



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Leading the way together.

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CHAIR'S REPORT

Stan Vander Waal

Whether it be our advocacy work with a new government, policy projects, collaboration with members or embarking on new initiatives, BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) has a lot to be proud of from 2017.

In regards to building organizational capacity, BCAC was successful in filling two staff positions that were previously vacant. Farmer ID Card sales continued to increase with 727 new accounts signed up. Membership also saw an increase as BCAC welcomed BC Salmon Farmers' Association and Mushroom Growers Society of BC. We're thrilled to broaden our membership with the addition of an aqua-based association. Agriculture and aquaculture share many of the same values and challenges and see great potential in a more collaborative relationship.

The annual BC Agri-food Industry Gala was another excellent sell-out event. BCAC donated all silent auction proceeds, which was nearly \$10,000, to the BC Agriculture

in the Classroom Foundation (BC AITC). Additional funds raised at the gala are to support BCAC's main advocacy event of the year, Ag Day in Victoria. In 2017, Ag Day saw a record level of participation from both agriculture representatives and government. Premier John Horgan also attended and spoke at the Proclamation ceremony.

The year was not without its challenges. A change in government, minimum wage increases, provincial health tax changes and arduous labour requirements were all areas with a great deal of focus. More than ever, BCAC has increased communication efforts with government to ensure our interests are considered in policy-shaping decisions and to stress the importance of consultation and collaboration. A strong foundation has been set with the new government and opposition for the work we will continue in 2018.

Collaboration with members was definitely heightened in 2017 with the hiring of a

Manager of Public Trust and Director of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement. Both started in their new roles in the second half of the year and hit the ground running on one of the emphasized areas of importance-building public trust. As farmers, we may have the most to lose as well as the most to gain, but we are not in this journey alone. More details on the work being done is found later within this report.

I would like to thank our members and their boards, sponsors, industry partners, government representatives and all farmers and ranchers for your dedication to advancing agriculture in B.C. We look forward with anticipation to the year ahead and the exciting opportunities and changes it brings.

Stan Vander Waal
BCAC Board Chair



YEAR IN REVIEW

Reg Ens, Executive Director



2017 was a crazy and challenging year. Who would have thought that

it would take until July before we knew who our new Minister of Agriculture would be! The long election period and a new government meant that much of the work we did leading up to the election was reviewed again in the fall.

Advocating with government on behalf of the farmers and ranchers of B.C. is core to

what BCAC does. This report highlights some of the key files that we worked on in 2017.

The new government has many changes that it would like to make. Some of the environmental and labour policies are concerning to members and require us to provide more input to these ministries, helping them understand how what they do will impact B.C. farmers and ranchers and through them the food security of BC. A new government means that we have to change the language

we use when telling our story. Economic growth is not the priority, it is one priority along with improving affordability for lower income individuals, climate change and increased protection of the environment.

We successfully supported having the long standing Ag Critic become the new Ag Minister. Having someone who knows who BCAC is, wants to engage with the sector and is focused on the job of Ag Minister is great. We are working with her and Ministry staff to develop the details behind *GrowBC*, *FeedBC* and *BuyBC* and anticipate that the February budget and the new federal-provincial funding program (Canadian Agriculture Partnership – CAP, replacing

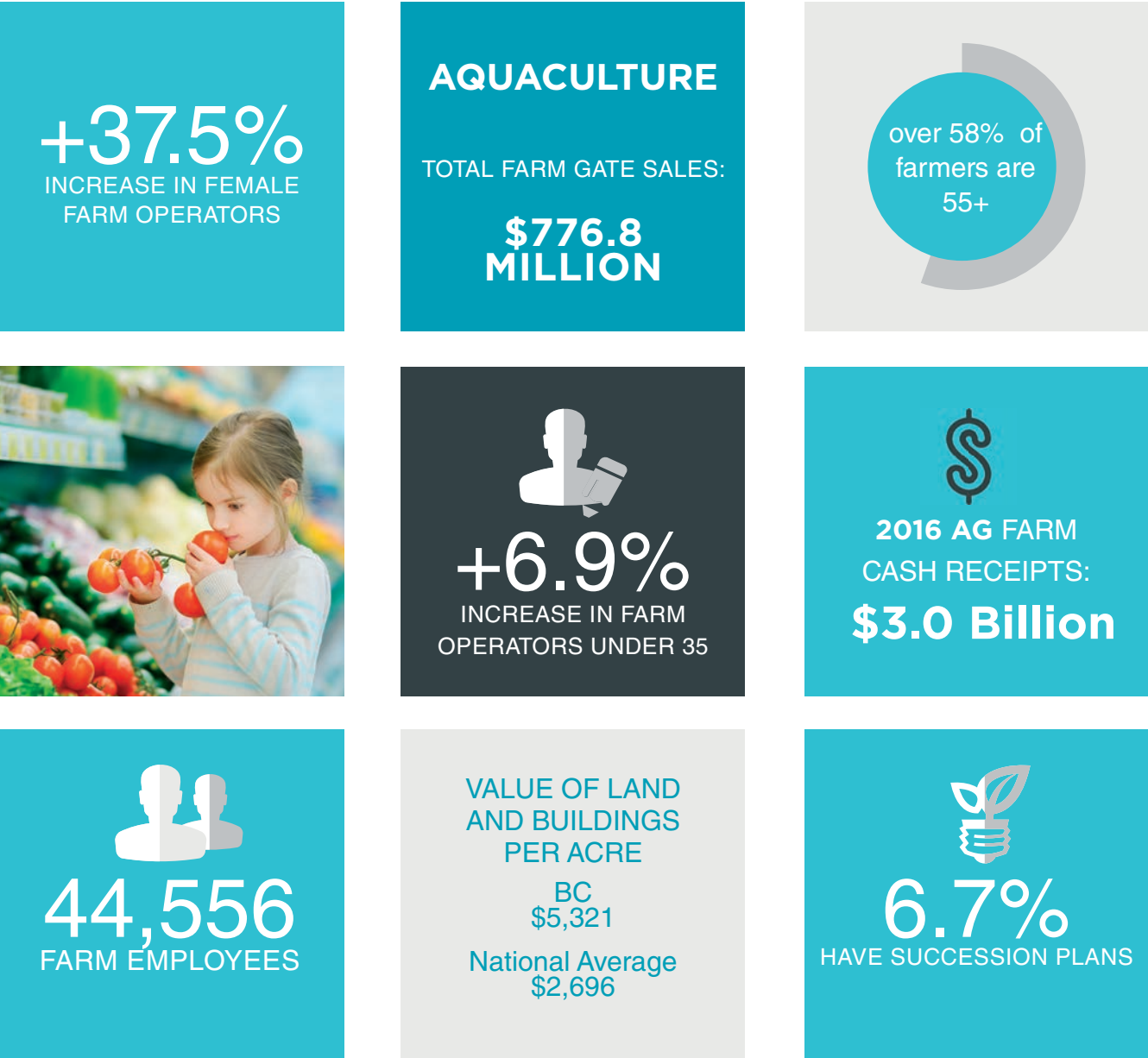


Did you know...*at Ag Day in Victoria, we saw the highest level of participation from both industry and government than ever before?*

