



## BC Fruit Growers' Association

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August 14, 2021

Hon. Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister:

The all-time, record-setting heat from June 28 to July 1, 2021, along with subsequent heat waves and season-long drought, is having a severe impact on the tree fruit sector. The Production Insurance Program and the AgriStability Programs are very much appreciated by growers in these extreme weather circumstances. In addition to the coverage provided by these programs for crop damage, the recovery from the extreme weather is at the top of tree fruit growers' minds.

We are requesting that the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods work with the federal government on an AgriRecovery application that will help the tree fruit sector to recover from the extreme heat of 2021 in BC, as has been done for the prairie provinces.

AgriRecovery in BC could assist with the following initiatives to aid recovery in the tree fruit (mainly apple and cherry) operations and preserve infrastructure:

- Preventative disease and nutrient sprays and application costs - for fireblight, mildew, canker, and Sudden Apple Decline - heat-stressed trees are weakened and more susceptible to these disease (Estimated compensation: \$5.8 million).
- Increasing the storage and delivery capacity of community/regional government irrigation infrastructure to prepare for new heat extremes in future years. Additional water storage capacity is needed for future protection of trees from excessive heat (eg. \$1 million per city purveyor for planning and short term infrastructure improvements).
- Testing and analysis costs to assess fruit quality pre-harvest. For example, the purchase of internal quality equipment for field staff and 5 major packinghouses (Approx. \$300,000)
- Purchase spoiled and diverted fruit in storage at fresh market value, which will encourage harvest when fruit quality cannot be adequately assessed prior to shipping, which will also prevent unnecessary impact on packinghouse operations due to disruptions in supply ( \$.25/lb = \$12.5 million).

We hope that the federal election in the case of an emergency, such that the AgriRecovery program will not be delayed due to the federal caretaker government.

BC's interior tree fruit industry represents 800 growers operating orchards that generate \$118 million in wholesale revenue and contribute \$776 million in economic activity.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pinder Dhaliwal', written in a cursive style.

Pinder Dhaliwal  
President

cc Tom Ethier, Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries  
Stan Vander Waal, President, BC Agricultural Council