

BC Fruit Growers' Association

Friday File



August 10, 2018

2019 Replant Update

Make an application between August 1 to October 31

[Replant applications are now available](#) on the BCFGAs website as of August 1.

Golden Apple Award- last reminder

Do you have a friend or neighbour who is an outstanding apple grower?

The Golden Apple Award recognizes horticultural achievement for apple growers. If you know of a deserving nominee, please contact [Carl Withler, Provincial Tree Fruit and Grape Specialist](#).

Municipal Elections

Once every 4 years, your chance to get involved

Municipal elections are being held on October 20, 2018. Nominations are being accepted at City Halls between September 4 and 14, 2018.

The BCFGAs has a policy to support individuals who run for municipal election, by providing brochures for use by the candidate who agrees to some general statements of support for agriculture. Here is our [local government election support policy](#) for potential candidates to consider. Contact Glen Lucas if interested.

SAWP

Changes for 2019

During a conference call yesterday, Service Canada made observations about the program and announced changes for SAWP in 2019:

- For arrivals in 2019, the validity of LMIAs will be until December 15, 2019. Usual validity is 8 months.
- There is a new, clarified process if the housing cannot be inspected due to
 - ◆ The housing is under construction or modular housing is not yet delivered.
 - ◆ The housing for workers will be leased, but currently has other owners/tenants and is not available for inspection yet.

Contact the BCFGAs office for further information on this policy.

- The SAWP contract between the employer and the worker will be kept at the farm, not sent in with the LMIA. This will allow the worker to sign the contract upon arrival. The grower undertakes to keep a copy of the signed contract available for program auditors who visit the farm. To reiterate: SAWP employment contracts will not leave the farm. Get SAWP employees to sign the contract upon arrival, give the employee one copy and keep a copy in a safe place.
- Transfer of workers when they stay on at the original farms' accommodation is clarified in program policy. Contact the BCFGAs office for further information on this policy.

- Some groups (e.g. beekeepers) make use of hotels for workers. The rules are clarified that, for hotel accommodation, a rating of the hotel and proof of registration will replace the housing inspection requirement.
- The BCAC housing inspection form and list of approved inspectors will remain in place for 2019, as the national housing standard will not be ready in time for 2019. The BCAC housing form is being modified for 2019. Growers take note of the following changes:
 - ◆ On-site washing machines and driers will be required.
 - ◆ As a result of the fire in Abbotsford, countertop hotplates will not be accepted as substitutes for stoves.
 - ◆ Larger Facilities may require an inspection by the local fire department.
 - ◆ The temperature range for accommodations is changed - temperatures must be able to be maintained between 18 and 27 c at most times.

SAWP

Question(s) of the week

There is a requirement for biometrics - what is it?

Biometrics are a fancy word for fingerprinting, which help to track records to the physical person (i.e. not rely on id which could be falsified). Biometrics are increasingly being required immigrants of various types.

For the SAWP program, the fingerprinting will be done at the time the work permit is processed by Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in the foreign country, usually at the Canadian Embassy . There is an \$85 fee paid to IRCC. The biometrics are only required every 10 years (previously every 5 years).

When will the requirement be put in place for SAWP workers?

The deadline for biometrics is December 31, 2018. After that date, SAWP and other Work Permit applicants *must* get biometrics completed by IRCC before the Work Permit will be issued.

The Caribbean implemented biometrics for their workers for about 5 years. The Caribbean countries will not be impacted by the December 31, 2018 deadline for biometrics.

For Mexico, which has not implemented a process to get workers to complete biometrics, a large number of workers will need to be processed in 2019 for the first time. The sheer numbers are expected to cause delays unless there is some streamlined process developed, but there is no obvious solution at this time. This problem is compounded as all of Mexico has only one processing centre currently capable of processing 250 workers per day. The problem becomes worse as travel distances in Mexico are relatively large, and workers may have problems with the travel and processing with times. Processing slow downs and related problems are expected in Mexico.

What is being done to reduce impact on Mexico SAWP due to the problems with the biometrics system?

The Canadian Agriculture Associations and Service Canada have raised the issue with the Mexican government, Service Canada, and IRCC. A conference call was held on August 9 to provide an update. Discussions are ongoing on how to resolve this biometrics issue, but no obvious solutions have been identified, other than encouraging producers to apply as early as possible for 2019 LMIA (application) and Work Permit approved as early as possible in 2018.