GF2) will provide these details. To advocate effectively, BCAC must involve our members and facilitate engagement between members. Adding staff resources to this area in 2017 is setting the groundwork for these efforts. We expect to build on this framework in 2018 to provide more frequent communications with members and stakeholders.

We were excited to hire a full time person to take on the public trust initiative. Sharon began bringing together the ideas and concepts and translating them into tangible projects and activities. We were sad to see her sudden departure. We are reviewing what we learned with Sharon and anticipate reposting the position shortly.

BC QUICK FACTS



LABOUR

update

The ongoing challenges facing employers finding employees has led BCAC to increase efforts on the labour file. To minimize miscommunications between parties, BCAC continuously works with, and between, several organizations helping producers in labour issues.

COLLABORATION IS KEY

AGSAFE

With input from our members, BCAC appoints three employer representatives to the AgSafe B.C. Board of Directors.

In April 2018, the AgSafe BC Annual General Meeting (AGM) is being held in conjunction with the IAF, BCAC and ARDCorp AGMs.

This recognizes that spring is a challenging time for farmers to attend meetings, but that having farmer oversight and accountability is critical for these organizations.

MEMBERSHIP

BCAC has supported the B.C. Labour Market Assessment Project being led by the BC Landscapes and Nursery Association (BCLNA)

Through funding from the provincial government, this project will help employers, initially in the horticulture sectors, source and develop the needed skilled employees for their operations.

BCAC has an ongoing work plan pertaining to labour. We urge members to contact us if they are in need of support.

PARTNERSHIPS

BCAC has a strong relationship with WorkSafeBC, helping provide industry feedback to WorkSafeBC and assisting with dissemination of information through our regular member updates, Council Capsule, website and social media.

As an additional valuable relationship, BCAC is a member of the BC Employers Forum. This organization works with employers from across many industries.



BCAC is also a member of the Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council (CAHRC). While it is not a lobby or advocacy organization, it provides research on labour conditions which are used to support the need for programs such as the Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program (SAWP). It also develops training and education programs to assist employers be better managers.

AG DAY

in Victoria

"I just spent all day talking to farmers, producers, and processors and I will never run out of energy for those conversations." - Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture

Organized by BCAC, Ag Day is a series of scheduled meetings between B.C. farmers and ranchers, Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, and senior government officials and other key stakeholders such as B.C.'s Agriculture Land Commission (ALC). The purpose? To discuss the sustainable growth of agriculture in British Columbia.

Another objective for Ag Day is to increase awareness around the positive impact agriculture has on the B.C. economy while also communicating the challenges that the sector experiences.

Collectively, the message was clear - by proactively working together, we can achieve

mutually beneficial policies, regulations and programs that support the sustainability and growth of B.C.'s land and water based industries. Key messages included:

- **Communicating Shared Values** (consumer trust building efforts)
- **Climate Change** (investment towards mitigation and adaptation)
- **Farm Sustainability** (Land Use, Taxation and Partnerships)
- **Working Together** (consultation)

The meetings took place on Tuesday and were followed by an evening networking reception. This year, we saw the highest level of participation from both government and industry representatives.

Plans for Ag Day 2018 are currently underway and tentatively planned for dates similar to 2017.

For further information about Ag Day in Victoria or how to participate, please contact your respective member association or the BC Agriculture Council office.



BUILDING TRUST

with consumers

As a starting point, BCAC would like to thank all our members and industry stakeholders for their constant support while in the development stages for the public trust initiative. We can't express enough gratitude for the level of participation and amount of hours everyone has contributed. It truly is amazing how much can be accomplished when we work together.

The average consumer is now three generations removed from a farm. Because they no longer understand the heart and soul of farming, convincing them to accept sensational, fear-based

untruths about what agriculture does and doesn't do is easy. They are willing to disregard facts as 'fake' if they don't align with their personal perspectives. This is bad news for agriculture unless farmers step up to the challenge of meeting fake news head-on. No trust means you can't build relationships, and in turn, price becomes the main focus. This is a dangerous position because price is one dimensional - up or down.

Value, however, is multi-dimensional and is based upon the consumers' interpretation of the brand. Consumers are

choosing to support companies that demonstrate and promote their ethical purpose, and in the case of farming, supporting farms that demonstrate their level of commitment to continuous improvement and transparency.

BCAC has revitalized the preexisting **We Heart Local** engagement strategy and have also established a working committee dedicated to the communications work involved with their objective to "Create direct connections between consumers and producers".

2017 INITIATIVES

AUGUST

- Real Dirt on Farming Partnership

SEPTEMBER

- Manager of Public Trust Hired
- Attended CCFI Public Trust Summit

OCTOBER

- Development of Year 1 Work Plan
- Re-Established We Heart Local
- Created a Pan-Agriculture Communications and Engagement Working Group
- Provided Public Trust Presentation at BCYF Farm Fest
- Had a booth at 4 Education and Career Fairs throughout BC
- Partnered with University of the Fraser Valley's *SolveIt!* Program



DECEMBER

- Ads in Country Life in BC

COMING UP IN 2018...

