



The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association

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Newsletter – moving to web-based

October 12, 2012

This newsletter is abbreviated and is being delivered to all BCFGAs members, as part of a transition to an email newsletter.

Throughout, this newsletter contains links to information that is available on our website or on internet. When members receive this newsletter by email, they may open the newsletter and access a link by selecting the link with the mouse. Growers without internet access may go to a regional library to access the internet addresses provided in this newsletter, and hopefully a librarian or short course is available to introduce you to the internet.

We are shortening the newsletter to save paper and expense. **In future, we plan to send the newsletter by email to those growers with email addresses and by regular mail to those growers without email.** Growers will be able to 'opt out' of the email delivery. Moving to email delivery will help reduce BCFGAs printing and mail expense by about \$5,500 per year, freeing up resources to cover our operating deficit.

Regional Annual Meetings

South Okanagan

Wednesday, November 14th
Oliver Parks & Recreation

Central Okanagan

Wednesday, November 28th
Coast Capri, Kelowna

Okanagan-Skaha

Thursday, November 15th
Sandman Hotel (Okanagan Room), Penticton

North Okanagan

Thursday, November 29th
Best Western Vernon Lodge (Okanagan Room)

All meetings start at 7:00. Tea, coffee and water will be provided.

Agenda:

1. BCFGAs Update – President's report
2. Apple Research and Promotion Agency – update
3. BCFGAs Constitution modernization
4. Resolutions – member's proposals to take forward to the Annual Convention
5. Election of Regional officers
6. Nomination of delegates
7. Nomination of Executive members

In Memorium

It is with sadness that we report the death of two well known growers, past members of the BCFGAs Executive. Their obituaries are available at the following web links:

David Hobson <http://www.kelownacapnews.com/news/151960945.html>

Pedro Barata <http://oliverdailynews.com/pedro-barata-rip/>

BCFGA / Rob Hall Bursary

No eligible applications have yet been received for the bursary (\$1,000 to a close relative of a current BCFGAs member). The deadline is extended until October 19. Go to the link to the "Awards Search" on the Okanagan College website:

http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/students/financialaid/Okanagan_College_Awards_Applcations/Awards_Search.html

Click on the "Awards A-Z" tab, then scroll down and click on the BCFGAs Rob Hall Award to view the award description and download the application form.

BCFGAs Golden Jubilee Bursary

The deadline to apply for this \$1,000 bursary is November 30, and it is open to close relatives of BCFGAs members taking a science degree. The application form is available on our website:

<http://www.bcfga.com/191/Bursaries>

BCFGAs Financial Downturn

Income has been much reduced this fiscal year. There are two main reasons for the large decrease in BCFGAs income in 2012. First, there is a delay in the launch of the Replant Program – leading to a temporary reduction in BCFGAs income for 2012. The Replant Program will be launched in 2013, when the BCFGAs will then earn administration income. This income assists with BCFGAs overhead costs. Secondly, the BCFGAs is being challenged with reduced grower fees due to this year's drop in Okanagan Tree Fruit Cooperative membership. All OTFC members are also members of the BCFGAs, so a reduction in OTFC membership directly impacts BCFGAs membership. A strategy for increasing the involvement of independent growers in the BCFGAs is underway.

Several cost-cutting measures were instituted in 2012. Since news of the drop in income was only confirmed in March, there has not been time to fully react to the income drop. A large, one-time deficit is projected for the year.

BCFGAs Annual Convention

The Annual Convention is being reduced to one full day, from the previous 2 half days, purely due to the need to reduce expenses. A one day meeting costs less than a meeting held over two days. An agenda will be set at an upcoming Executive meeting.

Time: 9:30 am – 4:00 pm (to be confirmed)

Date: Saturday, January 26, 2013

Place: Penticton Lakeside Resort

Unwanted / Obsolete Pesticide Disposal

An unwanted/obsolete pesticide collection is scheduled. The collection locations and times are:

Kamloops, Vernon, Kelowna and Oliver the week of October 23rd - 26th, 2012. There will be one day at each location.

Creston October 31st and Cranbrook November 1st, 2012

For further information: <http://www.bcfga.com/events.php?pageID=197&eventID=105>

Change of Guard

Norm Letnick, MLA for Kelowna Lake Country, was appointed Minister of Agriculture on September 5, 2012. The new minister is familiar with agriculture and particularly the tree fruit sector through his work with his constituents and the BCFGGA.

