriStability program, yet growers face excessive delays in the processing of program claims? We have been advised that growers should not expect their 2010 AgriStability claims to be processed before the 2012 apple harvest.

The BCFGGA wrote to the BC Agriculture Council on February 29, as follows:

For the 2010 program year, the timeline to process claims is driven partly by the submission of farm taxes and partly by the September 20, 2011 deadline to submit the program's 'Supplemental' form. We would normally expect that processing would be well underway, with many of the claims processed by this time of year.

We understand that the claims process is only just started, with much of the 2010 program year not expected to be processed until after the 2012 harvest. We request that BCAC make it a priority to determine the cause of the delays and to ask government to immediately address these delays.

Growers may wish to contact their local MLAs to inform them that the AgriStability program is increasing, rather than decreasing uncertainty, due to the extended delay in processing claims.

In the meantime, the deadline to submit a New Participant Package is April 30, 2012. Producers who participated in the 2010 or 2011 program will automatically receive a package from the Ministry of Agriculture. If you want to opt out, do so by April 30. Call 1-877-343-2767 for information.

BCFGGA Survey

Many growers will receive a call from IPSOS REID, a survey company, to complete a survey. The BCFGGA is conducting the survey in order to get a better idea of varieties in place and grower plans for future planting.

The information will be used by the BCFGGA for the second phase of a strategic study on the industry. The first phase of the study indicated that grower productivity and market prices at the cooperative were competitive but could improve. A problem was indicated in higher packing costs, compared with competitors in the Washington State.

There are many historical factors impacting packing costs in BC, including higher labour costs, lack of maintenance and upgrading of equipment in past years, and other factors. Consultants Desmond O'Rourke (Belrose Inc.) and Bruce Prenguber (Globalwise Inc.) have been engaged by the BCFGGA to investigate possible industry strategies, based on the grower survey and analysis of similar European models of tree fruit production and processing.

Results will be released to growers. For phase one results, see the provincial Minister's Tree Fruit Industry Working Group report at www.agf.gov.bc.ca/treefrt/product/production.htm, under the "Industry Development" heading.

Integrated Tree Fruit Production Guide

The 2010 production guide was published two years ago, with updates in 2011 and 2012. We plan to mail the 2012 update with this newsletter. If you do not have your edition of the guide, you may obtain it by:

- Contacting your Okanagan Tree Fruit field service representative, or
- At Growers' Supply and South Valley Sales, or
- By contacting Elaine Miedema at the BCFGa office (1-800-619-9022, extension 21).

Budding and Grafting Program - Update

The Program Policy Committee met to discuss and to make policy on certain types of applications that have previously not been part of the Budding and Grafting Program. These new types of applications have arisen because there is currently no Replant Program.

The following policy has been adopted to ensure the program is meeting its original objective of replacing varieties in existing orchard plantings:

1. Eligible applications are for changing the cultivar on a tree that has previously produced a crop. Not eligible are projects which bud a variety onto a rootstock that has previously not produced a crop. For further clarity, only applications at standard orchard spacing are eligible – nurseries are not eligible.
2. Applications will be eligible if budding and grafting occurs after March 2012 and prior to September 2013. Projects will be considered in the order in which they are received, with a wait list created if the program funds are fully allocated.

Funding for On Farm Projects Available

Producers who complete an Environmental Farm Plan will:

- identify the farm's environmental strengths,
- list priorities and action items for further improving the farm's commitment to the environment, and
- be eligible to apply for funding for the environmental action items on the farm.

Getting advisor help to complete the Farm Plan is free of charge and confidential. The planning advisors for the tree fruit growing area are:

EFP Advisor	Email	Telephone	Operating out of
Clay Campbell	crested@telus.net	250-499-2412	Keremeos
Dave Zehnder	dzehnder@telus.net	250-342-0325	Invermere
Duane Holder	dholder@telus.net	250-428-1742	Creston
Erika Davidson	iraka_12@hotmail.com	250-306-2448	Enderby
Joe Larivere	Joe.lariviere@vip.net	250-689-0498	Oliver
Pete Spencer	pspencer@uniserve.com	250-764-0376	Kelowna

Thanks from BCFGGA Award Winners

Dear BC Fruit Growers' Association:

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation for being chosen as the recipient of the BCFGGA Rob Hall Award.

This award will be of great help in my ongoing pursuit of education, namely a degree in the field of computer science. The BCFGGA's generous donation allows me to concentrate more fully on my studies and worry less about how to pay the rising costs of tuition. As of now, I am unsure what my exact occupation will be after completion of my post-secondary education, but as someone who has grown up in a family that is part of the BCFGGA, I have great respect for agriculture and may someday put my efforts towards furthering the industry.