- Public Trust Industry Stakeholder Workshop
- Four Producer Workshops (*Speak Up!* and *How to Host a Farm Tour*)
- Create Industry-Wide Shared Values Statement
- Canadian Ag Day Social Media Campaign
- Develop and Conduct a Public Trust Assessment
- Create Visual Story Telling Content (videos and social media content)
- Influencer Farm Tour (chefs)
- Present at BC Northern Agriculture Gala and BC Sheep Federation Event
- Ads in Country Life in BC



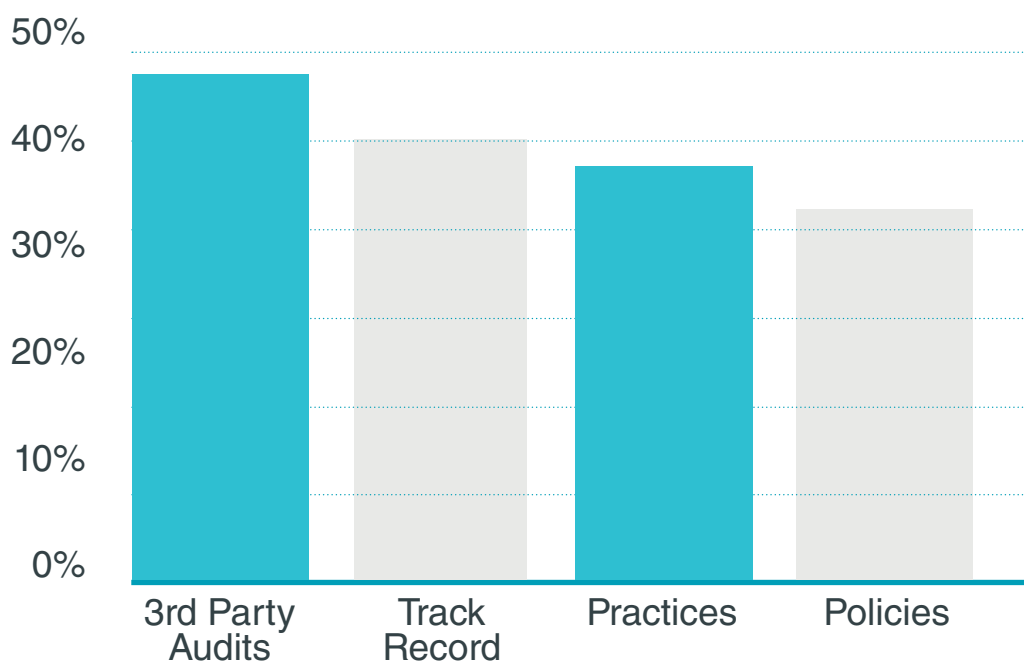
“Consumers are willing to disregard facts as ‘fake’ if they don’t align with our personal perspectives... That’s bad news for agriculture unless farmers step up to the challenge of meeting fake news head-on”

- Farm Social Media Voice, Andrew Campbell

PUBLIC TRUST

Canadian Centre for Food Integrity Research

HOW TO DEMONSTRATE TRANSPARENCY



About 4 in 10 Canadians surveyed strongly agree that providing the above information on the company website demonstrates transparency on food system topics.

TOP CONCERNS WITH:

MOMS

RISING COST OF FOOD

MILLENIALS

RISING COST OF FOOD

FOODIES

KEEPING HEALTHY FOOD
AFFORDABLE

ELEMENTS OF TRUST-BUILDING TRANSPARENCY



ACCURACY

Providing accurate, reliable and complete information.



DISCLOSURE

Useful, timely and easy to find information, does not withhold damaging information, easy to understand.



CLARITY

The information is clear and easy for consumers to understand.



MOTIVATION

Ethics guide behaviour, not intentionally mislead, interested in consumer well-being, public interest is considered, improves the community.

QUESTION: Which of the elements of transparency is most related to trust?

ACCURACY.

Out of the four above, it significantly scored the highest as most strongly related to building trust.

COMMUNICATIONS

and engagement



Since I started in June 2017, I have been having a fantastic time in my new role

and learning so much from the incredible people I have had the pleasure of working with.

Speaking of incredible people, Cassidy James, Communications Coordinator at BCAC and I have been very busy modernizing the existing communications initiatives at BCAC and also implementing some new ideas to keep the organization up-to-speed as technology changes. You may have noticed a change to the readability and layout of our e-news (Member Update or quarterly Council Capsule).

Since it has been proven that most people are more likely to watch videos than read information, we worked with a videographer and some of B.C.'s farmers and ranchers to develop an explainer video about who BCAC is and what role we play in B.C. agriculture. You can check it out on our website.

Also during the summer months, we took the time to write some

formal corporate communications policies for BCAC. This includes policies on things such as organizational communications, brand management, social media, news media, and issues management.

In the fall, we were in full swing organizing Ag Day in Victoria, developing a work plan for the public trust initiative and redeveloping the BCAC website. Phase 1 of the new website was launched on November 1, 2017 and work on Phase 2, which will include an online portal for Farmer ID card (FID) holders, will commence in the early spring.

New BCAC promotional materials were created for Ag Day, along with a first-time newsletter to FID card holders. It is our plan to send FID communications twice a year in the form of a hard-copy mail out and also electronically by email.

Upon completion of Ag Day, we jumped right into preparation for the 2018 Agri-Food Industry Gala. Thank you everyone for a terrific 2017 - I look forward to working with you on our upcoming initiatives.

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

- Member Survey
- Corporate Communications Policy Development
- Creation of Video Assets
- Public Trust Communications
- Real Dirt on Farming Partnership
- Education Fairs
- Ag Day
- Updated Branded Merchandise
- Updated Promotional Materials
- Farmer ID Card Newsletter
- Website Redevelopment
- New WALI Branding
- Video Project on 5000th EFP Participant

COMING UP IN 2018...

- Pacific Agriculture Show
- 2018 Ag Gala
- Island Ag Show
- Farmer ID Card Program Audit & Strategy
- Phase 2 of BCAC Website
- Development of a 3-5 year Engagement Strategy

BCAC COMMUNICATION CHANNELS



Communication channels are the means through which an organization communicate. BC Agriculture Council uses multiple types of communication channels to interact. Websites, social media, email, mail, and face-to-face channels are all methods we utilize.



FOLLOWERS vs. ENGAGEMENT?

BCAC ENGAGEMENT

Things like reach, content and timing of social posts are critical. Here is BCAC's current social following:

The size of your audience on social media doesn't matter if no one is paying attention. A lot of followers is good, so long as they are relevant and quality followers. Luckily, both BCAC and WHL have quality followers. Top engagement posts in 2017 included posts with videos or that drove people to photo galleries from industry events.

