



## What's New

### CLOSING THE LOOP

#### **COABC 2010 Conference: March 5<sup>th</sup> – March 7<sup>th</sup> Kamloops BC.**

Come to the COABC 2010 Conference....

- Learn Lessons, Network and Share Successes to keep more income on the farm
- Soil Building strategies, Cover crops, Pest Management
- Alternative Energy systems
- Overcoming barriers to market
- Labelling requirements, Food Safety and Resources for new organic producers

#### ***Keynote Speaker: Saturday March 6<sup>th</sup> at 9.00am. Dr BILL CODE***

After being diagnosed at age 42 with Multiple Sclerosis, Do Code became involve in organic foods and farming to help his healing process. As part of this involvemnet, he is a director with the Vancouver Island Heritage Food Service Cooperations, learning man leassons and value streams and life along the way.

Come and hear his story!

For more information and to register on the COABC website [www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca](http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca)

### Lower Mainland Horticultural Improvement Association

c/o BCMAL, 1767 Angus Campbell Rd

Abbotsford, BC V3G 2M3

Telephone (604) 857-0318, Fax (604) 556-3030

### **CALL FOR 2009 RESEARCH PROPOSALS**

The Lower Mainland Horticultural Improvement Association (LMHIA) is pleased to request proposals for field vegetable, berry, organic and other crop research.

Please submit according to the attached format, as it will standardize submissions and thus expedite the review procedure.

The deadline for applications is **January 30, 2010**. Applicants will be notified of the results of the proposal review soon after this date. Funds will be released upon receipt of complete reports and invoice(s).

Projects funded by the LMHIA are generally short-term, practical and address problems or opportunities for BC growers. Preference will be given to projects that include the LMHIA as one of two or more funding partners, and to projects that include commodity or producer group funding as part of the partnership. Research results will be made available to industry.

If you have any questions about submitting a proposal, please call Susan Smith at (604) 556-3046, or Mark Sweeney at (604) 556-3056.

Please submit proposals to Sandy Dunn via fax at (604) 857-1570, or by e-mail to [sandyg@uniserve.com](mailto:sandyg@uniserve.com)

We very much appreciate the research efforts for BC's horticulture industry, and look forward to your submissions.

### **Canada Organic Regime**

At the COO meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Gordon Henry of CFIA International Section announced that Taiwan has deemed the Canada Organic Regime as equivalent, effective August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009. More information regarding NOP-accredited CB's in other countries will be discussed at the December COO meeting.

### **Survey Monkey and Agriwebinar**

COABC Extension Services is offering its Survey Monkey <http://www.surveymonkey.com/> (professional version) and Agriwebinar <http://www.agriwebinar.com/> capacity to Certification Bodies and Grower Groups. If there is a survey you would like to conduct or a webinar you would like to offer get in with Rochelle Eisen [extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca](mailto:extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca) or 250.499.2413. All reasonable requests will be supported; cost recovery for webinar support will be necessary.



## **Ongoing**

### **Funding Opportunities for BC Producers, Processors and Associations;**

This booklet contains information about funding opportunities for BC agriculture and agri-food producers and processors, as well as industry associations and not-for-profit groups involved with the agriculture and agri-food sector. To access the booklet please visit, <http://www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca/exp/5288-eng.htm>

### **Reminder – shipping in and out of Province**

For certified organic operators who wish to ship outside the province (nationally or internationally) don't forget that you now must be certified under under ISO rather than the provincial BC certified organic program.

### **Sponsorship Program**

Who do you connect with in your daily life that may be interested in sponsoring the COABC? Health professionals, organisations that want to make an environmentally friendly statement, distributors etc...If you or a contact is interested in supporting the COABC contact Sarah Clark at [admin@certifiedorganic.bc.ca](mailto:admin@certifiedorganic.bc.ca) or (250) 260-4429.



## **Interesting!**

### **From BCAC**

**Farmland Assessment:** The province is moving ahead with a key recommendation of the July Task Force report – with the split-classification amendment being implemented for the 2010 assessment roll, [http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2009CD0047-000680.pdf](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2009CD0047-000680.pdf) .

**SRM Management:** The province has approved funding for Interior Agri-Solutions Inc., a collection service for SRM and non-SRM in both the south central and southern Interior regions, but is not proceeding with three other applications made to the Canada-British Columbia Specified Risk Material (SRM) Management Program, [http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2009AL0021-000663.pdf](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2009AL0021-000663.pdf)

**Farm Business Management:** Growing Forward funding for the Farm Business Advisory Services program was announced yesterday, [http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2009AL0022-000673.pdf](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2009AL0022-000673.pdf)

**Private Members' Bills:** Two Members' Bills dealing directly with agriculture have recently been introduced in the Provincial Legislature by Members of the Official Opposition....