Derek Sturko was recently appointed the new Deputy Minister for Agriculture, replacing Wes Shoemaker who moves to the Ministry of Environment.

Judy Guichon, a well-known rancher from Merritt, has been appointed Lieutenant Governor for BC.

Meeting with MLA's, MP's

President Kirpal Boparai and General Manager Glen Lucas presented briefs to the three local MLA's, the new Minister of Agriculture, the MP for Kelowna Lake Country and others. To see these and all recent BCFGGA briefs, go to <http://www.bcfga.com/216/Presentations>

Growing Forward 2

Details of the cutbacks to the AgriStability and AgriInvest Programs are being finalized. About one-quarter of the reduction in funding for these programs will be redirected to innovation programs. Further updates will be provided in upcoming newsletters and at the Annual Convention.

GMO Update

On July 24, the Canadian Horticulture Council's Apple Working Group voted in favour of a moratorium on the release of the Arctic Apple.

On August 7, the U.S. apple industry has reiterated its opposition to the deregulation of a new genetically modified non-browning apple, claiming it will pose a threat to exports.

On August 14, several Okanagan Valley groups (*Bee SAFE, Okanagan Greens Society, the True Food Foundation, and the Similkameen Okanagan Organic Treefruit Growers Association*) united to send a joint letter asking the local company "Okanagan Specialty Fruits" to stop pursuing a genetically engineered (genetically modified or GM) "nonbrowning" apple which they say jeopardizes the reputation of the Okanagan as a pristine fruit growing area.

On September 28, the Union of BC Municipalities voted in favour of asking the British Columbia Government to legislate the prohibition of importing, exporting, and the domestic production of fruit and plant material containing GE DNA Constructs and to declare that through legislation that BC is a GE Free Province in respect to all tree fruit products, and requested that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities make a similar request of the federal government.

Replant and Budding and Grafting – 2013 Applications and Guidelines

The BCFGGA and the province are finalizing the guidelines and application forms for the Replant and the Budding and Grafting Programs for 2013. We anticipate the guidelines and forms will be available shortly after October 31, 2012. For those interested growers who left their names with the BCFGGA office, the forms and applications will be mailed to you. Growers may also access the forms at

<http://www.bcfga.com/189/Replant+and+Removal+Program+2013>

SAWP Information Meeting

The Mexican Consulate and Worksafe BC are hosting an information meeting on SAWP on November 22, 2012 in Penticton.

For information and to register: <http://www.bcfga.com/events.php?pageID=197&eventID=106>

Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association (FARSHA) – Certificate of Recognition Program

A program is available that allows growers to save on their Worksafe BC premiums. The program is also proven to reduce workplace injuries to employees and families. The program, called the Certificate of Recognition (or COR), is to recognize and provide a financial benefit for growers who go beyond the regulatory requirements for work safety. The program requires that growers implement an Occupational Health and Safety Program and that FARSHA audit the program implementation (\$75 to \$150 fee), for a premium reduction.

| Payroll (annual wages paid) \$ | Annual Worksafe Premiums (at 1.5% preliminary premium for 2012) \$ | Premium rate reduction (not including audit fee paid to FARSHA) \$ |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| 10,000 | 150 | 75 |
| 66,700 | 1,000 | 500 |
| 100,000 | 1,500 | 500 |
| 370,000 | 5,500 | 555 |
| 1,000,000 | 15,000 | 1,500 |

The benefit is calculated by a formula, but over \$370,000 in payroll, the savings are 10% of premiums.

A further 5% reduction in premiums is available for implementing a “return to work” program.

To find out more about COR:

www.farsha.bc.ca/cor-audit.php

To register for a workshop on November 29, 2012 in Summerland:

<http://www.farsha.bc.ca/cor-seminar-form.php>

Agriculture Land Commission Report

Chairman Richard Bullock summarized the recent directions at the Agriculture Land Commission. The report is available at: <http://www.bcfga.com/events.php?pageID=197&newsID=91>

Strategy in the Apple Sector

Two recent reports have reviewed the current state of planning in the tree fruit sector and made suggestions on how the industry should move forward. The following documents are available at <http://www.bcfga.com/173/Tree+Fruit+Industry+Strategy>

Summary of Recommendations

BC Apple Industry Benchmarking Report

Canada Apple Industry Benchmarking Report