

BC Fruit Growers' Association Friday File



April 7, 2018

Tree Fruit Production Guide Sessions now Completed for 2018

On line Guide available

The Tree Fruit Production Guide meetings are now completed for another year. Thank you to our coffee sponsors:

Bank of Montreal AgSafeBC

You can check out *changes* to the 2018 guide (and future changes too!) by

1. logging into www.bctfpg.com,
2. Selecting the spray schedule icon (looks like a nozzle),
3. Select the “Change Log” tab at the top right of the page.

You can print out a copy of the spray schedule as follows:

1. Log into www.bctfpg.com,
2. Select the spray schedule icon,
3. Select the crop type,
4. Select the printer icon at the top right.

The schedules are fairly long, so you may wish to print them double-sided.

BCFGA Board meets with federal Ag Minister

BCFGA focuses on hot topics

The BCFGGA Board met with federal Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Lawrence MacAulay on Wednesday. The meeting also included our partners, Sukhpaul Bal and David Geen, the President and Vice-President of the BC Cherry Association. The BCFGGA focused on:

1. Labour: Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program delays in processing and the proposed Migrant Worker Support Network.
2. Industry Renewal: the proposed National Tree Fruit Investment Program, for bare land plantings and for infrastructure renewal.
3. Concerns about AgriStability not working in all cases.
4. Research: AgriScience, Innovation funds.

The meeting was positive and we identified several items to follow-up with the Minister.

Farm Workers - Supply Problems Urgent?

BCFGA survey results

Thank you to the 12 growers who responded to our survey. The respondents had a combined 225 workers (average 19 workers per grower, ranging from 2 to 65 workers). Common work terms were about 5 months ($\frac{2}{3}$) and 8 months ($\frac{1}{3}$). The breakdown of growers was 42% apple (only), 17% apple-cherry, 8% cherry (only), 8% soft fruit (only), 8% apple-pear, and 17% grew all commodities. Although the number of growers that responded is small, the results seem to be representative.

58% of growers did not employ family labour, or had less than 10% family labour

25% of growers had 30-50% family labour.

17% of growers had 60-90% family labour.

50% of growers had a workforce of 80-90% SAWP workers.

17% of growers had a workforce of 0-10%, 20-40%, or 50-60% SAWP workers.

It appeared that no-one participated in the Temporary Foreign Worker Program - Ag Stream.

67% of growers did not employ Quebecois, but

33% of growers had a workforce of 10-50% Quebecois workers.

33% of growers hired foreign visiting workers, comprising 10-30% of their workforce.

50% of growers did not have enough workers, but there was not a relationship between having inadequate number of workers and SAWP participation.

For SAWP employers who had excessive delays (90%), the source of the problem was identified as Integrity Branch processing delay by 50% of growers and delays in processing the Work Permit the other 50% of growers. 50% of growers are also having trouble getting their 'named workers' through the SAWP.

Where do you fit, and what is your experience? You can still [participate in our survey!](#)

City of Kelowna

Ag Plan and Ag Bylaws

Pinder Dhaliwal, Sukhpaul Goraya and Glen Lucas of the BCFGa met with the City of Kelowna regarding 3 proposed bylaw changes. The BCFGa representatives noted that, while members are not in favour of mega-mansions that remove land from ALR, there is a feeling that the city is using the wrong tool to control these mega-mansions. The city

is proposing to limit the size (total square feet) of house in the ALR, limiting the size to about 5,300 square feet.

Both the city and the BCFGGA agreed that the appropriate tool to use is to identify bonafide farmers through a higher 'gross farm income' criteria. Any property not engaged in agriculture (such as mega-mansions) would face higher taxes, which would in turn encourage the ALR property to remain productive and not encourage mega-houses on farmland due to a 'property tax break'. However, the property taxation is controlled by the province, not the city.

The province is currently [reviewing the ALR](#), and the BCFGGA is considering making the key point in its presentation on the appropriate taxation of underutilized ALR land (i.e. land with gross sales less than a certain amount, say \$3,000 per acre, would be taxed at a higher rate than class 9 agriculture rates).

We discussed the possibility of a temporary bylaw, but at a higher total square foot limit than currently proposed by the city. An alternative is that the footprint could be less than the proposed 5,300 sq. foot maximum footprint, say 3,500 square feet, and total square footage not be regulated. For example, a two story house could be up to 7,000 square feet and three stories up to 10,500 square feet. Member input to the BCFGGA Board of Directors is welcomed. Here is a [quick online survey and opportunity for comment](#).

Mexico SAWP Delays?

Gathering information

If you are getting the runaround re your application from Service Canada, please send [Bunvir an email](#) with the following:

- Your Name
- Date you sent in your LMIA
- Any response from Service Canada
- Whether you sent in a request to Expedite
- How many workers
- When you need them
- If Service Canada has called you with unusual questions.

BCFGGA, CHC and CFA are following up on these delays. Thank you to the growers who are maintaining communication with the BCFGGA on this important issue.

AgriStability

Still time to apply

The AgriStability Program will help many growers with low apple revenue for 2017.

The final deadline to participate under BC AgriStability Enhancement program in April 30th. BC Ministry of Agriculture staff are available for one-on-one meeting to discuss and help out with

the program details and requirements to sign up. For further information on AgriStability, contact 1-877-343-2767.

Replant Program Update, 2017

Final payments being made in the next two weeks.

The last payments made with the provincial share of funding for the 2017 Replant Program are being processed. Now, the BCFGA growers who remain on the waitlist will be paid from funds provided to the BCFGA by Summerland Varieties Corporation. All eligible BCFGA growers will be paid in the next two weeks.

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

Date	Meeting	Details
April 11	Species at Risk and Wildlife Management	Deep Brar, Glen Lucas
April 12	BCIAF Annual Meeting / BCAC AGM	Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas
April 19	BCFGA Board Meeting	
April 30	ALR Review - deadline for input	
April 30 - May 1	Labour Lobby Days	Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas
May 11	SIR Board	

BCFGA Office 250-762-5226 Toll free -1-800-619-9022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brenda Jorde, Member Services and BC Tree Fruit Replant Program, local 1. • Glen Lucas, General Manager, local 2. • Sheila MacGregor, Accountant, local 3. • Bunvir Nijjer, Corporate Secretary and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, local 4.
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Note: BCFGA has a very small office with limited staff. With many activities undertaken on behalf of our 487 members, Members should call to make an appointment to be sure of staff being present to meet with you (staff are often away on business related to the BCFGA). You may call your local director so that the BCFGA Board can take your information on how to best represent the tree fruit growers of BC.

BCFGA Board of Directors

Name		Telephone
Bhupinder (Pinder) Dhaliwal - President	Oliver	Cell/text 250-490-7198
Peter Simonsen - VP	Naramata	Cell/text 250496-5156
Ravinder Bains	Keremeos	Cell 250-499-0512
Sukhdeep (Deep) Brar	Summerland	Cell/text 250-462-5687
Karm Gill	Kelowna	Cell 250-863-9737
Sukhdev Goraya	Kelowna	Cell/text 250- 859-1229
David Machial	Oliver	Cell/text 250-485-2636
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