954

FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS

@BCAgricultureCouncil

1,601

TWITTER
FOLLOWERS

@bcagcouncil

366

INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS

*as of July 2017

@bcagcouncil

Google Analytics

In the era of data-driven campaigns and analytics, it is crucial to define our measurement goals from the beginning, establishing the relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) and measuring marketing effectiveness.

While it is a little too early since the launch of the new website to release any data, consider this a teaser that we'll be releasing information about our website traffic later in 2018.

Stay tuned!

Strong Facebook Following!



30,886

ENVIRONMENT

update

B.C. agriculture, including ocean-based farms, are vulnerable to changes in climatic conditions and even small shifts can have significant consequences for food production, the livelihoods of farmers and the future of the sector.

AG WASTE CONTROL REGULATIONS

In November, the new government released a third intentions paper. Many of the points in that paper were built off the work completed by the Agriculture Waste Control Regulations (AWCR) Working Group.

A couple of new ideas were presented, however, those ideas were primarily responding to the Pollis Report on the Hullcar Aquifer.

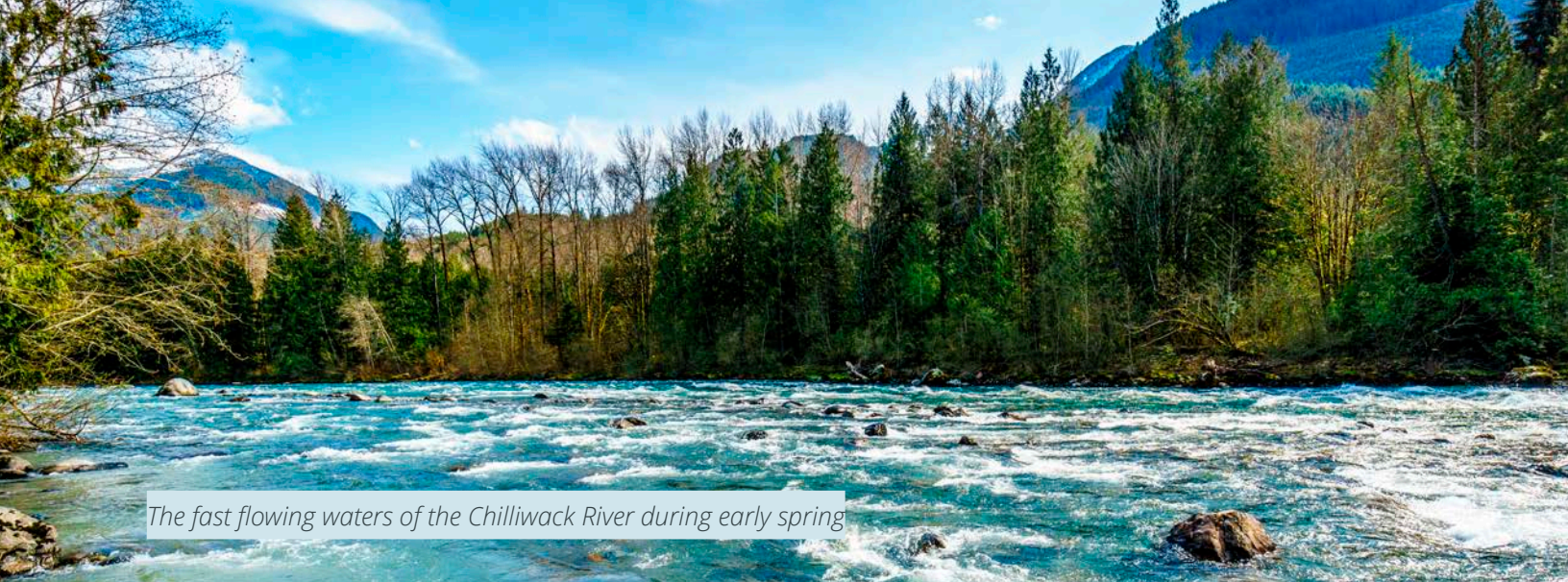
BCAC successfully worked with the new Minister of Agriculture to ensure that the Working Group would be able to review the draft regulations prior to public release.

The new regulations are anticipated in late spring of 2018. Our objective with the new regulations is to better protect the environment in ways that enable farmers to continue growing and raising healthy, safe, and affordable food.

AGRICULTURE NUTRIENT & AIR WORKING GROUP

This joint industry-government working group provides a forum for exchange of information on nutrient management and air quality. This group meets to discuss issues that may impact producers in the future, as well as review projects and research being done. The ANAWG committee is looking at ways to share information more widely (to both researchers and producers) in a time-efficient and effective way.





The fast flowing waters of the Chilliwack River during early spring

WATER SUSTAINABILITY ACT (WSA)

In 2017, BCAC and BCCA successfully worked with the new government to revise (simplify) the Ground Water Licencing Application forms. We also successfully had the licencing fee waiver period extended to March 2019.

We are continuing to push government to improve the licencing approval process. Once improvements have been implemented, we communicated that a final decision on a completed application should be made within 3 to 6 months.

BCAC continues to work with government to create awareness on the fact that there is a need to licence all ground water sources. WSA staff will accompany BCAC in 2018 to multiple member AGMs where they will have a booth and a rep on-site to assist producers start an application or answer any questions they should have.

**SAVE \$250 ON THE
APPLICATION
FEE UNTIL
MARCH 1, 2019**

If you're an existing non-domestic groundwater user (use began before March 1, 2016) you must apply by March 1, 2019. Before applying, users must register for a basic BCeID, visit:

www.bceid.ca

For more information, contact the government's FrontCounter BC, at:

www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca

FARM SUSTAINABILITY

update

Farm sustainability is a loaded word. At its core, all we do at BCAC is try to improve farm sustainability. Long-term economic success is seeing B.C. farmers and ranchers existing in harmony with the environment and part of supporting healthy, vibrant local communities.

In this specific context we are referring more to the regulatory economic framework that farmers and ranchers operate under. In 2017 there were two significant files that BCAC worked on in this area.

LAND USE

The new government has made it very clear that they are going to review the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). BCAC supports a strong land reserve that protects farmland for **farming** and also any upcoming review and/or changes to the ALC. We believe there should be one zone and that the panels have the ability to consider local situations for individual applications. We also believe that the regional panels, with strong oversight by the Chair provides a good balance with local representation and consistent decision making.

