

VIRUS CRISIS

Canada's food system is up to the test . . . if seasonal workers are allowed



The state of emergency across Canada will strip away any illusions about what really matters. Abundant food, in quality and variety, is taken for granted. In coming weeks, it's certain that all Canadians will learn very quickly how important the domestic food system is. If growers are given the right conditions – access to seasonal agricultural workers -- then fresh fruits and vegetables will be available. Workers such as Willy Green are crucial to this mission. The Jamaican, a seasonal agricultural worker for 30 years, was photographed a year ago on the farm of Rebecca Compton, Delhi, Ontario. Photos by Glenn Lowson.

KAREN DAVIDSON

Willy Green is grounded in Jamaica. But he and hundreds more from the Caribbean and Mexico are needed desperately to harvest asparagus, one of the first fresh crops to come to market in Ontario.

“At the moment, I have no workers,” says Rebecca Compton, chair of the Asparagus Farmers of Ontario. “I need 42 people through the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program.”

Compton spoke to The Grower on March 18 at a time of unprecedented crisis caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The federal government had just suspended the expected arrival of workers from the Caribbean and Mexico, and the American and Canadian governments announced closure of the border to all but traffic “deemed to be essential.”

On the same day, the U.S. embassy suspended processing of all new applications for the H-2A guest worker program in Mexico. Only returning

seasonal workers will be allowed to enter the United States.

“When the process is stopped midstream, it likely means those crews won’t be there exactly when they’re needed, if they get there at all,” Dave Puglia, president of the Western Growers’ Association told Reuters news service. “That means lost crops. That means lost food.” He speaks for fruit and vegetable growers in states including California and Arizona.

Reacting to the breaking news, Compton reiterated the importance of

domestic food supplies.

“In a fluid situation like this, we can’t be on the frontline in hospitals,” said Compton. “But as farmers we can provide food, the essentials to life. May is a crucial month and the planting season is quite narrow. We need to think of food production for the next six months to a year. The Canadian food system can feed Canadians.”

Continued on page 3

CHC honours leaders PG 6

More COVID-19 virus coverage PG 9

CPMA focus PG 16

AT PRESS TIME...



Seasonal agricultural workers are coming

With only 10,000 seasonal agricultural workers landed in Canada, and thousands more required, agricultural associations have successfully made the case that exemptions to the current travel ban are essential to the nation's food supply.

Federal ag minister Marie-Claude Bibeau gave a March 21 teleconference to agricultural journalists, confirming that growers would be allowed to charter planes to bring in approved temporary foreign workers. Workers must pass health tests in their home countries. Growers must agree that workers, upon arrival, self-isolate for 14 days. And if growers don't adhere to the rules, Bibeau said, "they will forfeit the right to workers in future years."

Federal health officials and a coalition of farm groups spearheaded by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and

including the Canadian Horticultural Council and Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS) are hammering out the details which are expected as early as the week of March 23. Pending results of these negotiations, FARMS and the Western Agriculture Labour Initiative (WALI) have instructed growers not to call their designated travel agencies to book flights yet.

In addition, a temporary modification is being made to the Labour Market Impact Assessment process for agriculture and food processing employers, as the required two-week job posting requirement will be waived for the next six months.

Financial aid to the agricultural community will be announced week of March 23, specific to Farm Credit Canada. Minister Bibeau confirmed that the \$82 billion economic package announced to date is open to farmers as small business operators.

Editor's note

At this unprecedented time, **The Grower** is working non-stop to provide in-depth coverage and informed context regarding the ongoing implications to agriculture of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our daily reporting on this fast-changing crisis is available at www.thegrower.org.

Follow our real-time updates on Twitter at -- @growernews.

Given current coverage demands, **The Grower** may increase the frequency of the **Fresh News from The Grower** e-newsletter. Sign up at www.thegrower.org

Processing vegetable growers to join OFVGA

A resolution extending membership to the Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers was passed at the annual general meeting of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. The Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers will join OFVGA as a fee-based member, which includes a director seat and the ability to send delegates to future annual meetings.

Ron Van Damme has been appointed as the representative to the OFVGA board. He grows tomatoes for Con Agra foods in Dresden as well as machine harvests cucumbers, green peas and sweet corn.

NEWSMAKERS

Beamsville, Ontario grape grower **Bill George Jr.** will serve a second one-year term as chair of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association (OFVGA). Apple grower **Charles Stevens** from the Newcastle area will be vice-chair. The 2020 board also welcomes **John Hambly**, Bradford, as the new director representing vegetable muck growers.



