

Dear B.C. Apple Growers,

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, stakeholders in the tree fruit industry working on the various stabilization initiatives continue to make strong progress in several important areas. These accomplishments are unprecedented and the result of frank dialogue, hard work and a common industry goal to improve returns for all growers. Minister Popham recently attended a steering committee meeting and made several supportive comments about the progress made to date.

Recently, there have been two meetings of three grower representatives from the New Tree Fruit Varieties Development Council (NTFVDC), three marketers/packers on behalf of all commercial packers, and the President of the BCFGAs, facilitated by the Ministry. The discussions centered on how the strong progress the packers are making to collaborate on critical matters overlaps with the marketing commission concept that has been recently discussed. The group discussed opportunities to increase collaboration across the industry.

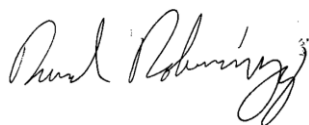
The representatives at the meeting felt it important to provide the industry an update on the discussions that took place. There was a clear commitment to collaborate to increase returns to growers as quickly as possible. The considerable overlap between the work the packers are doing, and the marketing commission concept was recognized. Examples where there is overlap include setting minimum quality standards, transparency of historical sales and marketing information, and marketing/promotion programs. There are examples where packers cannot collaborate, including setting minimum pricing and collecting levies.

To this end, the representatives in attendance agreed it was in the best interest of everyone in the industry to build on the progress made to date by packers on the areas (noted above) where there is overlap in all our objectives. It was also agreed that, at some time in the future, we should assess the progress being made, determine whether there is a need for a marketing commission, and identify what, if any, additional steps are required.

Working together, it is critical that the industry continues to make important progress towards increasing grower returns. Should you have any questions about the work underway, please reach out to any of the attendees at the meeting who have signed this letter.



Peter Simonsen (Grower and President, BCFGAs)



Dave Dobernigg (Grower and Director, NTFVDC)

*M. van Roachoudt*

Madeleine van Roachoudt (Grower and Vice Chair, NTFVDC)

*JC*

Jim Campbell (Grower and Administrator, NTFVDC)

*Warren Sarafinchan*

Warren Sarafinchan (President and CEO, BC Tree Fruits Cooperative)

*Lance McGinn*

Lance McGinn (Sales Director, Sandher Fruit Packers)

*Nav Lasser*

Nav Lasser (Sales Manager, Lasser Produce)