If revitalizing the ALR is about getting more currently unproductive land, back growing food, BCAC believes that a more detailed, likely longer discussion is needed. We need to have the ALC, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, local governments, land use planners AND **farmers** at the table. This group has to look at all of the regulations restricting or enabling farming. It has to look at farm taxation status – how are tax breaks determined and are they having the desired impact? It also has to take a long-term view as you don't invest in a farm for just one season, it is a long-term investment.

Work on this file will continue into 2018.

BUSINESS TAX POLICY

This is a national file that BCAC worked closely with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and our similar provincial organizations. By working together, farmers were able to have the federal government review and revise some of the proposed changes that would have made farm succession much more difficult. Thank you to Garnet Etsell who made a presentation to the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance in Vancouver.

ORGANIZATIONAL

capacity

FARMER ID CARD

2017 was another strong year for Farmer ID card sales. Approximately 725 Farmer ID Card accounts (individual farms) were purchased.

The BCAC Communications Team has started a bi-annual newsletter to FID card holders with plans to send information in spring and fall.

A FID program audit will take place in 2018 which will review the programs effectiveness and overall benefit offerings. Also included will be a 3-5 year marketing and sales strategy.

AG GALA

The premier networking event for agriculture, the annual BC Agri-Food Industry Gala (Ag Gala) continues to be a major celebration and an important fundraiser for BCAC. Funds raised at the gala primarily goes towards making events like Ag Day in Victoria possible.

Thank you to all those who generously donated gifts for our silent auction and also the winners! This year's silent auction raised nearly \$10,000! Proceeds from the silent auction went to BC Agriculture in the Classroom.

NEW MEMBERS

During the 2017 AGM, BCAC membership saw an increase as we welcomed BC Salmon Farmers Association and Mushroom Growers Society of B.C.

We're thrilled to broaden our membership with the addition of an aqua-based association. Agriculture and aquaculture share many of the same values and challenges and see great potential in a more collaborative relationship.

THE CO-OPERATORS

BCAC has recently applied to become a member partner with The Co-operators. The Co-operators share many of the same values that guide our approach to business and we believe that by working together, this relationship will prove valuable to our members and B.C. farmers and ranchers. This partnership also aligns with BCAC's strategic plan for organizational sustainability. More information to come in 2018!



BC YOUNG FARMERS

update

BC Young Farmers (BCYF) is a committee under the BC Agriculture Council. The current Chair is Alexis Warmerdam, Vice-Chair is Jill Robbins and Treasurer is Leo Quick. BCYF assists in the transition of young farmers to board rooms and to owning farms. In social and interactive settings, BCYF members learn leadership skills, explore community development, improve agricultural awareness, explore individual talents and most importantly, meet fellow young farmers. BCYF members are young farmers or young agricultural supporters between the ages of 19 and 40.

BCYF had several educational/professional and social events in the past year. In 2017, BCYF changed their approach to farm tours and events. The goal was to hold smaller, more intimate events with a focus on farm tours. Below is a list of all the events BCYF either participated in or hosted.



BCYF Chair, Alexis Warmerdam

Photo Credit: Ashley Martens Photography

**Below is a list of all the events BCYF either participated in or hosted.*

JANUARY

- Attended the Pacific Agriculture Show (PAS) where they shared a booth with BCAC.
- Hosted a social at Townhall Public House during PAS

FEBRUARY

- BCYF Directors attended MLA Darryl Plecas' breakfast meeting to talk about young farmers
- Toured three Abbotsford agri-businesses – ACI Foods (a hemp processor), VanderPol Eggs, and Old Abby Ales
- 7 BCYF delegates attended the Canadian Young Farmers Forum in Ottawa

APRIL

- Tour in Agassiz including: Golden Eagle Fish Farm, UBC Dairy Research Center, The Farm House Natural Cheese

JUNE

- Summerland farm tour including: Carlsons' cherry orchard and packinghouse tour, Garnett Valley Organic Farm, and a tasting at Dominion Cidery

AUGUST

- Abbotsford farm tour including Van Bell Nursery and a drone demonstration in a blueberry field by guavas.

OCTOBER

- Delta and Richmond farm tour including: West Coast Seeds, Ocean Spray Cranberries and Country Vines Winery

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

- Participated at BCAC's Ag Day in Victoria
- BCYF directors attended four career fairs with BCAC on Vancouver Island, in the Lower Mainland and Okanagan to engage with youth and have "food conversations". This activity was part of BCAC's public trust work plan.
- Hosted Farm Fest at UFV Chilliwack with presentations on BC Economic Forecast & Market Trends in Agriculture, the Agricultural Land Commission, and public trust in agriculture.

- Hosted a curling social

To learn more about BC Young Farmers, visit: www.bcyf.ca

CFA UPDATE

top stories

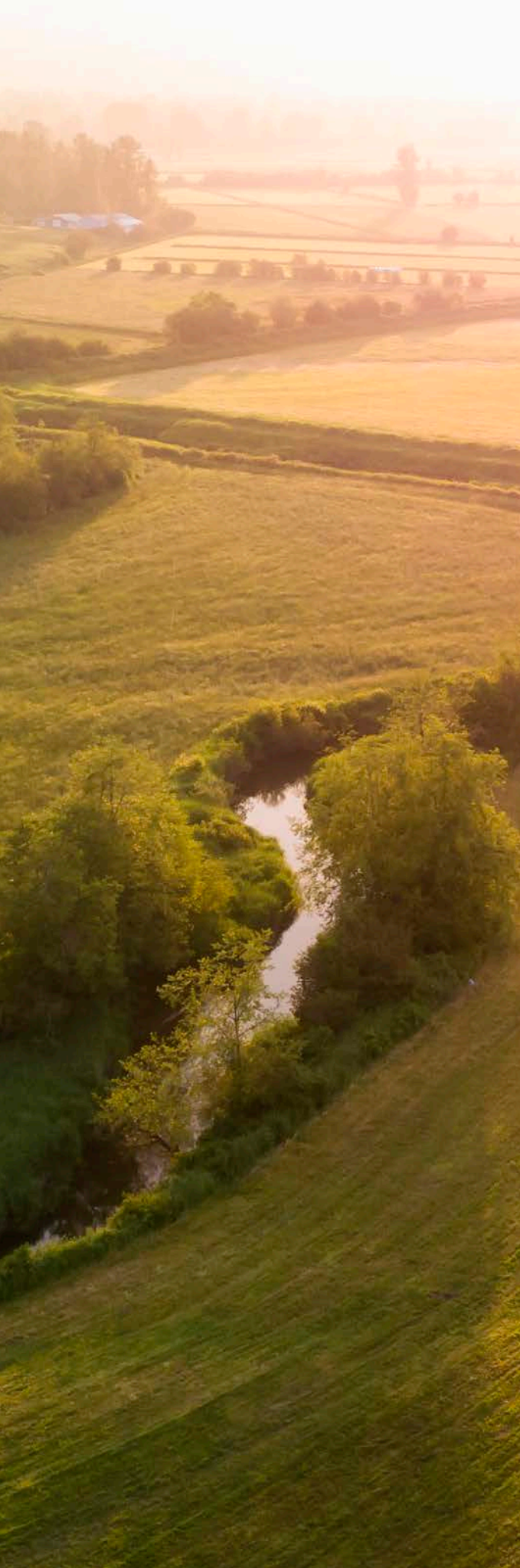
Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) continues to develop policies, build alliances and partnerships, and advocate on behalf of all Canadian farmers (including us in BC). Two million Canadians are employed in the agriculture and agri-food industry, representing one of every eight employees in Canada.