Front row, L-R: **John Hambly**, director; **Alison Robertson**, executive director; **Bill George Jr.**, chair; **George Gilvesy**, director; **Ken Forth**, chair labour section.

L-R: **Kenny Forth**, director; **Brian Gilroy**, chair, energy, property, infrastructure and food safety section; **Jan VanderHout**, chair, environment and conservation section; **Norm Charbonneau**, director; **Charles Stevens**, vice-chair; **Shawn Brenn**, director; **Glen Gilvesy**, director; **Fred Meyers**, director; **Mike Chromczak**, chair safety nets section.

The Canadian Horticultural Council held its 98th Annual General Meeting in Ottawa. **Brian Gilroy**, an Ontario apple grower will serve a third term as president. **Jan VanderHout** is vice-president. Directors are: **Marcus Janzen** and **Jason Smith**, BC; **Albert Cramer** and **Beth Connery**, Prairies; **Bill George**, Ontario; **Stephanie Levasseur** and **Jocelyn St-Denis**, Quebec; **Gerald Dykerman** and **Russell Weir**, Atlantic.

Photo right: President **Brian Gilroy** chats with **Bill Zylmans** (L) and **Jason Smith**.



Committee chairs are as follows: **Ken Forth**, Trade and Marketing; **Stefan Larrass**, Business Risk Management; **Dr. Justine Taylor**, Energy, Environment and Climate Change; **Jody Mott**, Industry Standards; **Beth Connery**, Labour; **Jason Smith**, Crop Protection; **Linda Delli Santi**, Greenhouse; **Joanne Driscoll**, Field Vegetables; **Bill Zylmans**, Potatoes.

Peter Rideout, executive director, Wild Blueberry Producers' Association of Nova Scotia, has retired effective March 31 after six years of service. Since 1980, he had worked closely with the sector in marketing and export development through his job with the Nova Scotia department of agriculture.

Bill Zylmans is stepping down as chair of the British Columbia Potato and Vegetable Growers' Association. The board will be expanding to nine members to handle business affairs. Zylmans will continue to represent seed potato growers. The new board includes: **Ab Singh**, **Blake Lundstrom**, **Judy Galey**, **Cory Gerrard**, **Blair Lodder**, **Hugh Reynolds**, **Randy Sahota**; **Peter Guichon**.

Congrats to **Katie** and **Phil Keddy** of Charles Keddy Farms Ltd., Lakeville, Nova Scotia. They are the winners of the 2020 Atlantic Outstanding Young Farmers competition. The growers of strawberries and sweet potatoes are headed to the national championships to be held December 2-6 in Saskatoon, SK.

Tom O'Neill is stepping down from the role of general manager of the Norfolk Fruit Growers' Association, Simcoe, Ontario effective June 30, 2020. He's served for 36 years, leaving a strong legacy of integrity and innovation. He will stay on for another six months as special advisor in the transition to **Hayden Dooney** who becomes general manager July 1, 2020.

Greg Meredith, deputy minister of Ontario agriculture, food and rural affairs will be moving to the ministry of labour, training and skills development effective April 6, 2020. OMAFRA is recruiting for a replacement.

THINKING OF SEED
THINKING OF SEMINOVA



*Our strength relies on
our professionalism,
our field expertise
and our dedicated
engaged employees.*

1-877-337-8423

www.seminova.ca

20 rue de l'Industrie, C.P. 3640, Saint-Rémi, QC, J0L 2L0

Alloy Thompson, M. Sc. CAA, Ontario Sales Representative, Tel: 705-434-7292



COVER STORY

Canada's food system is up to the test

Continued from page 1

Horticultural commodity groups across Canada are united in their need for access to seasonal workers to ensure the Canadian food system is robust and secure. Nationally, 60,000 seasonal workers are needed for pruning, planting and harvesting. These are 'seasoned' hands, with skills for production practices in a range of crops from berries, apples and grapes to tender fruit, field and greenhouse vegetables. Hard-working men and women who have been returning to Canada each season for years are committed, dexterous, and adaptable to Canadian weather conditions.

Bill George, chair of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, and provincial agriculture minister Ernie Hardeman have been working, along with other provincial cohorts to make the case to the federal agriculture minister.

"It is the OFVGA's goal to partner with government to help maintain a secure food supply for Canadians while at the same time protecting the health of Canadian citizens and workers," says George.

