



The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association

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GM Apple Battle Heats Up

Kelowna, BC – The BCFGA Fruit Growers' Association (BCFGA) has asked government for an immediate moratorium on the GM Apple, known under the trademark Arctic Apple. The Arctic Apple has recently been in the news as its owner claims that the approval of the apple in the US is imminent. A parallel regulatory process is underway in Canada.

The BCFGA wrote to the Health Minister Rona Ambrose and Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz today to request that the regulatory process for the Arctic Apple be suspended. "Our concern is the negative publicity for apples in general caused by the controversy over this GM apple. There is potential market damage caused to apple markets if this GM apple is approved – indeed, it seems the damage is occurring even while the apple is in the regulatory process and a decision on its approval is still pending. The public thinks of apples as a pure, natural, healthy and nutritional fruit. GM apples are a risk to our market image," said Jeet Dukhia, President of the BCFGA.

The BCFGA is opposed to the introduction of the GM apple, with this position endorsed by its delegates at its Annual Convention. The Canadian Horticulture Council's Apple Working Group, a national committee of representatives from each apple growing province, is in favour of a moratorium on the introduction of the Arctic Apple.

The public is skeptical about GM food according to a 2012 national survey, which the BCFGA completed in partnership with the Quebec Apple Producers Association. The survey showed that 69% of Canadians are not in favour of GM food and 91% said GM labelling should be mandatory. "If 76% of people say the Canadian government has not provided adequate information to the public on GM foods, how can the government then approve these products for introduction to an unprepared marketplace? This places the entire apple market at risk, and we have asked that the government place an immediate, pre-emptive moratorium on the on this apple before our markets suffer," said Jeet Dukhia, President of the BC Fruit Growers' Association.

The BCFGA is an agriculture association with a membership of 550 commercial tree fruit growers in BC. It celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2014.

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Further information:

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2012 Survey: [www.bcfga.com/files/Report on GE survey - July 3 2012.pdf](http://www.bcfga.com/files/Report%20on%20GE%20survey%20-%20July%203%202012.pdf)