BCAC delegates were once again very active at the CFA AGM. BC brought forward several resolutions, of which all but one were passed by the delegates. The resolution process works well, providing opportunity for delegates to bring forward and discuss issues with the whole membership. This process provides valuable input to the board and staff as they prioritize activities for the year.

CFA has been working very closely on the BRM program review. There are monthly update calls with the committee. While all efforts are equally important, the notable highlights from 2017 include:

Tax Proposal Rollback: When Finance Canada unveiled its Tax Planning Using Private Corporations proposals, CFA quickly voiced concerns with the complexity and the lack of timing for the consultation period, which occurred at peak harvest season. CFA took action in partnership with its members to campaign government at every level. There will be some differences for farmers because of changes to the incorporation taxes, and farmers





may need to work with their investment advisors to use a different program for pension and retirement plans. Income sprinkling may not be an issue for families that farm together, but it is suggested that farmers speak with an investment advisor if they are incorporated.

NAFTA: CFA is working diligently to strengthen the Canada-US-Mexico trade relationship and maintain close contact with Canada's lead NAFTA negotiators. CFA's advocacy in support of NAFTA has included:

- A U.S. tour for CFA executives to meet with American Farm Bureau officials from California, Kansas, Iowa and Wisconsin
- CFA, the American Farm Bureau Federation and Mexico's Consejo Nacional Agropecuario sent a joint letter to their respective government officials.
- CFA President Ron Bonnett spoke at the Dentons NAFTA 2.0 summit in Washington D.C

Apart from NAFTA, there were several other shifts in the international trade paradigm. CFA participated in many domestic and international meetings, submitted position papers for various consultations and presented views to many elected officials.

Labour Concerns: CFA coordinated a range of efforts to highlight agricultural labour issues. This included meetings with the Minister of Employment, Labour, and Workforce Development, Patty Hajdu, representatives from the Prime Minister's office, and officials from Minister MacAulay's office. CFA specifically requested to create an interdepartmental advisory council to connect officials from various departments together with key agricultural stakeholders.

CFA Director of Business Risk Management and Farm Policy, Scott Ross, has also joined the Labour Task Force, a group focused on examining the issues of labour management and the challenges posed by shortages facing the Canadian agricultural and agri-food sector.



CHAIR'S REPORT

Allen James

Agriculture is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals and happiness

The B.C. Agricultural Research & Development Corporation (ARDCorp) is pleased to provide its 2017 Annual Report. As the program delivery agent for the B.C. Agriculture Council (BCAC), ARDCorp serves B.C. farmers and ranchers by delivering programs, funding, and expertise to enhance the competitiveness, innovation, and viability of BC agriculture.

ARDCorp enjoyed another successful year of program delivery in 2017. Included in this report is a detailed update on the current programs delivered by ARDCorp in 2017. In summary, those programs included the:

ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN and BENEFICIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES PROGRAMS

In the final year of the Growing Forward 2 (GF2) agreement, the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program continued to deliver its two distinct components; the Environmental Farm Plan and

Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) program. Both components have a similar strategic direction, but a different focus.

The BMP Program operates arm-in-arm with the EFP Program providing opportunities for cost-shared funding incentives for producers to implement eligible environmental improvements on their operations.

BMP applications for the 2017 program year were accepted beginning April 1, 2017. Initial funding was fully allocated within 12 hours of accepting applications. To learn more about the notable highlights from the year, read on in this report.

There continues to be higher demand and need for the programs offered than funding available. This shows producers are interested and willing to make on-farm improvements but require the government's support. The funds invested by the government result in significant overall improvements in the sector.

BC AGRICULTURE & FOOD CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVE (CAI)

The Initiative is currently delivering two programs - one focused on regional-level adaptation and one on-farm practices and adaptation. CAI's work has attracted national attention for its collaborative approach to sector engagement, which has become a model for other provinces as they develop their own adaptation programming for agriculture.

AGRI-RISK INITIATIVE PROGRAM

In July of 2017, ARDCorp received funding approval under the federal Agri-Risk Initiatives Program for a project to develop a risk assessment framework and to conduct focus groups with five commodities. The assessment was to inventory their risks, evaluate how various risks are being managed, identify any gaps and provide possible strategies for some risks where gaps exist.

There were several common themes that emerged; regulated pests and disease risks, labor shortage risks, social license concerns and concerns regarding Business Risk Management programs and the degree to which these programs are understood and communicated. All five groups identified some gaps with respect to the risks. Potential strategies were presented to the various groups however it is unclear at this time whether groups will take steps to further examine possible strategies.

Continuing delivery of the Environmental Farm Plan and the Climate Action Initiative remain high priorities for ARDCorp. A desire to deliver these programs through the Canadian Agriculture Partnership has been expressed to government and we look forward to an announcement on their decision in the spring.

Thank-you to our funding partners, the provincial and federal governments and the Investment Agriculture Foundation for their continued support of agriculture in British Columbia. Best wishes for another successful year on the farm!

Allen James

ARDCorp Board Chair

ENVIRONMENTAL

farm plan

As of 2017, over 5,000 B.C. farmers and ranchers have completed an Environmental Farm Plan.

In the final year of the Growing Forward 2 (GF2) agreement, the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program continued to deliver its two distinct components; the Environmental Farm Plan and Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) program. Both components have a similar strategic direction, but a different focus.