Thank you again for your generosity in supporting me in the pursuit of my dreams.

*Sincerely,
Gordon Vollo.*

And

To the board, staff and members of the B.C. Fruit Growers Association

I want to thank you for recently presenting me with the BCFGGA's media award. Given my family's history in the industry, the recognition was extremely personal for me, and very humbling. I have appreciated the relationships I have developed within the organization and the industry over the years, and I look forward to that continuing.

Once again, thank you for the award and best of luck with the upcoming season.

*Richard Rolke
Morning Star newspaper
Vernon*

BCFGGA Business Plan 2012

The BCFGGA Executive met after the Annual Convention on February 1. The Executive reviewed current activities, resolutions and considered input of individual executive members, then came up with priorities for 2012, as follows:

Mission-related Priorities

Priority	Goal
1	Funds for growers through programs – ALR Program
2	Replant
3	Apple Research and Promotion Agency
4	Water
5	Labour
6	Public Relations
7	Area-wide Pest Management
8	Columbia River Treaty

Administration- and Governance-related Activities

Activities
Industry strategy – renewal
Accord –coordination, monitoring progress.
Grower communications.
Program operation.
Delivery of services to growers.
BCFGGA governance – bylaw review

BCFGA Annual Convention, January 26-27, 2012, Resolutions

1. Appreciation (Complementary) CARRIED

2. Municipal Support for Tree Fruit Industry Priorities CARRIED

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. Affordable, Effective Production Insurance CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa work to maintain an affordable Production Insurance program, and Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGa seek to improve coverage of named perils, while keeping coverage in balance with affordable premiums for the Production Insurance.

4. Replant Program CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa pursue a replant/grafting program with federal and provincial governments.

5. Apple Crisis CARRIED

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGa request the province to respond more quickly to the apple crisis.

6. Housing Bylaws CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa oppose restrictions on farm housing size and location on agricultural lands.

7. Protection of Plant Breeder's Rights CARRIED

Therefore be it Resolved that the BCFGa urge the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to introduce a government bill in the House of Commons to update the Plant Breeders' Rights Act (S.C. 1990, c. 20) by adopting the 1991 UPOV Convention.

8. Genetically Engineered Free Zone CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa ask the Okanagan-Similkameen, Central Okanagan, North Okanagan, and Columbia-Shuswap Regional Districts to investigate the establishment of a Genetically Engineered Free Zone for edible horticulture and livestock products encompassing all of the regional districts.

9. Labeling of Genetically Modified Produce CARRIED

Therefore be it Resolved that the CHC lobby the governments to implement a Genetically Modified labeling requirement for fruits and vegetables.

10. PST Rebates CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa and BCAC lobby to replace the PST exemption list with a system of PST rebates on all farm inputs.

12. SIR Program CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa support the SIR Program and encourage the ongoing improvements in effectiveness and efficiency of the SIR program.

13. SIR and Other Pests CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa request the SIR Program to investigate the feasibility of a control program for area wide pests including but not limited to apple clearwing moth and cherry fruit flies, and Further Be It Resolved that the BCFGa lobby for clearer enforceable regulations in the Municipal Enabling and Validating Act.

14. Area of Low Pest Prevalence CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa ask the CFIA to give priority to establishing an ALPP for apples.

BCFGA Annual Convention, January 26-27, 2012, Resolutions (continued)

15. Partner with Regional Districts to Continue the Starling Control Program

CARRIED

Therefore be it Resolved that the BCFGa continue its support for the starling control program, and

Further be it Resolved that the BCFGa encourage the regional districts to continue support for the starling control and research program.

16. Funding for Deer Fencing Program

CARRIED

Therefore be it Resolved that a funding proposal for a deer fencing program be developed jointly with other horticultural associations and submitted to BC Investment Agriculture for consideration.

17. Efficacy of Pest Control Products

CARRIED

Therefore be it resolved that the PMRA work closer with the crop protection industry (Crop Life) and US jurisdictions to ensure that pesticide labels have application rates that are effective and do not build resistance in pests.

18. Sanitary Facility Program

CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the provincial government provide assistance for building on farm sanitary facilities.

19. Labour Orientation and Farm Worker Campgrounds

CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa request that the grape and wine industry contribute to labour orientation and farm worker campground programs.

20. Low Skill Worker Program – Country of Origin

CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa and CHC request that immigration visas be issued to qualified applicants in the Low Skill Worker Program, regardless of the country of origin.

21. Agriculture Water Reserve

CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BCFGa support the concept of Agriculture Water Reserves.