What can I do to assure that my workers are caught up in delays due to biometrics?

There are two ways around the Mexican biometrics requirement:

1. Growers may apply for Mexican workers in advance of the December 31 deadline. If the work permit is obtained before December 31, 2018, then biometrics are not required (recall that advertising, LMIA approval and Mexico recruitment processes must be completed *before* the Work Permit process). Service Canada does not wish to take applications longer than 6 months before the worker arrives in Canada, but there may be some flexibility this year. *Growers are strongly advised to apply for 2019 Mexican workers well in advance (6 weeks) of the end of the year.*
2. If a grower applies for Caribbean workers, the same problems do not exist. For the Caribbean, there is not a significant risk of having workers delayed due to the biometrics requirement, as biometrics are already in place and working without issue for 5 years. *Growers may wish to consider switching to the Caribbean program for 2019 to avoid possible delays and other problems with the introduction of biometrics in Mexico.*

BCFGA Summer Labour Project - 2018

Contact Ron Forrest

Ron Forrest can let workers know of available work at your farm - call him to let him know when you need workers. Ron is available until the end of September.

Ron Forrest's new number is 778-363-3620.

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

Date	Meeting	Details
August 14	BCFGA Board meeting	
August 16	Associate Assistant Deputy Minister of Innovation and Science	Pinder Dhaliwal, David Machial, Glen Lucas
August 16	Stephen Fuhr, MP	Pinder Dhaliwal, Sukhdev Goraya, Karm Gill, Glen Lucas
September 20	Mexico SAWP Regional Meeting	Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas, Bunvir Nijjer
October 5	SIR Board meeting	
October 18-19	Annual Review Mexico SAWP	Pinder Dhaliwal Glen Lucas
October 16	Unwanted Pesticide Collection, Growers' Supply, Vernon	
October 17	Unwanted Pesticide Collection, Growers' Supply, Kelowna	
October 18	Unwanted Pesticide Collection, Growers' Supply, Oliver	
October 30	Unwanted Pesticide Collection, Top Crop Garden, Cranbrook	
October 31	Unwanted Pesticide Collection, Growers' Supply, Creston	
November 5-7	BC Agriculture Day	
November 15	BCFGA Board meeting	
November 20-21	Annual Review Caribbean SAWP	
December 4-5	BC Agriculture Climate Network workshop, Kamloops	
December 7	SIR Board meeting	
February 12-13	BCFGA Annual Convention	

<p>BCFGA Office 250-762-5226 Toll free -1-800-619-9022 </p>	<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: BCFGAs 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 BCFGAs). You may call your local director so that the BCFGAs Board can remain informed on how to best represent the tree fruit growers of BC.

BCFGAs 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
David Dobernigg	Vernon	Cell/text 250-550-8999

Housing Unavailable for Inspection

Some employers have accommodations that are used for the TFWs however they are not available in time for the housing inspection to be conducted within the eight months necessary for the employer to apply for their LMIA because:

- They are not constructed yet (new builds/ pre-fabricated homes); or
- The accommodations will be leased.

Accordingly, the following information will be accepted as part of the LMIA application:

New builds and Pre-Fabricated Homes

- For pre-fabricated housing, the employer may submit evidence, such as the contract with the pre-fabricated supplier and identify an alternative option if the building is not ready in time for the workers arrival;
- Employers will be expected to have these structures completed and inspected no less than one (1) month before the first worker arrives;
- Once available, employers will then be required to provide the housing inspection report to Service Canada officers, no less than one (1) month before the first worker arrives;
- If the housing does not meet TFW Program requirements, the positive LMIA may be revoked; and
- Given TFWs must pay for work permits prior to arrival, if the housing does not meet the established requirements, the employer should reimburse the worker the cost of the work permit.

Lease Agreements

- Employers are required to provide proof of the lease agreement and an alternative location if lease is not available before workers arrive;
- Employers will attest that they will submit a housing inspection report no less than one (1) month before the first worker arrives;
- Once available, employers will be responsible to provide the housing inspection report to Service Canada;
- If the housing does not meet TFW Program requirements, the positive LMIA may be revoked; and
- Given TFWs must pay for work permits prior to arrival, if the housing does not meet the established requirements, the employer should reimburse the worker the cost of the work permit.