

BC Fruit Growers' Association Friday File



March 20, 2018

BCFGA Takes Lead in Getting Service Canada Meeting set up Grower Input Strong

Service Canada's Integrity Branch is conducting consultations on TFWP Worker Protection with stakeholders across Canada. BCFGAs representatives Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas, and Bunvir Nijjer attended a meeting in Vancouver on March 16. The Vancouver session covered areas other than SAWP (The Ag Stream of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, Caregivers and Nannies, and Restaurant and Hotel worker agents were present) and involved 'community groups'. BC Agriculture Council / WALL reps were also present to put forward the agriculture story.

Several days ago, BCFGAs was asked to organize a session on March 17 in Kelowna. The Kelowna session featured grower participation. The Kelowna meeting was able to focus on agriculture and SAWP alone.

Thank you to the growers who came to the Kelowna meeting to present their concerns and also stress the need for SAWP workers. The BCFGAs is following up with Service Canada and at the political level, as well as coordinating with the Canadian Horticultural Council, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and the Canadian Agricultural Human Resources Council where (like BCFGAs) SAWP issues are identified as a top priority.

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.

We will follow-up with you.

SAWP Problems Urgent

Focus of March 14-15 Canadian Horticultural Council Annual Convention

The CHC convention highlighted current issues with SAWP delays and the problems caused when growers receive substitute workers for 'named' workers (those who have worked on the farm in previous years) as requested.

Several resolutions and discussions during the meetings were able to stress the importance of resolving the delays that have occurred this year in processing SAWP applications (LMIA's) and the delays in the work visa. Delegates from across Canada are frustrated with the slowness and confusion in the system this year - sometimes named workers are not being issued visas and unnamed workers are being substituted. In order to avoid this problem, indicate on the LMIA that you will not accept substitutes if your named worker is not available.

A survey of BC and Quebec growers is being planned to be conducted in April, to be conducted by WALI, FERMES, and the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council to record the financial and personal impact on growers due to the extended processing times and inability to send the named workers. This work will complement recent information from Ontario and the Maritimes on the very negative impact that government inaction and mismanagement is causing.

BCFGA will be appealing to growers in the coming weeks to respond to the survey.

The BCFGA will also be initiating a letter writing campaign to highlight the problems to federal politicians and the Minister of Labour. BCFGA directors will be asked to communicate with growers to help write letters explaining the impact on their farm, their finances, and even their health due to the extended turnaround times in processing Labour Market Impact Assessments for the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program. If you write a letter yourself, *please make sure to send a copy to the BCFGA.*

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

Date	Meeting	Attending for the BCFGA
March 19	Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry: Climate Change Impact on Agriculture	Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas
March 20	Quarterly Mexico SAWP Conf. Call	Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas
March 21	Quarterly Caribbean SAWP Conf. Call	Pinder Dhaliwal, Glen Lucas
April 3	City of Kelowna Ag Bylaws	Pinder Dhaliwal, Sukhdev Goraya
April 6	BCFGA Board of Directors	

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- 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.

BCFGA Board of Directors

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