Tom Heeman, chair of the Berry Growers of Ontario, wrote federal ag minister Marie-Claude Bibeau, pleading the case for agricultural workers. "The loss of these essential employees would result in crop losses here in Ontario as well as across the country," he said. "In the absence of a reliable work force we would face a cropping disaster... We are very willing to take appropriate measures to make sure the workers we bring to Canada go through appropriate screening and quarantines if necessary . . . We understand the Canada/U.S. border is being kept open for trade and commerce and we believe that the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program falls within this criteria."

Listening to the chorus of agricultural voices calling out for immediate access to workers, mainstream media have been interviewing farmers such as Ken Forth, president of Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS) and a broccoli grower from Lynden, Ontario.

"We had four more planes scheduled for this week, but now they aren't coming," Forth told the Financial Post on March 18. "Broccoli has to be hand cut. I need an army of people to do that. From now until mid-August I'm planting

and harvesting because our retailers want a constant supply."

FARMS has the capacity to charter planes but to date have been prevented from doing so. Although charter planes are rarely used in British Columbia, said Reg Ens, executive director of the BC Agriculture Council, he is currently fielding calls from farmers worried about the loss of more than three-quarters of the 8,000 seasonal workers they need.

The arrival of workers on commercial flights has diminished to a trickle. "Two workers arrived from Guatemala earlier in the week, but two commercial flights out of Mexico were cancelled for today," Ens reported.

The BC Agriculture Council is working with other provinces such as Quebec on protocols that would allow seasonal workers to arrive without compromising the health of Canadians. These details include testing before leaving home countries, establishing protocols to create social distancing within a "work camp" environment, assistance in setting up direct payment deposit and grocery delivery services, and supporting workers with essentials on arrival.

"Food security is an important issue for the prime minister," said Ens. "We need to make sure that the public health officials feel comfortable with our proposals."

Calls for the federal government to allow the return of seasonal agricultural workers became louder with the March 18 news release by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA). "We urge the federal government to take great care and deliberation when making decisions that will immediately and significantly impact our food supply and food security," wrote Keith Currie, president, OFA. "Food security is key for all Canadians and we depend on a stable, affordable and safe food supply, year-round. The continuous production and distribution of food products through our supply chain networks are even more critical in a crisis situation such as the one we are currently facing today."

Currie explained that the farm produce and food processing sectors face unique challenges in attracting and retaining a local workforce. Ontario alone had been expecting approximately 20,000 workers to arrive in coming weeks to assist with spring preparation and planting and to



Fruit trees will be in bloom in just a few weeks. This seasonal agricultural worker is pruning Harrow Diamond peach trees, one of the earliest maturing varieties, at the farm of David Hipple, Beamsville, Ontario. Photo by Denis Cahill.



“

Broccoli has to be hand cut. I need an army of people to do that. From now until mid-August I'm planting and harvesting because our retailers want a constant supply.

~ KEN FORTH, PRESIDENT, FARMS

”

processing plants. These key individuals are critical to the 2020 production year.

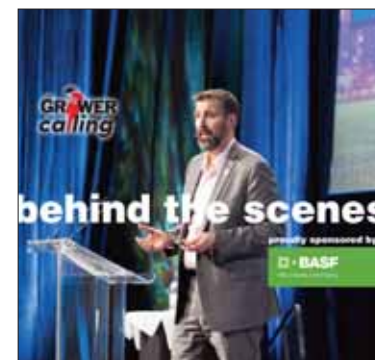
Fortunately, more chapters of this story have yet to be written. At press time, deliberations between agricultural stakeholders across Canada and the federal and provincial governments continue into the small hours of the night. It's hard to imagine that shining a light on seasonal agricultural workers, a little understood but critical aspect of food production, will not result

in a made-in-Canada solution.

Please see update on page 2

Behind the Scenes

The Grower goes "Behind the Scenes" of this breaking story to interview Ron Lemaire, president, Canadian Produce Marketing Association. He's one of many national and provincial agricultural leaders pressing a plan with the Prime Minister's Office for the essential services of seasonal agricultural workers.



CROSS COUNTRY DIGEST

BRITISH COLUMBIA



Global spread of COVID-19 virus is causing uncertainty for cherry exports

MYRNA STARK LEADER

The fluctuating state of global markets is a key issue for BC's cherry growers in 2020.

