

**BC Fruit Growers' Association
Friday File**



September 11, 2015

Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) President Visits Kelowna

CHC Keith Kuhl and Executive Director Anne Fowlie are in Kelowna attending meetings of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA, the national group representing fruit and vegetable importer/export agents, brokers and packers).

Fred Steele and Glen Lucas met with Anne and CHC President Keith Kuhl yesterday, and the new BCFGAs location at Vaughan Avenue makes it easy to show visitors a lot of our industry in a short time - the office is next to the cidery, fruit store and pear and cherry lines. In the evening, Summerland Varieties Corporation was having an SVC Executive meeting, so we were able to host Keith and Anne to a dinner in Summerland.

A few of the Canadian Horticultural Council key achievements over the years have been:

- lobbying to establish the **Pest Management Centre** which helps achieve access to new pesticides, as well as promote pesticide risk reduction. A list of new [pesticide risk reduction projects for 2015](#), including efficacy and IPM trials involving biopesticides, has been published on the [Pest Management Centre](#) of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada [Pesticide Risk Reduction Program](#) can be viewed [here](#).
- establishing a **national food safety program** in response to retailer and exporter demands for many different types of food safety programs.
- establishing the pre-requisites (licensing, dispute resolution) for a **Canadian 'produce payment security' program** that ensures any sales of produce have priority payment. The US has established a "PACA Trust" under its Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA). The PACA trust is a remedy for produce sellers to obtain payment on undisputed amounts owed for produce sales, including insolvent buyers. Recently, Canadian produce sales to the US were excluded from from the PACA trust, because Canada does not have a parallel program that assures priority of payment on Canadian and US produce sales.
- lobbying to adopt the most recent plant breeders rights convention, known as UPOV 91.

A CHC priority is to obtain a commitment from the federal parties on establishing a 'PACA-like trust' in Canada. CHC is also asking for a commitment from the federal parties on programs to promote fruit and vegetable consumption.

Wind Damage in Oliver-Keremeos - Info Session held last Thursday

About fifteen growers attended the meeting organized by the BCFGAs and the Agriculture Risk Management Branch. The purpose of the meeting was to make sure growers whose operations suffered damage in the wind storm of Saturday August 16 have up-to-date program information. Growers had many suggestions for improving the Production Insurance program. The BCFGAs will take forward these and other ideas and suggestions to the Tree Fruit Production Insurance Advisory Committee.

Federal Election: National Agriculture Leaders Debate to be held, September 30

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture – which represents some 200,000 farmers and their families nationwide – has organized an agriculture-focused election debate for September 30.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture will be hosting a National Agriculture Leaders debate in lead up to the Federal Election. The debate will highlight issues facing Canadian farmers and give an opportunity for each party to outline its platform positions as they pertain to Canada's farm and food future.

WHEN: Wednesday, September 30, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.,

WHO:

- Gerry Ritz, Conservative Minister of Agriculture
- Malcolm Allen, NDP Agriculture Critic
- Mark Eyking, Liberal Agriculture Critic
- Bruce Hyer, Green Party Deputy Leader
- Bloq Québécois, representative TBC

WHERE: Fairmont Chateau Laurier Hotel, Ottawa. A live webcast will be available on the CFA's website - [registration required](#)- or via CPAC.

RSVP & WEBCAST REGISTRATION: Please register in advance for the webcast and RSVP if attending in person. Registration information, as well as details on farmers' priorities for the upcoming election, can be viewed [here](#).

Debate questions will be posed via pre-taped video segments from farmers across Canada.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is the country's largest national general farm organization. Its members include provincial general farm organizations, national and inter-provincial commodity organizations - representing over 200,000 Canadian farmers and farm families through its members. Founded in 1935 to provide Canada's farmers with a single voice in Ottawa, the CFA works on behalf of Canada's farmers to ensure the continued development of a viable and vibrant agriculture and agri-food industry in Canada.

September's agriculture debate is also expected to address the sector's chronic labour shortage, climate change, education and risk management programming – a topic that is becoming increasingly relevant as Western Canada grapples with drought conditions and severe hailstorms.

The debate will also raise the issue of the federal government's significant funding cuts to risk management programs under Growing Forward 2 – cuts farm groups have said they want to renegotiate in the next agriculture budget, expected in 2018.

Replant Program 2015

After processing the first 45 applications, in order of priority by horticultural rating, the next 32 applications will be inspected over the next two weeks. The new batch of inspections is funded by reallocation of some later-year funding in the replant program, as well as matching funds

from Summerland Varieties Corp. Additional funds were freed up from 'slippage', where growers who apply for funding eventually plant less than expected.

The BCFGAs continue to work towards allocating all available funding. The BCFGAs obtained approval for \$117,000 from Summerland Varieties Corporation and \$117,000 reallocated from the last year of the program. In future years, growers will be advised of approval/not approval as soon as possible before planting, with an objective of letting growers know by December 31.

The Replant Program for 2016 will have an application deadline of November 16, 2015. Applications will be available in the second half of September. A training session for Horticultural Advisors is being planned.

Reminder: Minimum wage and piece rates change on September 15, 2015

Minimum wage and piece rates change on September 15, 2015. Minimum wage goes from \$10.25 to \$10.45, plus vacation pay of 4%. Piece rates include vacation pay.

Commodity	Before September 15, 2015	After September 14, 2015
Apple	\$17.06 / bin	\$17.39 / bin
Pears	\$19.21 / bin	\$19.58 / bin

Our Labour Project is winding up for the year. Ron Forrest will remain available until the end of September for worker placements - 250-859-7503.

Summerland Varieties Corporation and the BCFGAs Research and Development Orchard Ltd. provide funding for the BCFGAs Labour Project - thank you to these BCFGAs subsidiaries for supporting growers.

Summerland Varieties Corporation provides funding for the 2015 Supplemental Replant Program. Appreciation to SVC for its generous contribution.

