

Cherry Notes



Newsletter of the Okanagan Kootenay Cherry Growers Association

December 2009

OKCGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT DECEMBER 2009

Wow, what happened? I'm sure most cherry producers are wondering just that. 2009 will undoubtedly go down in history as a year to remember (or forget).

With all time low market returns and rising productions costs, we are entering a new era in the cherry industry. While it's impossible to predict the long-term implications of this "new world" we must all contemplate our operations and begin the process of adjusting operations and expectations while continuing to flourish in our chosen industry. Good luck with that.

Your OKCGA board of directors continues to work hard to help you face these new challenges. On October 27 I made a presentation to the Standing Committee on Agriculture in Ottawa.

The topic was "Competition, How it Effects Canadian Food Producers". In the hour and

a half I had before the committee I presented a brief outlining our concerns centered on US cherries being dumped into Canadian markets, the Canadian Regulatory Agencies inability to enforce anti-dumping laws and our higher costs of production compared to our competitors. I felt this multi-party group of MP's listened to our message - many questions were asked and notes taken.

Their final report will not be finished for some time, but I believe this process will help answer the question "Does our government support Canadian family food production or not?"

We are busy planning our 2010 Research Projects and Annual General Meeting. With the infusion of the Fruitsize royalty (just over \$30,000!) and recent news from PICO that the new federal funding program (DIAP) is almost signed, we are positioned to do more great work in 2010. If you have an area you think requires research, please contact Brian Mennell at 499-5303. Your input will be appreciated.

Big change this year for the AGM; we're moving. Catering services are no longer available at PARC so we are holding the meeting at the Lakeside in Penticton on February 9, 2010. The agenda is not yet final but you can be sure to learn lots by attending. Tell your neighbours.

We've run into a major hurdle registering Quintec, a much anticipated powdery mildew control product from Dow. After being promised imminent registration two years in a row, it appears the PMRA is saying it won't be registered for 2010 growing season. Please go to our website at www.bccherry.com and get the info so you as an individual can write and add your voice to this important message "We need new pest control products to stay competitive". Thanks.

To conclude I want to thank the hard working members of the OKCGA Board. This is an amazing group of individuals and it is a true pleasure to work with them. I'd also like to thank our members, particularly the volunteer levy payers. Without their financial support, we couldn't continue to do the job of improving cherry production in BC.

I trust this finds you all in good health and spirit. Merry Christmas to you and your families and a Happy New Year.

Greg Norton, President

5 GOOD REASONS to send in your 2010 OKCGA Membership renewals and 2009 Research Levy contributions today:

1. Prepay your February AGM registration and receive a discount.
 2. You must maintain a current OKCGA membership to keep your orchard listing on the OKCGA website - which is growing in popularity for employees.
 3. Your levies are fully tax deductible and qualify for up to 40% SR&ED Investment Tax Credit, so it is a terrific opportunity for us to invest in research for our industry and get money back as well as all we learn from the research!
 4. If we know how much our research budget is, we can make sure we have good research projects lined up - and don't miss opportunities because of funding uncertainties.
 5. Cherries are your business, and research is an important part of that business if we want to succeed. We gain by working together through the OKCGA.
- So, if you have not already done so, please fill in the renewal form on the last page and mail it to PO Box 28100 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna, V1W 4A6.



Did you know?

CANADA & B.C. FUND FARM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The Farm Business Advisory Services program will provide total funding support

of \$965,000 over four years to help producers access basic financial analysis and specialized business planning services that will enable them to effect better, more informed management decisions.

The program provides two tiers of funding support to producers for business consulting services. Tier 1 provides consulting services for a basic farm financial assessment to a value of up to \$1,900, at a cost of only \$100 to the producer. Tier 2 covers up to 85 per cent of the cost of consulting services to a maximum of \$3,000, for specialized business planning to adopt progressive farm business management practices and strategies in nine business management areas.

To access funding through the Farm Business Advisory Services program, producers must complete a farm action plan and submit an application. Once their application has been approved, the applicant can select from a list of pre-approved consultants to begin the business planning process. For more information about the program or to apply, contact B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Agri-Food Business Development Program at 1-877 702-5585 (toll-free).