"These are uncertain times with the COVID-19 virus," said David Geen who opened the sold-out, March 3 BC Cherry Association (BCCA) annual general meeting in Kelowna. As association vice-president, he started the research and export update by recognizing the commitment of BCCA president Sukhpaul Bal, who along with Christine Dendy, were on a week's market development mission in India. "The virus highlights our industry's needs to be diversified in as many markets as we can."

To underscore the point, the original keynote speaker for the event decided not to travel from

Vietnam to address the athering.

Representing 80-85 per cent of the BC cherry acreage, the association had a productive 2019, marking the first full year of Japanese trade along with China and California. The association co-hosted a well-attended cherry school in 2019 and were planning an educational day on spotted wing drosophila in April 2020. That might now be changed due to COVID-19 escalation.

The organization is continuing to pursue markets in Japan and South Korea, while maintaining the relationship with China. In 2019, more than three million kilograms of cherries went to China, up a bit from the previous year, despite a more challenging growing season, which was plagued with rain early in the harvest season. India is a potential market, but



Growers exchange experiences at the BC Cherry Association annual general meeting in Kelowna. Photo by Myrna Stark Leader.

right now exporters need to fumigate or hold fruit in cold storage for 10 days.

"These are both things that our growers can't do so we are trying to have those trade barriers reduced or removed," association administrator Beth Cavers said during her financial report.

Although there's full access to Japan, Geen says it's not likely as big as the China market, but mentioned opportunities for more specialty

sales such as gift packs of cherries. Korea is moving along but frustratingly slow so hopes of a pilot are unlikely until 2021.

In March 2020, the European Union will decide whether BC growers will be required to have a new trapping program to track cherry fruit worm. Unbeknownst to the association, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) proposed a trapping program during trade discussions, but the BCCA board's position is

that a strong 30-year track record without a contraband insect should be enough, pointing out that the U.S. trade deal was renewed without a trapping program. There was at least one producer at the meeting who ships about 75 per cent of his cherries to Europe. Given recent global developments, he doesn't know what will happen.

Myrna Stark Leader is a freelance agricultural journalist based in Kelowna, BC.

Hemp Seedlings Pre-Sexed



RoelandsPlant
FARMS INC.
519-328-8334

ALBERTA

Research is underway for the Canadian Potato Early Die Network



Funding has been secured for the Canadian Potato Early Die Network (CanPEDNet) reports Thomas McDade, agricultural director, Potato Growers of Alberta. Dr. Mario Tenuta, University of Manitoba, is leading the program. He is collaborating with Dr. Dmytro Yevtushenko, University of Lethbridge Potato Research Chair.

As part of the CanPEDNet, Yevtushenko and a number of his students collected soil samples in the fall of 2019. These samples were representative of fields earmarked for potatoes in 2020. In total, 32 fields were sampled across southern Alberta.

Soil samples were tested for levels of *Verticillium dahliae* by the Agricultural Certification Services Lab in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Of the 32 samples submitted, virtually all were found to have very low levels of *Verticillium microsclerotia*. Most of these soil samples were found to have 12 microsclerotia propagules per gram of soil, and in most cases, much lower.

"Overall, this is an excellent result as the economic threshold for *Verticillium dahliae*, per gram of soil, is in the eight to 12 range," says McDade.

CROSS COUNTRY DIGEST

QUEBEC

Imports pressure Quebec's asparagus sector

Quebec's 190 asparagus growers expect another challenging season in 2020, with Mexican imports eating into local markets. Amélie Lachapelle, a crop consultant with Innovterra, Sainte-Julienne, Quebec shared her prediction at the Asparagus Farmers of Ontario Grower Information Day, March 3, in Delhi.

Agriculture Canada statistics show that the Mexicans sent \$70.5 million worth of asparagus in 2018, up considerably from \$40.4 million in 2014. Those figures are for all of Canada.

Quebec's asparagus sector is about a quarter of the size of Ontario's with about 1,012 acres in production compared to 3,853 acres in Ontario. Yields in 2019 were recorded at 3,656 pounds per Quebec acre compared to 4,288 pounds per Ontario acre.

Lachapelle explained that 45 per cent of Quebec production is sold to wholesalers or resellers. About 35 per cent goes directly to food chains while the remainder is sold at farmgate or at farmers' markets. More organic asparagus is being grown every year, comprising about six per cent of total production.

Quebec's asparagus committee has been more aggressive in the last couple years to educate consumers that local asparagus is available in May and June. "We have a short season, so we have to hit hard," said Lachapelle.

