

BC Fruit Growers' Association

Friday File



March 20, 2020 SECOND EDITION

Temporary Foreign Worker Travel Ban - resolved

Details still unclear

The federal government tonight issued [a press release](#) announcing the end of the travel ban that had prevented workers from Mexico and Caribbean countries from coming to Canada.

Several items arising from the announcement are unclear, and further detail will be provided next week.

There will be a two-week period of isolation on the farm, but we expect that work can continue during this time. However, the workers will not be permitted to be in public places and *must* stay on the farm property. Delivery of groceries to the farm, and handling of banking on the farm will need to be arranged by the employer.

Travel will be the next hurdle, with many commercial flights cancelled. Also, the recovery of the Mexico SIMOL database, which was corrupted and needs to be rebuilt, may cause delays. How to handle the transfer of Caribbean workers in the Toronto airport, under conditions of COVID-19, needs to be worked out. These factors will cause inevitable delays.

The advertising requirement for SAWP is waived for the next 6 months.

There is still expected to be a labour shortage, due to these many factors impacting the SAWP and backpacker programs this year. As a result, BCFGGA suggests that growers consider placing job ads on [Job Bank](#).

Also, if you are contacted by a local person requesting work on your farm, consider giving them a chance and hiring them.

If you do not have work for the local person requesting work on your farm, help them by contacting your neighbours or refer them to the BCFGGA. Tell them about Job Bank. *Do not just say "no"*. We as an industry must address the public concern that the SAWP workers are displacing local workers - *go the extra mile and help the Canadian looking for work to find a farm job, even if it is not on your farm.*

You may have the person looking for work contact Ron Forrest 778-363-3620 (but he is not available until May) or the BCFGGA office to get help finding work, or refer them to Job Bank.

Mohini Singh said today, "Our growers *have to adhere* to every guideline, every rule *very, very strictly*. There is no margin of error because this is about public safety."



BCFGA Office:
250-762-5226
Toll free:
1-800-619-9022

- Brenda Jorde, Member Services and BC Tree Fruit Replant Program, part-time, Monday - Thursday, local 1.
- Glen Lucas, General Manager, local 2.
- Sheila MacGregor, Accountant, part-time, local 3.
- Bunvir Nijjer, Corporate Secretary and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, part-time, local 4.

BCFGA 2020 Board of Directors

Name		Cell/Text
Pinder Dhaliwal - President	Oliver	250-490-7198
Peter Simonsen - VP	Naramata	250-488-0363
Ravinder Bains	Keremeos	250-499-0512
Sukhdeep (Deep) Brar	Summerland	250-462-5687
Avi Gill	Kelowna	778-990-9737
Sukhdev Goraya	Kelowna	250-859-1229
Talwinder Bassi	Oliver	250-485-7272
David Dobernigg	Vernon	250-550-8999

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

Date	Meeting	Details
April 8	Tree Fruit Production Guide annual review Cancelled	Creston