Money Available For Training - "Workplace Training for Innovation Program" is offering funding of up to \$1,500 per employee to a maximum of \$5,000 per employer for a wide range of training to improve productivity, enhance

international competitiveness, innovation, introduction of new technology, equipment, etc. The applications are simple, farm companies are eligible, funding includes course fees and materials and manuals, but not travel. Training provider must be 'arms-length' from the organization, training should be for employees rather than owner-operators (but owners can be in attendance!), and training must be complete in 6 months. This is a federal program to stimulate the economy; the funds are limited but not many have applied yet, so consider applying soon. Workshops and training programs could include things such as IPM, identification and monitoring of orchard pests and diseases, machinery maintenance, ... use your imagination - upgrade your staff and get learning! For more information and the application form, visit the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development website

www.aved.gov.bc.ca/workplace_training_program/welcome.htm



Committee Reports

Labour

Highlights from the National Mexican SAWP Meeting:

Two members of the Western Agriculture Labour Initiative (WALI) Committee and BCAC staff attended the three day

National Mexican Seasonal Agriculture Workers Program (SAWP) held November 16 to 18th in Toronto. The meetings are the high level negotiations between the governments of Canada and Mexico and agricultural associations that manage SAWP. Everyone agrees that SAWP is an important program for Mexican workers, Canadian farmers, and the governments of Canada and Mexico. The discussions focused on continuing the success.

Some key points for 2010:

1. The BCSWAP rate for 2010 will be \$9.14 per hour. All advertising must use the new wage rate.
2. All named workers and returning workers will be issued multiple entry visas - this will allow growers to send workers back to Mexico within the terms of their contract. Workers on the program for the first time will NOT be issued multiple entry visas.
3. The Mexican government will be providing free or low cost medical insurance for the families of all SAWP workers.
4. Mexico again reminded employers to be sure to use workers' names as they appear on their passports - otherwise applications may be held up.

Other information to note:

Mexico is requesting that farmers start the application process at least three months before they need workers.

Housing inspections must be conducted prior to applying for an LMO.

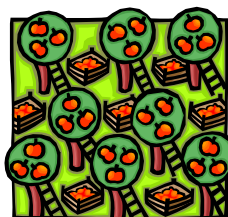
All workers have the same rights regardless of origins; including illegals.

SAWP contract allows for the transfer of workers because the work permit is worker specific not farm specific, unlike the low skilled worker program.

There are certain conditions however:

1. it must be to another SAWP farm.
2. the second farm must have a valid LMO.
3. all transfers must be done with the source country's concurrence and the approval of the worker (and HRSDC).
4. informal transfers or the sharing of workers is not permitted - under the Immigration and Refugee Act, violators (farmers) can face a \$50,000 fine and imprisonment.

Workers can be transferred more than 2 times if arrangements are made ahead of time.



PICO'S CANADA FIRST POLICY

(by John Kingsmill, General Manger & CEO, Okanagan Plant Improvement Corporation)

Okanagan Plant Improvement Corporation (PICO) has developed a Canada First policy relating to the release of tree fruit cultivars, both apples and cherries, from the PARC breeding program. The policy is based on the recognition that PICO represents the Canadian government's tree fruit breeding program, which is funded by Canadian taxpayers and, as such, is indirectly "owned" by all Canadians. Under this policy, domestic growers enjoy benefits that are unavailable to growers elsewhere in the world. These include preferential access, reduced costs and the absence of acreage and marketing restrictions of the kind often imposed on international growers.

The policy provides Canadian growers with preferential access to new cherry cultivars developed at PARC, Summerland.

International licensing of cherry cultivars in the northern hemisphere is often delayed in order to give Canadian growers an opportunity to develop the varieties and establish domestic and international markets. For example, PICO recently notified cherry growers through the BCFGA and OKCGA newsletters that Sentennial will not be released elsewhere in the Northern hemisphere until 2011 in order to give Canadian growers a head start on the variety.

The most significant economic benefit of PICO's Canada First policy is that Canadian growers generally pay only tree royalties in order to obtain new cherry cultivars, even on varieties that are earmarked for international release on a restricted or club basis. On the other hand, international licensees of club varieties of PARC cherries generally pay:

- up-front license fees
- tree royalties
- planting and/or acreage fees, plus
- production based royalties on all fruit sold.