Along with Stéphane Roy, Fermes Horticoles LMR, she explained that growers continue to evolve technically with the main goals of protecting soil health, improving fertilization and plant uptake and intensifying integrated pest management. To reach those goals, growers are planting plugs with 10 feet spacing between rows. This spacing allows for better ventilation, pest management and better access for cultivation.

Deep spaders are used to plant fusarium-free asparagus plugs at the end of the harvesting season when there is better availability of labour.

Spore traps were used for the first time in a 2019 trial to detect the fungal pathogens that cause rust and purple spot in asparagus.

"With the help of weather station data and scouting, we decide if a treatment is relevant or not. Often it is not, as we found last summer," says Lachapelle. Biodegradable plastic mulch is used for weed control. In further research trials, beneficial nematodes are

used to combat the asparagus beetle.

Photo far right: Amélie Lachapelle, crop consultant, Innovterra and Stéphane Roy, president, Quebec Asparagus Committee.



Get hooked on rapid disease control.*

*Actual technology may not be exactly as shown.

Experience a new level of control with our unique binding action.

Talk about technology you'll get attached to quickly. New Cevya® fungicide uses exclusive binding activity to control biotypes that may be resistant to other fungicides, including Group 3-tolerant strains. This hook-like action delivers fast and continuous control of key diseases in grapes, apples, pears, stone fruits, potatoes and more. Visit agsolutions.ca/horticulture to find out what it can do for you.



Cevya[®]
Revysol[®] Fungicide

BASF
We create chemistry

Always read and follow label directions.

AgSolutions, CEVYA and REVYSOL are registered trade-marks of BASF. CEVYA fungicide should be used in a preventative disease control program. © 2020 BASF Canada Inc.

CANADIAN HORTICULTURAL COUNCIL 98TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, OTTAWA

Long-time leaders are honoured



L-R: Brian Gilroy, CHC president; Tom O'Neill, Honourary Life Member; Linda Delli Santi, Outstanding Achievement Award; Rebecca Lee, CHC executive director; Tracy Shinnors-Carnelley, Doug Connery Award; Shirley Archambault, Honourary Life Member.

KAREN DAVIDSON

Collaborative. Untiring. Tenacious. These are some of the adjectives that Brian Gilroy, president, Canadian Horticultural Council used to describe four award winners at the 98th annual general meeting in Ottawa.

On March 11, Canadian Horticultural Council president

Brian Gilroy presented four awards to deserving recipients in Ottawa, Ontario. Here are excerpts from his commendations.

Tom O'Neill, Simcoe, Ontario, Honourary Life Member, has been with the Norfolk Fruit Growers' Association (NFGA) since 1983, and has been general manager since 1991, overseeing storing, packing and

marketing. He has represented the Apple Marketers' Association of Ontario at the former Ontario Apple Marketing Commission, Ontario Apple Growers, Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association and the Canadian Horticultural Council. He also served as the Canadian representative to the U.S. Apple Association from 1992 to 2000. In 2019, he made the Vineland

Growers' Cooperative the exclusive marketer of the association's fresh apples.

Linda Delli Santi, Langley, British Columbia, winner of the Outstanding Achievement Award, is executive director of the BC Greenhouse Growers' Association and has served as chair of the CHC Greenhouse Vegetable Working Group since 2007. Her valuable leadership has been pivotal in developing a collaborative national forum for greenhouse vegetable growers. She is currently co-chair of the Greenhouse Task Force leading the Canadian industry-government response to Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus.

Tracy Shinnors-Carnelley, Carman, Manitoba, winner of the Doug Connery Award, is vice president, Research & Quality at Peak of the Market. She leads the research program which is focused on variety evaluation, improved pest management, and optimization of agronomic practices for fresh market potatoes, carrots and sweet potatoes.

She also spends time working with growers in their fields and packing houses,

supporting activities in these same areas. In her early days at Peak of the Market, she worked with Doug Connery before his untimely passing, and continues to work with Connery Riverdale Farms as a valuable resource.

Shirley Archambault, Ottawa, Ontario, Honourary Life Member, joined the Canadian Horticultural Council in 1998 as a policy affairs coordinator where she was responsible for coordinating Minor Use Pesticide Projects, liaising with registrants, coordinating IR-4 field research in Canada and working with grower groups and various stakeholders.

She joined Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in 2003 with the establishment of the Pest Management Centre and launching of the Minor Use Pesticide Program. Through her work both before and during her tenure as international and industry affairs officer at the Pest Management Centre, Archambault has been a key contributor to the competitive parity of Canadian growers with their American counterparts, by ensuring growers have access to the same safe, effective pest control products.