22. Columbia River Treaty Funds

CARRIED

Therefore be it Resolved that the BCFGa demand that the province support the agriculture sectors impacted by the CRT, by allocating a portion of the funds generated by the CRT to the affected agriculture sectors.

23. Infrastructure Renewal

CARRIED

Therefore be it Resolved that the BCFGa encourage industry and government to partner on the renewal of packinghouse infrastructure in the tree fruit industry.

24. Restore Provincial Funding to the National Average (% of Agriculture GDP)

CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that the BC government increase the level of funding by \$120 million to bring the level of BC agriculture funding to the national average of 14.9% of Agriculture GDP and resulting in an additional \$88 million in federal program funding for BC.

25. Provincial Apple Research and Promotion Agency

CARRIED

Therefore Be It Resolved that this Convention of the BCFGa support the establishment of a Provincial Apple Research and Promotion Agency.

26. Research and Extension

CARRIED

Therefore be it resolved that the BCFGa, BCAC, CHC and CFA request the provincial and federal governments to hold a congress of all stakeholders to address the decline in research capacity and withdrawal from extension services that are necessary to sustain family farming in Canada.

27. Constitution Renewal

TABLED

BCFGA Tree Fruit Awards 2011

Golden Apple Award

Sponsor – Chemtura AgroSolutions

Mann Orchards - Avtar Mann

Avtar and his wife Ronnie decided to lease an orchard in 2005 with their first crop in 2006. They have 17.5 productive acres. Prior to leasing the orchard they both worked for David Geen (Coral Beach Farms). They also have a successful 1.5 acre nursery in Lavington. They have two children ages 19 & 21 who attend UBCO.

Avtar & Ronnie believe strongly in pruning, not just dormant pruning, but summer pruning as well. They also follow a nutrient program based on soil, leaf and fruitlet analysis. They stay on top of a spray program to minimize pest and disease to ensure they produce the best crop possible. They understand that it takes many dedicated hours in order to produce top quality fruit.

Their production in 2011 was excellent with 84 bins per acre for ambrosia and 72 bins per acre for Gala. The grade and size was outstanding along with the high yields. Gayle Krahn is their field person.

Compact Orchard Award

Sponsor - Dow Agro Sciences

Rawd Potter, Summerland

Rawd grew up in the orchard industry in the Summerland area. He operates currently 17 acres of orchard primarily apples with a couple acres of pears. He grows Ambrosia, Galas and Spartans. His Ambrosia block was the reason for his Compact Orchard Award. It is a 2900 tree per acre block yielded 68 bins per acre in 2011 with a 91% XF and an 87% large size packout. – an excellent crop by any standards. He attributes his success to several people including Lorraine Bennest, Gord Shandler, Peter Waterman and Gene Hogue. His field man is Steve Brown.

Soft Fruit Award

Sponsor Arysta LifeSciences

Greg and Chris Norton, Oliver. BC

Greg and Chris Norton currently have 20 acres of cherries and 6 acres of peaches. Chris looks after the tree training, the packing line, paper work, and the farm workers. They have an excellent relationship with their farm workers many of whom come back every year.

Production in 2011 was about 9,000 cartons with large fruit size (90% row 8.5 to 9.5). They keep their production at moderate levels to maximize sugars and fruit quality.

BCFGA Kelowna Office
Telephone: in Kelowna, call 250-762-5226
Or 1-800-619-9022

NAME	TITLE	Telephone (Extension)
Glen Lucas	General Manager	23
Elaine Miedema	Member Services Coordinator	21 – part-time, 3 days per week
Sheila MacGregor	Accountant	22
Josée Larocque	Public Relations and Events Coordinator	24 – part time

BCFGA Executive 2012

Executive member	Telephone	Location
Kirpal Boparai (President)	712-2247	Kelowna
Jeet Dukhia (Vice-Pres.)	545-1780	Vernon
Madeleine van Roechoudt	864-9147	Lake Country
Amarjit Lalli	491-8661	Kelowna
Jora Dhaliwal	764-9078	Kelowna
Denise MacDonald	494-1347	Summerland
Peter Simonsen	496-5156	Naramata
Nirmal Dhaliwal	498-4119	Oliver

Membership in the BCFGAs

The BCFGAs are the growers' parliament. It is the group which represents tree fruit growers to government and the public. What is the benefit? With a strong membership, the BCFGAs have a stronger voice with government in the areas of programs, regulations and taxes. All Okanagan Tree Fruit Cooperative (OTFC) shippers are members of the BCFGAs. This support has strengthened the BCFGAs and collaboration between the BCFGAs and OTFC helps achieve industry goals.

'Independent' growers who do not ship to the Okanagan Tree Fruit Cooperative, may join the BCFGAs – call Elaine at 250-762-5226 ext. 21 today.