BMP applications for the 2017 program year were accepted beginning April 1, 2017. Initial funding was fully allocated within 12 hours of accepting applications.

Through the efforts of 23 Planning Advisors located across the province, 236 new EFPs, 145 renewed EFPs and 76 implemented plans were achieved in 2017. The program has effectively reached its combined four-year targets for new and renewed plans by 120% and 125% respectively.

For the 2017-18 program year, the BMP program saw 210 projects completed with \$1.53 million in program funding. Management plans accounted for about 30% of approved applications.

Management plans provide further education and assistance to producers and support for their EFPs. The four-year target for completed (funded) BMP projects was achieved by 106%.

During 2017, the program continued to follow the Planning Advisor Policy and Procedures Manual which was intended to assist in delivery. A performance evaluation system developed in 2016

was used and resulted in consideration of changes for contracted planning advisor services. Options for merit-based funding approvals of selected BMP categories were further reviewed with a plan to implement in 2018-19. As part of the program's efforts to remain relevant, a project was developed to review the costs, benefits and potential synergies of introducing an assurance component.

The program continued to develop a process for an online BMP application platform. A complete rollover of the client database and implementation of an online application process was planned, however delays in development of the interface will result in the need to trial this later next year. Out of the training that took place in the spring, seven new Planning Advisor candidates were offered contracts and successfully completed mentoring and a second training session in September 2017.

HULLCAR The Hullcar Aquifer Water Quality Program was launched in April 2017 with funds available for community outreach and targeted education on nutrient and irrigation water management. In addition, the program had funds available for farm practice changes on operations over the aquifer.

Representatives of the B.C. EFP program attended the second National EFP (NEFP) Summit in Ottawa in November. The NEFP project explored data management, sustainability platform equivalency, EFP verification and communication opportunities.

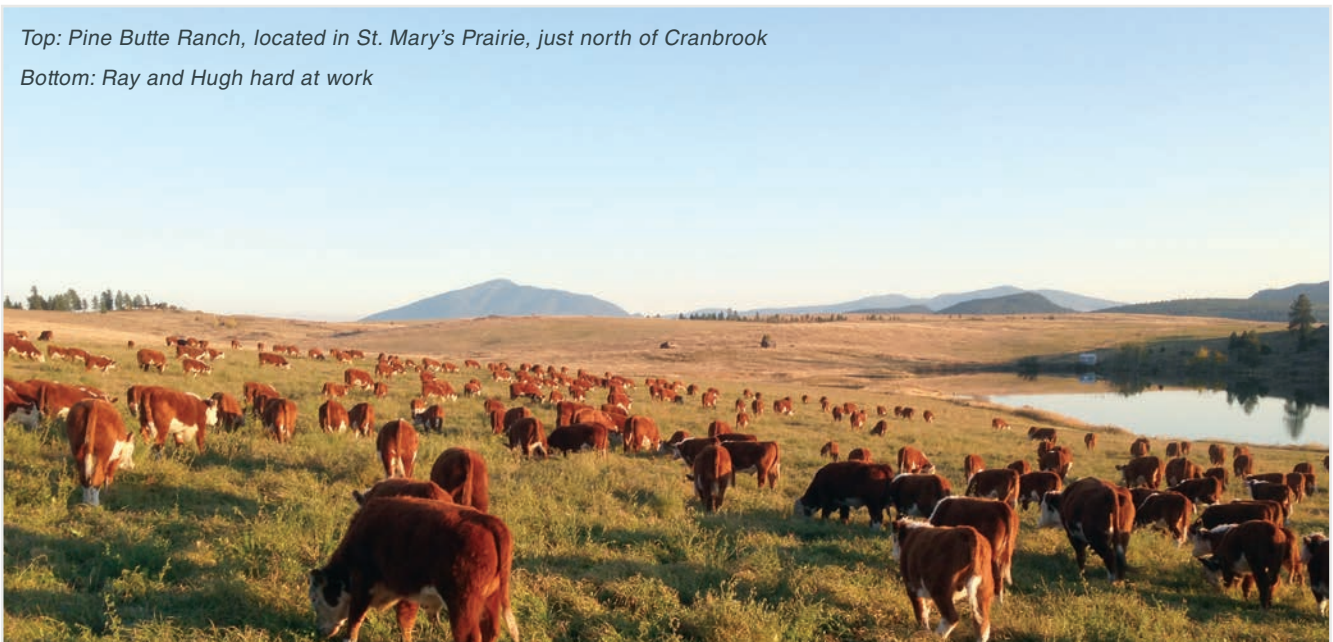
A notable highlight from the year was with Environment Canada's Species at Risk Partnership on Agriculture Land (SARPAL) Program where the completion of two biodiversity training workshops and some new information materials on species appropriate to BMPs occurred.

2017-18 was the final year of the current Growing Forward 2 agreement and the end of the current delivery contract for the EFP and BMP programs. Program administration focused on final reporting and planning for potential programming for the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, including the development of high-level proposals and detailed delivery budgets. For more information visit: www.bcefp.ca

5000TH ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN PINE BUTTE RANCH

Top: Pine Butte Ranch, located in St. Mary's Prairie, just north of Cranbrook

Bottom: Ray and Hugh hard at work





Research consultant, Catherine Tarasoff, discusses on-farm research manual with Vanderhoof farmer, Butch Ruiter.

BC AGRICULTURE & FOOD

climate action initiative

Started by BCAC and IAF in 2008, the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI) develops tools and resources to enhance B.C. agriculture's ability to adapt to climate change.

The Initiative is currently delivering two programs - one focused on regional-level adaptation and one on-farm practices and adaptation. CAI's work has attracted national attention for its collaborative approach to sector engagement, which has become a model for other provinces as they develop their own adaptation programming for agriculture.

Regional Adaptation Program

Between 2013 and 2018:

- Six Regional Adaptation Strategies completed (Fraser Valley, Okanagan, Cariboo, Peace, Cowichan Valley and Delta) with more than 400 participants involved.
- 41 locally led projects completed with over 50 agricultural organizations and local government partners.
- \$1.8 million in GF2 funding for projects with an additional \$500,000 in leveraged partner funding

The Regional Adaptation Program has resulted in the development of new informational resources, as well as the piloting and/or development of tools to address shared risks such as wildfire and flood preparedness, and managing for changing pest populations. Many of these projects have application and relevance in multiple regions or across B.C.

