



BC Fruit Growers' Association

Friday File

April 21, 2017

Temporary Farm Worker Housing Bylaw City of Kelowna

The City of Kelowna is proposing a bylaw on temporary farm worker housing. The BCFGA agrees that a bylaw is needed, but the proposed bylaw has several problems. We are asking that producers send an email to clerks@kelowna.ca, with reasons why the proposed Temporary Farm Worker Housing Bylaw as proposed is not adequate, *such as*:

- The consultation was too rushed before its introduction.
- Minimum parcel size (10 acres) is not small enough.
- Maximum number of workers (40) does not relate to farm size.
- Maximum use per year is 8 months, but sometimes work overlaps and occupation is up to 10 months per year.
- Rigid limits on housing footprint that do not relate to farm size.
- Requirement to be within 150 feet of a road.
- Definition of On Farm Processing incomplete (does not include packing and storage).

The BCFGA is encouraging Kelowna growers to plan to attend a Public Hearing on May 2 at 6 pm in Kelowna City Hall. We will confirm with members that the Public Hearing is proceeding, because BCFGA and BC Cherry Association are working together to develop an alternate bylaw. However, because of the short timeframes, we must continue preparing for the Public Hearing (though we hope it will be cancelled) - please continue to send your emails opposing the bylaw as presented to clerks@kelowna.ca

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Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs)

Your input on grants for on-farm environmental projects

The Environmental Farm Plan Program is composed of two parts:

1. Assistance in preparing an Environmental Farm Plan for the farm.
2. Funding of projects that are identified as priorities in the EFP.

To be eligible to make application for BMP funding, a producer must have:

- Completed an EFP
- If older than 5 years, it must first be renewed
- Items being applied for must be indicated on the producer's Action Plan
- Any prerequisite Management Plans have been completed and submitted to the EFP Program

The EFP program is expected to continue in the new Agriculture Policy Framework.

- Application opening date is traditionally April 1st of each year
- In 2016 the available funding was fully allocated within 3 weeks of the opening date
- Currently, applications are received and approved on a 1st come 1st serve basis, however, Ontario moved to a rating-based priority list, and this type of approach may be considered in the future in BC.

The BMPs that are most relevant to the tree fruit sector in the current program are:

Title, type	Grant %	Funding Cap
Cost difference between mower and mulching mower.	30%	\$5,000
Composting manure, vegetable waste	30%	\$25,000
Portable chippers, air assisted burner	50%	\$25,000
Improved efficiency, parts and alteration to sprayers.	30%	\$1,500
Tower sprayers, specialized new sprayers to reduce volume of spray (e.g. optical sensors)	30%	\$10,000
Cost difference between mower and mulcher.	30%	\$5,000
Weather stations.	50%	\$5,000
Buffer, hedgerow, shelterbelt	60%	\$15,000
IPM Plan	100%	\$1,000
Irrigation planning	100%	\$1,000

Several EFPs that were valued by growers have been reduced or eliminated in the current EFP program, including:

- Irrigation improvements
- Pesticide storage sheds

Based on discussions with growers, the following BMPs should be added or grant percentage/caps increased:

- air injection nozzles
- irrigation improvements
- pesticide storage sheds
- weather stations

Deer fencing is sometimes mentioned as a priority by growers, but after trying unsuccessfully several times to gain this item as a BMP, the BCFGAs are seeking other opportunities to control the growing deer populations.

The BC Ministry of Agriculture is seeking farmers/ranchers for a survey on beneficial management practices and the Environmental Farm Plan. Your feedback will assist the BC Ministry of Agriculture in deciding which beneficial management practices to fund in upcoming years.

By participating in this survey, you will also have an opportunity to enter a draw for four \$100 prizes. Information that could identify an individual participant's responses will remain strictly confidential. The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes. Below is a link to the survey:

<https://survey.ubc.ca/surveys/alsemm/producer-v5-bcac/?collector=192408>

Information collected by this survey will assist the BC Ministry of Agriculture, in cooperation with the University of British Columbia (UBC), in conducting a needs assessment of beneficial management practices (BMPs) that are suitable for BC agriculture. The BC Agricultural Research & Development Corporation and the Environmental Farm Plan/Beneficial Management Practices Programs are also cooperating on this project.

Questions or concerns can be sent to Adrian Semmelink (adrian.semmelink@ires.ubc.ca).

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Grants for Student Workers

Some funding still available



Funding Available in Most Areas

Available Spots are Filling Up Fast!

APPLY NOW

The Get Youth Working Program offers a \$2,800 hiring incentive to hire eligible youth age 29 or younger.

The application is easy. You conduct your own recruiting. At any time during the recruiting process complete and submit an online application. The approval process is quick and easy.

Your application includes a FREE posting on the Job Board.

Complete the [EMPLOYER APPLICATION](#) today.

BCFGA Executive meeting

The BCFGA Executive met yesterday and the agenda items discussed included:

1. Member Services Committee recommendations on bylaw proposals:
 - a. Length of Executive terms
 - b. For sole proprietorship / partnership: voting by close relative
 - c. Rename Executive to be Board of Directors
 - d. Hold a Special General Meeting in November to consider these changes
2. BCFGA Fee structure - Associate Membership fee reviewed, Member fee structure for review later.
3. Director training.
4. Financial Update.
5. Administration contracts for ratification:
 - a. Irrigation Water Use - education outreach project
 - b. Post and Wire Support Systems guide
 - c. Elios Robotics - industry partner, no cost at this time
6. Update on activities and direction:
 - a. City of Kelowna Worker Housing Bylaw
 - b. Human Rights Tribunal complaint: female workers in SAWP
7. Provincial Election - Chamber All Candidates forums co-sponsored by BCFGA:
 - a. 6 pm, Tuesday, April 25. SS Sicamous, Penticton.
 - b. 11:15 am, Wednesday, April 26, Ramada, Kelowna (luncheon).

If members have any input or questions on these and other topics, contact your local Executive member.

Mexico SAWP meeting

Great information and well attended


The Mexican Consulate and BCFGA are coordinated information sessions held on April 19 in Kelowna and Oliver. The meetings discussed the Canada-Mexico Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program and were very useful. Here are just a few of the tips:

- Each employee must keep timesheets, even when picking piecework.
- Timesheets should be filled out and reviewed at least once a week and initialed by the worker and supervisor. Keep copies for 6 years.
- Housing inspections should include a note from the inspector that deficiencies or the LMIA may be returned as incomplete.
- Cowan insurance and WorkSafe coverage for hospital costs is almost always assured; however, ambulance costs are often not covered.
- You have the right to insist that workers leave the property cleaned and in good condition. Write up your 'house rules' on personal conduct and keeping facilities clean. Advise in the house rules that if not clean at the end of the season, the cleaning charges will be deducted from the workers last pay. Make sure to review the house rules the first day of employment and have the worker sign the document. Keep a copy of the document in the worker file. The Mexican consulate has offered to translate the house rules to Spanish.

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

Date	Meeting	Attendance
April 25	BCFGA Labour Committee	
May 9	BC Election	everyone!

How to contact the BCFGA Office

BCFGA Office - 250-762-5226 Toll free -1-800-619-9022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brenda Jorde, Member Services and Replant Admin, local 1.• Glen Lucas, General Manager, local 2.• Bunvir Nijjer, Corporate Secretary and Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program, local 4.
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