

## Report to the 2023 BCFGGA Convention

From the

### **BCFGGA General Manager**

Many things have changed in the past two years, causing anxiety and financial losses for growers. Some of the changes will be irreversible: the declining availability of youth workers is economy-wide. It will be difficult for agriculture to compete with urban-based employers. Several new initiatives, described in the Labour Report, are proposed to deal with the emerging labour market issues.

We have invested wisely in getting outside help when needed. Contractors include James Calissi (Nursery Stock Study, Cost of Production Study), Tamara Richardson (Apple Clearwing Moth Pheromone Study), Carl Withler and Lynn Lashuk (Living Labs, TFW housing policy), Michael Wallis (TFWP Employer Group Study), James Grieve (Orderly Marketing), George Geldart (Apple Price Study), Harvey Sasaki (Replant Program) and MNP (Cost of Production Study).

Several studies have been completed or released this past year, and we are looking forward to seeing the MNP results and future plans on COP at the Annual Convention. Studies on Nursery Tree Supply and Fumigation Requirements, Cost of Production and We are improving our internal expertise to coordinate the extension of research projects so that members can benefit from the new information generated by studies, and we will have inhouse publication / media expertise to ensure the information is in an accessible format and writing style. Availability of these contractors and inhouse expertise helps us achieve desired changes, more quickly.

In September last year, Gail Nelson became our new Horticultural and Research Projects Manager. With the start of 3 sizable research efforts starting up and an AgriMarketing Project in its final year, it has been a steep learning curve and Gail has excelled at getting these projects underway.

Our existing staff continue to ensure the strong performance of the BCFA. Bunvir Nijjer, Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant, works remotely now and continues to help BCFA members with Temporary Foreign worker applications. Sheila MacGregor, CMA, keeps our accounting in order and takes pride in 'clean' audits. Don Magnusson, P.Ag., helps us with the Tree Fruit Production Guide, field research, and wrote a paper on Nursery Fruit Tree Import Treatment. We have plans to add one new employee to complete our roster. An employee search is underway for Communication and Member Services Manager. In a small office, everyone provides back-up for each other, and the variety of work and challenges keeps things interesting. All of our staff have a great orientation to customer relations.

Programs we continue to operate and administer include:

1. Pesticide Applicators re-Certification (PAC)Program .
2. Pesticide Handlers Certification Program.
3. Export Inspection Coordination for Apples to Taiwan.
4. Tree Fruit Production Guide.

We have completed substantial design work on modernizing our website, and we are awaiting the hiring of the Communications and Membership Manager to complete this work. Communications through our Friday File continued and the newsletter is mainly delivered via email, though a redesign is also planned for the newsletter in the coming year.

Ongoing incentives to BCFGAs members include:

- EFP Incentive (\$250)
- AgSafeBC Certificate of Recognition Program (\$250-\$500)
- Crop Tracker pilot project (\$480)

Reduced cost services for BCFA members include:

- TFW housing bylaw assistance, GreenSpark Consulting (Carl Withler, P.Ag.) - value about \$200.
- LMIA (TFW application) assistance (Bunvir Nijjer, RCIC), at a reduced cost.
- Cost of Production pilot project, MNP.

Additionally, we provide subscriptions to industry magazines and in January added Good Fruit Grower to the other subscriptions (Country Life in BC, Orchard and Vine, and The Grower). The BCFA Friday File is a trusted source of information in the industry.

If, as Woody Allen said, "80% of success is showing up", then the BCFGAs is well on its way. BCFGAs reps participated in:

- The annual presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the provincial budget review committee).
- BCAC's Agriculture Day and Agriculture Gala.
- SAWP Annual Review Meetings in November.
- CHC Annual Meeting.

When the BCFGAs participates, it benefits our growers directly by bringing back information and having a direct say in programs and policy development, and indirectly by forging strong relationships that will bring future benefits for our members.

### Financial

Overall, we aim for a balance between income and expense - we are "nonprofit" and exist to serve grower interests. The new business model refocuses us on providing value to members, without forgoing our traditional industry leadership.

The wise investment over the past 30-70 years in the BCFGAs Research and Development Orchard and Summerland Varieties have provided BCFGAs with financial security. We are able to focus on providing growers with incentives and discounts and there is more to come.

At your service,



Glen Lucas, P.Ag.  
General Manager