In 2020, recycle every jug

Our recycling program makes it easier for Canadian farmers to be responsible stewards of their land for present and future generations. By taking empty containers (jugs, drums, and totes) to nearby collection sites, farmers proudly contribute to a sustainable community and environment. When recycling jugs, every one counts.

Find a collection location near you at cleanfarms.ca



info@cleanfarms.ca

[@cleanfarms.ca](https://twitter.com/cleanfarms.ca)

CANADIAN HORTICULTURAL COUNCIL 98TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, OTTAWA

Committee work will be key in national crisis

KAREN DAVIDSON

Brian Gilroy had a bad feeling about the COVID-19 virus. As president of the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC), his opening remarks at the annual general meeting on March 11 referenced “the gorilla in the room” and the effect it might have on the horticultural sector.

That day, the World Health Organization declared a world pandemic. Beth Connery, chair of the CHC labour committee, warned that growers should look ahead at potential disruptions and plan for delays in seasonal agricultural workers.

Within 48 hours, a tsunami of bad news washed over the horticultural industry. Ontario announced the closure of public schools as did other provinces in due course. Friday, March 13th marked one of the biggest rushes on groceries in Canadian history, bigger than any high holiday. On March 16, the federal government then announced a travel ban on anyone who wasn't a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. All of Canada's horticultural leaders had dispersed across the country but were now galvanized in virtual meetings to safeguard health, while lobbying for tens of thousands of seasonal workers to arrive in Canada.

It's small wonder that CHC's leadership was advocating for more resources towards public trust as well as forecasting a two per cent increase in fees for 2020 and 2021. The moment of reckoning arrived in breathtaking fashion.

The remaining business of the meeting now pales in comparison to operating in a crisis environment. Yet many of the themes will support horticulture in the coming year.

Trade and Marketing

This committee, chaired by Ken Forth, was concerned about global trade. The greenhouse sector, for example, is concerned about open borders with the United States for its tomato, pepper and cucumber exports as well as its ability to develop markets in China.

Vegetable growers have the same concerns with \$1.8 billion of exports. The Association des producteurs maraîchers du Québec brought forward a motion that the federal government provide financial assistance to complement existing risk management programs to mitigate the risk of trade disputes.

Now that COVID-19 virus is here, this committee will have a laser focus on keeping

commercial traffic flowing across the Canadian/U.S. borders.

The Dispute Resolution Corporation, celebrating its 20th anniversary, will play a key role in the coming year with more global membership.

Business Risk Management (BRM)

A diversity index for horticulture BRM programs may provide a more equitable and representative coverage for diversified farms, filling a gap

while being complementary to AgriStability and AgriInsurance.

This committee will be pressuring the federal government for more relief in these current crisis circumstances.

A new chair was elected: Stefan Larrass, Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association

Energy, Environment and Climate Change

A new chair was elected: Dr. Justine Taylor, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers

