

BC Fruit Growers' Association

Friday File

June 16, 2017



BCFGA Summer Labour Project - 2017

Contact Ron Forrest

The BCFGa summer labour project has started. Ron Forrest provides safety orientation sessions for staff (before the season starts and as work starts on your farm). Call Ron to arrange a workshop on your farm: **250-859-7503**. Ron can also let workers know of available work at your farm - call him to let him know when you need workers.

SAWP Housing

Modernizing the requirements

A recent news article that depicted sub-standard worker housing is causing changes. The farms in the news article represent a small percentage of the overall program, and these farms likely represent the poorest quality housing in the program. A meeting of farm association and government was held earlier this week in Langley, to discuss some of the items which must be changed in the SAWP housing requirements. The most significant changes in SAWP housing that were discussed are:

- Travel trailers and recreation-type trailer and vehicles will no longer be approved. Manufactured homes and portable workcamps are acceptable.
- By 2019, the laundry facilities for SAWP workers will be on-farm. Currently, transportation to a laundromat is acceptable.
- A public perception issue for the program is untidy yards around the housing. In future, housing inspectors will be ensuring that the area around the housing is tidy and that proper garbage containers are in use. Consulate and other inspections will ensure that yards around SAWP workers is kept tidy throughout the year.

Switching from inspected to uninspected housing may result workers being removed from the farm, and penalties levied. If workers are relocated, then the new housing location must be inspected prior to use and the Consulate or liaison service advised.

South East Kelowna Irrigation District

Open House

Jo Szady, new trustee for SEKID advises an upcoming open house is being held June 20th. For more information on the workshop on Phase 1 of the 2017 Kelowna Integrated Water Supply Plan, click the link below.

https://www.sekid.ca/news-reports/news-archive/story/21/Public_Information_Open_house_June_20_2017/

Temporary Farm Worker Housing (TFWH) Bylaw An Update

The BCFGA, BC Cherry Association and the Strengthening Farming Unit of the BC Ministry of Agriculture have been working with the City of Kelowna to develop a Temporary Farm Worker Housing Bylaw that works for growers and addresses the concerns of City Council and staff. A compromise has been developed, where 3 of the four requirements of the BCFGA have been met

- maximum size prior to Public Hearing is 60 beds,
- the allowable seasonal occupation period is 10 months rather than 8 months, and
- siting of TFWH on properties will consider soil capability and impact on neighbours.

The fourth BCFGA recommendation, to re-define “Farm Unit” to allow distance separation between TFWH operated by a single farm, was not possible as it impacted other activities of the Ministry of Agriculture that too relied on the definition of Farm Unit. An alternative solution was developed by the City, based on a maximum of 60 beds per sector for a farm unit, before a Public Hearing is required.

Though not ideal, the sector approach is supported - with the expectation that if there are significant problems or issues with the sectoral approach over the next 2 - 3 years, the bylaw can be revisited. The considerable improvement in the bylaw was made possible by associations, municipal and federal government working towards a solution.

Kelowna Agriculture Plan More from the big city

An Agriculture Plan has been drafted and the growers are invited to review the draft Plan at an upcoming public information session. Staff will be available to answer questions and facilitate discussion at:

Wednesday, June 21
4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Reid Hall, Benvoulin Heritage Park
(2279 Benvoulin Road, Kelowna)


**Can't attend the open
house? Provide your
input from June 12 to
30.**

**[Take the online
survey.](#)**

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

Date	Meeting	
June 16	Sterile Insect Release Program Board Meeting	David Dobernigg, Amarjit Lalli, Glen Lucas
June 21	Kelowna Agriculture Plan, Wednesday, June 21 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Reid Hall, Benvoulin Heritage Park (2279 Benvoulin Road, Kelowna)	

How to contact the BCFGA Office

<p>BCFGA Office - 250-762-5226 Toll free -1-800-619-9022</p> 	<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.
--	--

The BCFGA Labour Orientation and Safety Program

Contact Ron Forrest
250-859-7503
Email: rforrest.bcfga@gmail.com