**Food Safety Amendment (Farm Gate Sales) Act:** This Bill would amend the Food Safety Act to allow for the sale of meat direct to consumers at the farm gate, [http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th1st/1st\\_read/m205-1.htm](http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th1st/1st_read/m205-1.htm) . A news release can be found at the following link, <http://www.bcndp.ca/newsroom/new-democrats-introduce-bill-legalize-purchase-local-meat>

**Stream Diversion Amendment Act:** This bill would amend the Water Act to ensure that agricultural water licenses maintain a minimum stream flow for fish/wildlife, [http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th1st/1st\\_read/m204-1.htm](http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th1st/1st_read/m204-1.htm)

The Legislature adjourned on Thursday, November 26th and is expected to resume for 3 days commencing February 9th, and then again the first week of March for the 2010/11 Budget. It should also be noted that Members' Bills seldom become law.

### **Article from Times Columnist (Victoria) - New organic rules could boost prices**

Wednesday, November 04, 2009

By Sarah Schmidt

Organic produce will likely be pricier this winter and some vegetable bins could even be empty because the Canadian border is now closed to "organic" veggies containing sodium nitrate, the organics industry is warning.

But the sector is split on whether the development is a good thing for consumers.

The use of sodium nitrate is permitted under U.S. organic rules, but Canada's new mandatory standards won't let producers use the organic label in Canadian stores if the produce is grown in soil enriched with the natural substance. Like the European Union, Canada considers sodium nitrate to be the equivalent of a synthetic fertilizer because it is highly soluble and leaches from the soil.

Canada's mandatory organic products regulations began in July, but the industry expected a two-year grace period under a stream of commerce policy to allow for a transition away from sodium nitrate. It is commonly used by large-scale organic growers in California as a fertilizer during unfavourable fall and winter conditions to secure a third crop every year.

But the U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued an immediate decree to its growers that it can no longer export this produce to Canada under a new equivalence agreement with the Canadian government.

Laura Telford, national director of the Canadian Organic Growers, applauds the USDA's hard-line approach, saying consumers are better off knowing produce certified as organic in Canada no longer contains sodium nitrate.

"It runs contrary to organic principles. It's a quick fix, an easy way to get nitrogen into the system," said Telford, whose group lobbied Agriculture Canada to "take a zero-tolerance" approach during equivalency negotiations with its American counterpart.

"But most of us were surprised that when the Americans got together with the Canadians to negotiate it, there was no phase-in period. And we're really shocked by this because things usually go in the U.S.'s favour. From Canada's point of view, this is all good news. We set our bar high, and they immediately accepted the higher bar."

Telford said the likely short-term effect on consumers will be higher prices on organic produce throughout the winter months; 80 per cent of all vegetables sold in Canada during the season come

from California, and Telford estimates that only five of the large-scale organic producers have stopped using sodium nitrate.

Penelope Marrett has a more pessimistic take on the situation, calling it an "impeding crisis" in the organic products industry in Canada, where retail sales for organic food have been climbing about 20 per cent per year this decade and topped \$1 billion in 2006.

The president of the Canadian Health Food Association, which represents businesses in the entire supply chain in natural and organic foods, said empty store bins are a likelihood this winter. And that's bad for consumers and retailers, said Marrett.

"We want to ensure that Canadian retailers really feel confident in their ability to continue to provide customers with organic produce without a loss of business."

That's why Marrett is calling on Agriculture Canada to push the USDA to allow for a two-year transition period.

Ann Clark, a specialist in organic farming in the University of Guelph's department of plant agriculture, said the American government should stand its ground.

"This is a particularly interesting situation because it is the USDA that has taken the opportunity to revisit the issue and decided to tighten up the standards for export to Canada," Clark said.

"They could have allowed a two-year transition period under stream of commerce, but instead decided immediate implementation. This is to their credit."

## Conference / Events

### **Soil Health Seminar – December 19, 2009**

With such a strong positive response to our first session held in Armstrong, we are offering a second session in Kelowna on December 19 beginning at 8:30 am and going until 4 pm. The first session was fabulous and everyone went away with new information and a stronger sense of the merits of composting and the means to make some very effective composts.

This session will be held at the Okanagan Mission Community Hall located at 4409 Lakeshore Road in Kelowna. Lunch will be provided again along with coffee, tea and snacks. The cost will still be \$30 which is a steal for the information of this caliber presented by such an entertaining and informative speaker as Marion Lanthier. The seminar is possible through funding from the Regional Seminar Series of COABC. Anyone wishing to attend must preregister with Cara Nunn of NOOA at 250-540-2557 or northorganics@gmail.com. Payment will be taken at the door and can be cash or check to NOOA. Please call early as the first session filled up quickly.