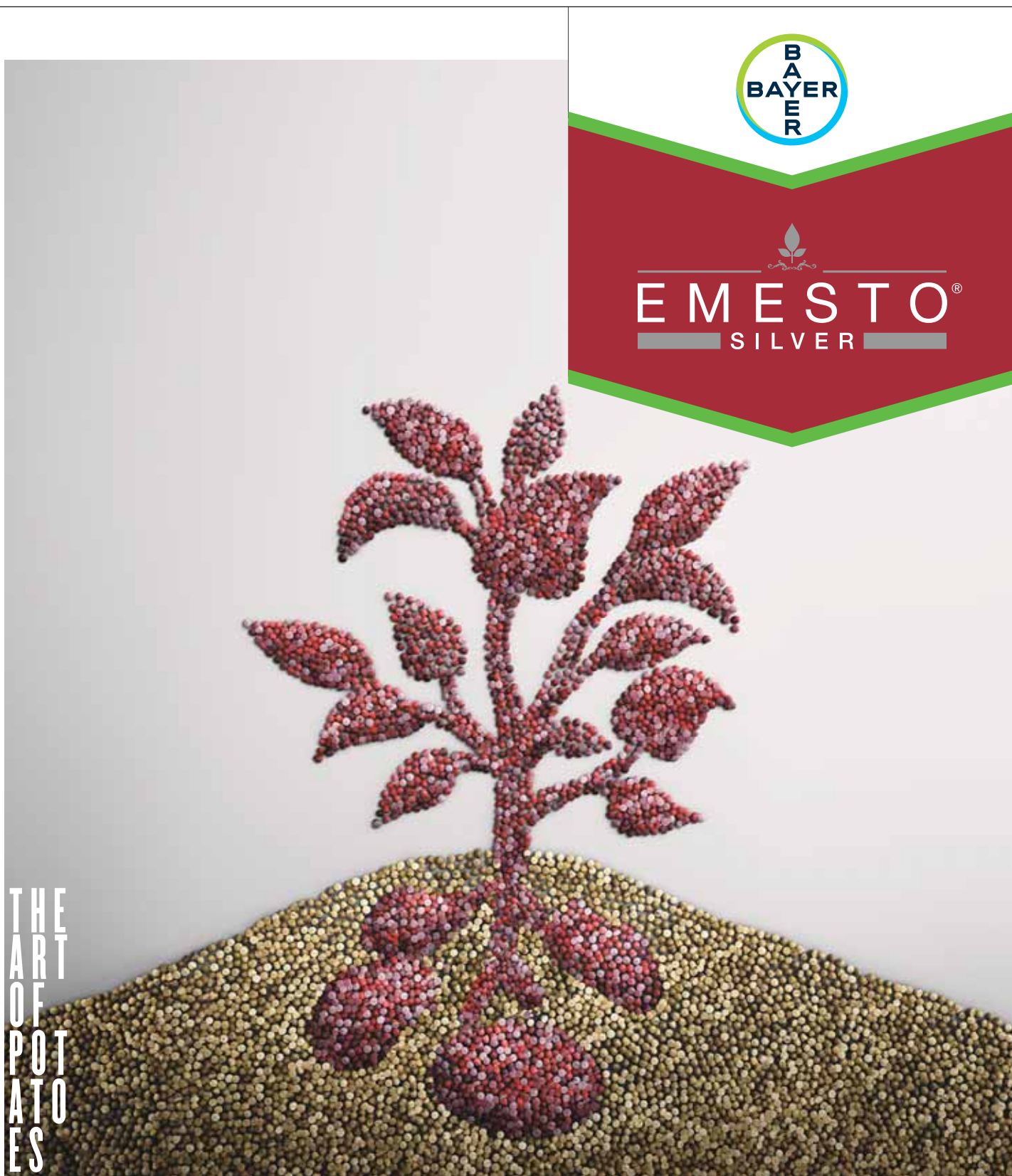
Industry Standards and Food Safety

This committee, chaired by Jody Mott, invited Christine Shaker, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to speak. Several food recalls in the past year, particularly of romaine lettuce in the U.S., caused ripple effects in Canada. In moving forward, the CFIA is adding verbiage to such recalls that says “not a Canadian product.”

Labour

Chaired by Beth Connery, the labour committee has been working with Steven West, director of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program. A new pilot program is to have online applications to complete Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIA). Of 690 applications received, 93 were from horticulture.

Continued on page 8



Your crop is your masterpiece.

We just bring the tools. The unmistakable red formula of Emesto® Silver fungicide seed treatment protects your potato seed-pieces from seed and soil-borne diseases. With two modes of action against fusarium, it even safeguards against current resistant strains. But what insecticide you choose to combine it with is completely up to you – because when it comes to art, the artist always knows best.



cropsience.bayer.ca | 1 888-283-6847 | @Bayer4CropsCA | #AskBayerCrop

Always read and follow label directions. Bayer, Bayer Cross, and Emesto® are trademarks of the Bayer Group. Bayer CropScience Inc. is a member of CropLife Canada. ©2020 Bayer Group. All rights reserved.

CANADIAN HORTICULTURAL COUNCIL 98TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, OTTAWA

Committee work will be key in national crisis



L-R: Courtney Stevens, Charles Stevens, Sam Connery, Beth Connery.

Continued from page 7

Government personnel have been walking employers through the application, a process that takes about 60 minutes. Third-party users are allowed to submit payments and

to access decision letters online.

Crop protection

This committee invited Lars Juergensen, associate director, transformation policy, PMRA to speak about the rejigging of the

re-evaluation process. What does continuous re-evaluation look like? The answers will become clearer in the months ahead.

Brian Gilroy commented, “This is all great, but the challenge is public perception

Intergenerational Transfer Experience

This session was chaired by Peter Jaskiewicz, Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa. After he shared latest research, he moderated a panel with Charles Stevens and daughter Courtney Stevens, Wilmot Orchards, Newcastle, Ontario as well as Beth Connery and her daughter Sam Connery, Connery’s Riverdale Farms, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

“The first hurdle is that I was the daughter-in-law who inherited the farm,” remembers Beth Connery. The untimely passing of her husband prompted an unusual journey in re-orienting the farm.