Farm Adaptation Innovator Program (FAIP)

Between 2013 and 2018:

- 15 projects funded through FAIP focused on reducing farm-level weather-related risks through applied research.
- 60 project partners including agricultural organizations, universities and research consultants, and over 80 individual producer co-operators.
- \$1.7 million in GF2 funding for projects with an additional \$620,000 in partner funding

In 2017-18, the CAI launched a knowledge transfer pilot, producing three videos that highlight FAIP projects. The videos can be seen at: **www.bcagclimateaction.ca/video**

With a focus on increasing farm-level resilience to climate change impacts, the results of FAIP projects aim to help farmers make the best possible decisions for overcoming climate challenges while meeting their production goals. Projects have ranged from development of a “how-to” manual for on-farm research through to demonstration and evaluation of crop protection technologies, new varieties and irrigation management practices/technologies. For complete project results, visit:

www.bcagclimateaction.ca

AGRI-RISK INITIATIVE

In July of 2017, ARDCorp received funding approval under the federal Agri-Risk Initiatives Program for a project to develop a risk assessment framework and to conduct focus groups with five commodities to inventory their risks, evaluate how various risks are being managed, identify any gaps and provide possible strategies for some risks where gaps exist. Risk analysis was not confined to just financial and production risks and how well current Business Risk Management Programs were working. It was broadened to include risks related to public trust, labor availability, political/policy risks and climate change.

The project budget was \$186,854. The maximum federal government contribution is \$124,604 with industry cash and in-kind payments making up the remaining \$62,250.

Five commodity groups participated: nurseries, cattle, blueberries, cranberries and grain.

There were several common themes that emerged; regulated pests and disease risks, labor shortage risks, public trust concerns and concerns regarding Business Risk Management programs and the degree to which these programs are understood and communicated. All five groups identified some gaps with respect to the risks. Potential strategies were presented to the various groups however it is unclear at this time whether groups will take steps to further examine possible strategies.

There is a great demand on farmers' time making it a constant challenge to engage with them. However, with the assistance of commodity organizations, the project was able to receive the support it needed. The five commodities now have an inventory of their major risks and suggestions as to how to address any gaps. There is also a model for other commodity organizations to follow if the interest and commitment exists.

BIOGAS WEST

2018 conference

2018 Value of Biogas West had a full two-day agenda featuring a renewable natural gas information session, two biogas plant site visits, and several biogas streams

2018 Value of Biogas West Conference

Biogas technology enables farmers to take advantage of underutilized resources, diversify income, manage waste, and reduce energy and/or waste management costs. Over 176 individuals attended 2018 Value of Biogas West (formerly known as the Agri-energy & Waste Management Forum) to enhance their biogas knowledge. \$54,000 in sponsorship for the forum was provided by Canadian and international companies, while \$5,000 was provided by the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture.





CENTRIFUGE

nutrient separation study

Research indicates some dairy farms produce more manure phosphorus than is required by crops; resulting in a surplus phosphorus in soils. A centrifuge was tested on seven B.C. dairy farms to assess its ability to extract nutrients from dairy manure.

Results from the Study show that all seven farms were able to extract sufficient phosphorus to meet the requirements of a nutrient management plan (and expand herd size by at least 15%). This Study therefore shows that centrifuges are a very suitable and cost-effective technology for B.C. dairy farms that produce more manure phosphorus than is required by crops. This project was funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture through the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia (\$103,025) and Growing Forward 2 (\$30,000), ARDCorp (\$10,000), the Dairy Industry Research and Education Committee (DIREC) (\$15,000), and the seven participating farms (\$21,000).



WALI

western agriculture labour initiative

BCAC, through its subsidiary company (WALI), works with employers and governments to enable employers to find adequate domestic workers and improve working conditions for temporary workers.

Supporting the Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program (SAWP) and, to a lesser degree, the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program continues being a major initiative for BCAC. In late 2016, BCAC created a subsidiary corporation the Western Agriculture Labour Initiative (WALI) to house the work done on this file.

In 2017, employers using SAWP began contributing directly to support the work on this file. These funds are enabling WALI to assist with:

- Processing completed Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) applications
- Increase representation at the national level
- Facilitate more regional engagement with employers, and
- Working with government partners to ensure safe working conditions for all employees.

WALI is not currently staffed nor licenced to assist, however, in 2018, some of these funds will be used to support hiring of additional staff resources to focus on the TFW file. In late 2017, the BC Ministry of Health announced that they would begin work to update the Industrial Camp Regulations (ICR) to ensure healthy living conditions for workers and meet the requirements of federal programs (such as SAWP). BCAC has been working for this update for several years and looks forward to working with the province on this initiative.

BCAC is part of an interagency working group (Ministries of Health, Labour, Agriculture and Industry) working on improving the ICR along with other initiatives relating to TFW. We anticipate engaging with employers later in 2018.

Please visit: **www.walicanada.ca** for updates.

OUR BOARD

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Ray VanMarrewyk - Board Treasurer

Representing Greenhouse Vegetables

Lynda Atkinson - Director

Representing Equine

Terry Brooks - Director

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Representing Cattle, Pork and Other Livestock

MISSION

Our mission is to continually improve the social, economic and environmental sustainability of BC agriculture

VISION

Grow BC into the most dynamic and robust agricultural province in Canada.

OUR MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

BC Blueberry Council

BC Broiler Hatching Egg
Producers' Association

BC Cattlemen's Association

BC Cherry Association

BC Chicken Growers' Association

BC Cranberry Growers' Association

BC Dairy Association

BC Egg Producers' Association

BC Fruit Growers' Association

BC Grain Producers' Association

BC Grapegrowers' Association

BC Greenhouse Growers' Association

BC Honey Producers' Association

BC Landscape & Nursery Association

BC Pork Producers' Association

BC Potato & Vegetable Growers' Association

BC Poultry Association

BC Salmon Farmers Association

BC Strawberry Growers Association

BC Turkey Association

BC Wine Grape Council

Certified Organic Associations of
British Columbia

Fraser Valley Cole Crop Growers' Association

Fraser Valley Pea and Bush Bean
Growers' Association

Horse Council British Columbia

Mushroom Growers Society of BC

Peace Region Forage Seed Association

Raspberry Industry Development Council

United Flower Growers' Co-Op



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