Finally, plantings and sales territories are not restricted for Canadian growers, whereas, with club varieties, the acreage permitted to be planted by international licensees is specified and their sales territories are restricted to a named group of countries. On the other hand, Canadian growers can plant as many acres of a cherry variety as they choose and they are free to sell their fruit anywhere in the world. Moreover international licensees of club varieties of cherries are prevented by the terms of their license agreement with PICO from selling their fruit in Canada for the life of their agreement.

When these valuable benefits are coupled with the outstanding cherry varieties that have been released by the PARC breeding program, it is clear that Canadian growers can be competitive with cherry growers around the globe.



Up Coming Events

Northwest Cherry Institute

Friday January 15, 2010 8:30
Yakima Convention Centre
Yakima, Washington

OKCGA 2009 Research Review

Monday February 8, 9:00am PARC,
Summerland

OKCGA Annual General Meeting

Tuesday February 9, 2010
Penticton Lakeside Resort
21 West Lakeside Dr. Penticton
Details to follow

Okanagan Packinghouse Fieldmen's Group Conference

Thursday, February 18, 2010
Capri Hotel, Kelowna, BC
Early Bird Cost: \$50. After
February 12: \$75.
Contact your field person to
register.

Did you know?

The maraschino cherry dates back several centuries to the coastal regions of Yugoslavia and northern Italy where a liqueur was manufactured from a local cherry called the "Marasca".



Research Shorts

Warm temperatures at bloom reduce fruit set in sweet cherry.

Warm springs have often been assumed as a prelude of good fruit set in temperate fruit species. However recently erratic fruit set has occurred under apparently warm springs in Mediterranean conditions. Therefore work was undertaken in Zaragoza, Spain where 12 year old trees of 'Vignola' and 'Sunburst', in the field, were covered with a polyethylene cage to raise temperatures during for two weeks during bloom. The average maximum temperatures increased 5.8°C the first year of the trial and 6.9°C in the second year. This resulted in an average increase in the mean temperature of 1.4°C and 3°C respectively. This increase in temperature reduced fruit set from 18% to 5% in 'Vignola' and 25% to 4% in 'Sunburst'. When the process of pollination and fertilization was examined more closely the workers found that fertilization occurred six days after pollination. Higher temperatures accelerated pollen tube growth rate but also reduced the number of growing pollen tubes along the style. In the ovary, the warm temperature accelerated ovule degeneration.

Hedhly, A., Hormaza, J.I., and Herrero, M. 2007. Journal of Applied Botany and Food Quality 81:159-164.

**OKANAGAN KOOTENAY CHERRY GROWERS' ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NAME		COMPANY/ORCHARD	
ADDRESS			
CITY		PROV	POSTAL CODE
PHONE	FAX	EMAIL	

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (Please check all that apply)

Grower Marketer Supplier Consultant/Fieldman Government Other

ACRES IN CHERRY PRODUCTION: _____ NON-BEARING CHERRY ACRES: _____

Please attach cheque payable to **OKCGA, c/o Box 28100 RPO East Kelowna, Kelowna V1W 4A6** for:

2010 MEMBERSHIP FEES .	50.00
2009 CROP LEVY: total pounds packed @ 1 cent/pound	
AGM Meeting (includes lunch) \$25 plus \$25 for each additional person	
Total	\$

On receipt of your application and membership fee, a PIN number will be emailed to you that will enable you to access the Members' Area on our website - with full research reports and other material that will be posted from time to time. Newsletters and research reports are now presented online at www.bccherry.com and are NOT mailed unless you specify that a mailed copy is required.

Notices and newsletters will be emailed to you, so **please be sure we have your current email address.**

If you have questions about your membership status, PIN, or email, please contact Christine at membership@bccherry.com or Tel: (250) 860 3537, Fax: (250) 868 8979.

WEBSITE LISTING on www.bccherry.com

Membership entitles you to list your orchard on bccherry.com for seasonal job applicants.

If you wish to have your orchard listed, please complete the following: Yes, please list us.

1. Contact information IF different from the information above:

NAME		COMPANY/ORCHARD	
ADDRESS			
CITY		PROV	POSTAL CODE
PHONE	FAX	EMAIL	

2. Website address if you have a website: _____

3. Approximate picking season dates. _____

4. (Optional) brief three line description of your orchard, the work, facilities for employees etc.:
