

Report to the 2019 BCFGGA Convention

From the

Member Services Committee

Membership Committee Structure and Governance

The Member Services committee is made up from the Northern District Council Chair, Southern District Chair, Northern Region Chair and Southern Region Chair, and several members of the board of directors. The committee helps provide oversight of services provided to members and provide feedback on how effective these services are.

The Member Services Committee met once this year. The BCFGGA Board referred several items to the committee, including the membership fee formula and whether there is interest in making certain changes to our bylaws that have been discussed on and off over the years. The main areas of interest for the Committee are:

- Services provided to members
- Communication
- Bylaws
- Governance

Governance

The idea of moving our AGM from a hybrid system that has both membership voted elections and delegate voted resolutions to a full membership voted system was discussed. Possible benefits included cost savings, but would require a significant change to the format of the AGM. The committee felt that the idea had some merit, however, we needed a break down of potential cost savings and a formal proposal to what a new format would look like before making a decision. This may require a change from a resolution based system to a proposed business plan. This would involve the existing board putting together a business plan and proposing it to the membership. Other proposed changes included having the AGM on a single day instead of splitting it over two half days, which again would result in lowering costs. We are in the early discussion phase and information gathering phase and would be interested in hearing thought from both members and delegates.

Bylaws

The Committee noted the issue of ‘bylaw fatigue’ - you will recall that BCFGGA has had significant change to its bylaws over the past 5 years or so:

- Move to Member-elected Board (was elected by Delegates).
- Move to one-half of Board elected each year.

This is the first year that half, rather than all, of the Board will be elected at the Annual Convention. None of the possible future changes that the committee discussed is pressing, so we decided that we have a period of ‘no change’ to the bylaws to allow us to adapt to the new election procedure before more changes are considered. We also agreed to recommend no change to the current procedure of allowing new members up to the registration deadline at the Annual Convention should remain unchanged from prior years.

Fee Formula

On the topic of fees, we noted that there was a schedule in place to increase fees by about 3% per year over 5 years, following a long period (over 10 years) of no fee increase. We decided to recommend no change to the fee formula at this time. However, there is a need to address the proper recording of acres and the recruitment of new members.

Communication

Communication with members is important. The Friday File newsletter does a great job of updating the membership on upcoming meetings, program deadlines, and other important information. The Friday File is delivered by email, unless there are important meeting notices (like Annual Convention) that need to be distributed. The Convention Portfolio, in abbreviated form, is also delivered. It was agreed to continue to encourage growers to set-up emails in order to receive industry updates. We also observed that we do not put much effort into the BCFGGA facebook page. There is some updating of content, however, there was some discussion of how it may not be as effective at communicating to our grower base as it is for communicating with the public.

The most important and useful way for us to communicate and hear your questions and concerns is face to face, and for that reason we continue to have numerous committee and regional meetings (including district and SWAP meetings). Staff also provide one on one meetings to help with program applications, and do bring concerns that require a policy change to the board.

BCFGGA Services

The array of services the BCFGGA provides to members is very broad. We discussed these services and found them to be valuable and worthwhile for our members. Services to members include

- Pesticide Applicator Recertification Program (PAC points)
- Bursaries: Rob Hall, Golden Jubilee, and Joe Sardinha Memorial (funded by Sardinha family).
- Tree Fruit Production Guide On-Line and Spray Schedule
- Labour Orientation and Safety Training program
- Assistance with SAWP and TFW- Ag. Stream applications
- Free subscriptions to Ag. magazines

The Committee agreed with adding a pilot project for Crop Tracker, a horticulture and harvest activity recording program.

Extension Services

The committee has a separate discussion on grower education services, which is also called “extension services”. We agreed that plans should be developed to establish extension services for the following:

- Business Management courses
- Computer Skills
- Human Resources Management

The Member Services Committee discussed horticultural extension and noted the recent industry strategy looked at some horticultural extension models used successfully in other parts of the world, including New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom. Horticultural extension is complicated and rapidly evolving, as information technology is impacting how we learn about horticultural practices, such as the Decision Aid System, Crop Tracker, and other information technology.

A recent idea, that is being discussed after our committee met, is that an Okanagan Horticultural Show could include grapes, cherries, even hops and cannabis, as the Lower Mainland Ag Show has successfully done. This allows trade show participants to come to one large show, instead of several small shows. More discussion with the various trade show organizers will take place over the coming months.

Information Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Information Privacy and Confidentiality Policy was reviewed. It is located on our website on the “Who is the BCFGGA” webpage.

Farm Practices Protection

There were no appeals to the Farm Industry Review Board about farm practices and the BCFGGA had no activity on the topic this year.

Public Relations

The BCFGGA continues to be involved in some public relations activities

- Activities:
 - BCAC Agriculture Day
 - Summerland Fall Fair sponsorship (we rotate between fairs every 3 years)

We decided not to attend the IPE this year, as location of our booth was problematic. We did not receive any feedback on decision not to attend the IPE.

Public Trust

Briefly, Public Trust is:

- Doing the Right Thing
- Trusted Assurance / Verification
- Communication

The BCFGGA is contributing funds and resources to two initiatives to maintain Public Trust in the industry:

The CHC Labour Video

The BCAC Public Trust Initiative

Sometimes, farmers simply need to inform the public of what we do, and the public's fears and supposed issues disappear. Public Trust is our way of coordinating that effort.

Thank you to the growers for your input.

Respectfully submitted,
David Dobernigg, Chair

Members:

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