



2023 OKSIR

Directors

Voting Directors

Tim Lavery
CSRD

Shirley Fowler,
2023 Chair
RDNO

Dr. Gord Lovegrove
RDCO

Mohini Singh
RDCO

George Bush,
2023 Vice Chair
RDOS

Joginder Dhand
Fruit Grower, North

Tarsem Goraya,
Fruit Grower, Central

Walter Makepeace
*Fruit Grower, South,
Organic*

Non-voting Directors

Dr. Susanna Acheampong
BC Ministry of Agriculture

Taras Pojasok
*Agriculture and
Agri-food Canada*

OKSIR Welcomes New Directors to the Board

The newly appointed OKSIR Board met for the first time since last fall's local elections. The Board welcomed back Directors George Bush (Cawston, RDOS), Shirley Fowler (Armstrong, RDNO), and Tim Lavery (Salmon Arm, CSRD). New to the Board for 2023 are Directors Gord Lovegrove (Kelowna, RDCO) and Mohini Singh (Kelowna, RDCO). Grower Directors remain unchanged from 2022, with Joginder Dhand (North), Tarsem Goraya (Central) and Walter Makepeace (South, organic). Directors Fowler and Bush were elected as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, for 2023.

OKSIR Receives Financial Support from the Provincial Government: Letter from the Minister of Agriculture.

The Board received a letter from BC's Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Pam Alexis. The province is committed to working with OKSIR to develop a long-term strategy to ensure the financial viability of OKSIR and is offering \$400k in operating support for the next two years. In addition to the operating support, the province is contributing \$70k towards a financial sustainability assessment with a detailed review of potential business models. The funding announcement follows on the heels of a 2022 review of the OKSIR program completed by Cascadia Partners, commissioned by the province. The report concludes that without the OKSIR Program in place, the already-struggling BC apple industry is unlikely to survive.

OKSIR Parcel Tax Rate to Increase 4%: BCFGA Offers Direct Payment to Minimize 2023 Increase, Highlighting Current Financial Peril of Apple Growers

BCFGA proposed the OKSIR Board reduce the 2023 parcel tax increase from the planned 8% to 4% and offered \$40k in operating support in lieu of increased tax rates. The BCFGA and OKSIR Grower Directors were unanimous in their support for OKSIR, calling it critical to the apple industry. They also noted, however, the financial situation for most apple growers is dire and driving the rapid removal of apple orchards in the region. The BCFGA has been advocating for senior governments to provide direct financial support for apple growers and in the meantime, they are willing to use their own industry association funds to support OKSIR to reduce the 2023 financial burden for growers.

OKSIR Sales of Product Revenues Near \$900k for 2022

As apple acreage has declined, the OKSIR Board has looked for opportunities to use its excess sterile moth production capacity to offset the costs of the local program. Gross sales of product were just shy of \$900k last year, accounting for 22% of program revenues. The Board is looking forward to exploring the potential opportunities to further increase non-tax revenues in the upcoming financial sustainability study.

The next regular meeting of the OKSIR Board will be 10:30 a.m. on **Friday, March 10, 2023**, in the Woodhaven Boardroom, RDCO with option for online participation.