### **BCIC's INNOVATION SUMMIT 2010**

January 7-8, 2010 | Vancouver Hyatt Regency Hotel

In support of furthering the commercialization of new technologies in the agriculture, food and ag-bioproducts sectors, join BC business leaders, researchers, start-ups, innovators and entrepreneurs in this hybrid networking, science to business event.

The BCIC INNOVATION SUMMIT 2010 includes companies from the following sectors:

- Clean technologies
- Advanced food processing and packaging
- Production of novel food and non-food products
- New food safety and animal health detection technologies
- New bio-control technologies
- Software for control and management of a range of complex systems

#### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

AWARDS EVENING | January 7, 2010

Join us for the kick-off event, the Commercialization of Agricultural Technology (CAT) Competition Awards evening, where four emerging BC companies will be recognized and awarded prizes totaling \$600,000.

EXPERT PANELS, BUSINESS PITCH SESSIONS & BOOTH EXHIBITION | January 8, 2010

Expert Panels: Learn techniques and strategies from industry experts and entrepreneurial case studies that impact a start-up's business.

Confirmed panelists include:

- Mark Betteridge, Discovery Parks
- Bob Chaworth-Musters, Angel Forum
- Mark Gambert, Contech Enterprises Inc.
- George Hunter, Small Business BC
- Sandy Mathies, Cannor Nurseries Ltd.
- Yves Potvin, Garden Protein International
- David Raffa, Lions Capital Corp
- Dave Smardon, BioEnterprise Corporation
- Jim Taylor, Avrio Ventures

Panel Topics:

- Business Fundamentals - Planning for a successful business
- Get Fundable - Access to capital and strategies for raising investment
- Success Stories - Case studies from established entrepreneurs in these sectors

*Business Pitch Sessions:* Develop business partnerships by making a pitch for commercialization resources.

*Booth Exhibition:* Discover organizations that provide services to help develop your business.

\*Summit registration fees will be waived for companies participating in the Business Pitch Sessions or the Booth Exhibition!

PURCHASE TICKETS Early Bird Price: \$75 (ends Friday, December 18, 2009) Regular Price: \$100

For more information please contact [lifesciences@bcic.ca](mailto:lifesciences@bcic.ca) or visit the event website.

<http://www.bcic.ca/industry/life-sciences/agri-food/summit-2010>

*Date:* Thursday, January 07, 2010 at 6:00 PM - to - Friday, January 08, 2010 at 5:00 PM (PT)

*Location:* Hyatt Regency Hotel, 655 Burrard St, Vancouver, British Columbia V6C 2R7

### **Food Safety Systems Implementation (Processor) Program:**

An important opportunity for food processors in British Columbia

To British Columbia Food Processors and Interested Parties:

You will be receiving information about the Food Safety Systems Implementation (Processor) Program in the mail. In the meantime, we wanted to make sure that interested businesses were aware of upcoming food safety planning workshops in British Columbia. The purpose of the FSSI (Processor) Program is to offer education and funding for processors across British Columbia to develop food safety plans. The program delivers educational workshops, one on one consultations and funding to eligible food processors to implement GMP and/or HACCP plans. The Small Scale Food Processor Association (SSFPA) is pleased to deliver this program in support of British Columbia food processors.

Food Safety Planning Workshops – Fall 2009

#### **Friday, December 11 – Kamloops**

Visit [www.ssfpa.net/foodsafety](http://www.ssfpa.net/foodsafety) for more information on the workshops and registration

All food processors are welcome to attend the introductory food safety workshops to learn basic food safety for food manufacturing using food safety systems such as GMPs and HACCP. The sessions will include the latest information on employee hygiene and practices plus hands-on demonstrations including measuring and recording temperatures, and testing sanitizer solutions strengths. These workshops are a valuable education tool (if a company has participated in a workshop before, this might be a good experience for other employees). What's more, they offer an opportunity to network and access information that can help enhance the bottom line in these challenging economic times.

- Workshops begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m.
- Cost \$20, includes lunch and coffee breaks (includes GST)
- Each Company participating will receive a FREE VWR Traceable® Waterproof Food Thermometer and a Record of Participation



## Keep in Mind

*Got an Organic Question?*

Try Cyber-help <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/index.html> or contact Rochelle Eisen, BC's organic extension agent at [extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca](mailto:extension@certifiedorganic.bc.ca)

**If you change your address or contact information send it to your CB office as soon as possible so that you don't miss out on receiving a BCOG and other materials.**