

BC Fruit Growers' Association
Friday File
December 18, 2015



Seasons Greetings
Last Friday File of the year 2015

We have published a more frequent and to-the-point newsletter since June - the "Friday File". Only occasionally do we print the Friday File and mail it, usually, we send it by email and post it to our website. Those members who do not have email are missing out on potentially valuable information. E-mail is an essential tool for businesses in the 21st century.

We hope that members have found the weekly newsletter to provide

- more timely information
- regular information on how issues are evolving
- important reminders about dates
- relevant insight into industry and association issues

The Friday File has increased communication, as staff and Executive receive your comments and ideas in response to the newsletter. The plan is to continue with the Friday File in the New Year, after taking a brief break during the holiday season.

Best wishes to everyone during the holiday from the staff and executive of the BC Fruit Growers' Association!

BCFGA Annual Convention
January 29-30, 2016

The BCFGA Annual convention is being held in Kelowna at the Ramada Hotel. An agenda is being developed and will be included in the Convention Portfolio mailed to all growers. In response to several growers, who in recent years commented on a perceived excess of paper and mailing cost for the portfolio, we will be having an abbreviated portfolio. Many of the reports that are normally part of the portfolio, but not included this time, will be available on the BCFGA website and we will also have printed copies available at the Convention. You should receive the new, improved, and shorter portfolio in mid-January.

The BCFGA Executive will be looking for input into several governance-related items, which could change the way the BCFGA conducts its internal business in future. No changes are planned for the 2016 Convention, but changes possible in future conventions could include items such as multiple-year terms and a change to electronic voting (there are several variations possible). To be clear, no changes are being made for the January 29-30, 2016 Annual Convention and election. We appreciate member input on future direction and possible changes and will seek that input at the Convention.

Seasonal Agricultural Worker Housing Inspectors - certified

A significant change came to SAWP housing inspections this year - all agriculture associations were caught by surprise when we learned that existing inspectors (who were uncertified) would be retiring without notice. The BC Agriculture Council, through extra effort of Board member Rhonda Driediger and Executive Director Reg Ens, quickly found a new source of inspectors.

It was reported that previous inspectors were taking short-cuts and not doing the complete job of inspection expected by the Mexican, Caribbean and Canadian governments that oversee the SAWP. The new inspectors are certified and their continuing certification requires that they do a competent and thorough job. However, the job is limited to the inspecting and filling out of the inspection form and identification of significant safety issues. The scope of the inspection process has been a learning curve, and some fees were seen to be much too high at the start of the new inspection process.

BCFGA organized a December 16 meeting with housing inspectors. It was noted that the variation in fees is narrowing, fees are moderating, and inspectors have indicated a willingness to discuss their fees with growers. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the scope of inspections, to bring greater consistency in inspections, and to discuss inspection issues.

Mike Bradshaw	Kelowna	250-870-8340
Keith Suftin	Kelowna (travels no charge 2 hours)	250-317-3349
Brad Pears	Kelowna	250-717-6434
Barry Chickloski	Penticton	250-490-1118
Dwight Carroll	Kelowna	250-470-8467
Hugh Cairns	Kelowna	250-808-5777

(You may notice that we are presenting the list so that it 'rotates' who is listed from top to bottom, as this is more a fairer way of letting growers know who is available to do inspections.)

Meetings

Agriculture Land Commission

The Chair of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission has offered to meet with BCFGAs representatives prior to our Annual Convention and the new CEO of the Agricultural Land Commission is planning to attend the BCFGAs Annual Convention as keynote speaker in Kelowna on January 30.

How to contact the BCFGAs Office

BCFGAs Office  250-762-5226 or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brenda Zarr, Member Services and Replant Admin, local 1. ● Glen Lucas, General Manager, local 2. ● Sheila MacGregor, Accountant, local 3.
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toll free 1-800-619-9022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bunvir Nijjer, Corporate Secretary and Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program, local 4.
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This newsletter prepared by Glen Lucas - contact me with any errors or omissions at glucas@bcfga.com

Dates and Events

Check [the calendar on our website](#) for more information

Date	Event
December 31, 2015	AgriStability application deadline for 2015 (with penalty)
January 12 and 14, 2016	BCFGA District Council meetings
January 27	BCAC Agriculture Gala, Abbotsford: for tickets www.bcac.bc.ca - this event usually sells out, so register early.
January 29-30	BCFGA Annual Convention, Ramada Hotel, Kelowna