“We talked to a lot of various people about the succession process,” says Connery. “Sometimes you talk to too many and sorting through it all is difficult. One of the positive things is planning for mechanisms for communication.”

This theme was echoed by Courtney Stevens, Wilmot Orchards. “Regularly scheduled meetings are important,” she says. Her father Charles says, “My wife and I controlled everything on the farm. We had to give up that control or else it won’t work. It’s difficult to do, but it must be done step by step.”

Writing job descriptions is most helpful to the process as well as setting up board of directors meetings and a shareholders meeting.

The plenary session ended with a pledge from Amy Argentino and Bev Appleby, CHC, to develop a next generation leadership program so that young leaders can attend the annual general meeting.

CPMA has cancelled 2020 convention and trade show in Toronto

In light of the rapid escalation of safety precautions to decrease the transmission of COVID-19, and recommen-

dations of municipal, provincial and federal governments regarding large gatherings, the Canadian Produce Marketing

Association (CPMA) Board of Directors and 2020 CPMA Convention and Trade Show Organizing Committee have

made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 CPMA Convention and Trade Show.

“We appreciate that many preparations for the show are already underway, however the health and safety of CPMA members, Convention and Trade Show registrants and the general public is our paramount concern,” said Ron Lemaire, CPMA president.

During this unprecedented global situation, CPMA strongly encourages all businesses and individuals throughout the produce supply chain to consult the association’s COVID-19 Updates page, to strictly adhere to government guidance and recommendations and to prioritize self-care above all else.

CPMA continues to work with government and partners across the supply chain in an effort to minimize business disruptions. Exhibitors, sponsors and attendees who have already paid will have the following options:

- Carry forward booth purchases and sponsorships to the 2021 CPMA Convention and Trade Show in Vancouver, B.C., with 100 per cent of payments to date being transferred to the 2021 CPMA Convention and Trade Show. In advance, CPMA thanks the many

We hope that there are more measures for public trust.”

Jason Smith continues to chair this committee.

Next year’s annual general meeting is planned for March 15-18 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

companies that have indicated they will be pushing their support to the 2021 event in Vancouver.

- CPMA will also be offering 100 per cent refunds on ticket sales, including Full Delegate passes, Trade Show only passes, Retail Tour, Chair’s Welcome Reception, Companion Program, After Party, and CPMA Annual Banquet.

- CPMA is offering refunds of 80 per cent to any exhibitors or sponsors wishing to cancel their participation in the 2020 CPMA Convention and Trade Show (fees, expenses and penalties have been incurred for advanced preparations that prevent CPMA from refunding the full amount). CPMA will be contacting exhibitors and registrants over the next few weeks to address their decisions in this matter. The CPMA Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is traditionally conducted as part of the Convention and Trade Show agenda, will be changed to a virtual meeting. Details on this event will be sent to members as soon as they are confirmed.

Source: Canadian Produce Marketing Association March 20, 2020 news release

Proudly Canadian

Pencil Pointed Stakes

For farm, landscaping, land surveying & more!

Made from quality hardwoods

HARDWOOD EXPERTS SERVING THE LOCAL FARMING COMMUNITY FOR 50+ YEARS

Sustainably sourced materials • Bulk delivery & custom sizing available

Vegetable & Produce Bins

- Onion bins, carrot bins, potato bins, cabbage bins & apple bins
- Pre-cut components
- Ash & Oak hardwoods good for outdoor use
- Diagonal corner post, pre-cut & ready to nail
- CFIA heat treat certified

Plus, all-natural wood chips, mulch & shavings

Sales Office 519.842.8234
info@townsendlumber.com
 1250 Jackson Side Road, Courtland, ON

Townsend Lumber Inc.
Responsibly managing, harvesting and sawing timber in southwestern Ontario since 1954.

townsendlumber.com

OFVGA ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Policy and government relations in the pandemic era



GORDON STOCK
SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR &
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS,
OFVGA

Initially this article was going to discuss new policy priorities for the OFVGA, now that the annual general meeting is behind us. However, I am refocussing as I write from my kitchen table, between calls and emails fielding questions about the status of access to seasonal agricultural workers. The COVID-19 pandemic has quickly changed the reality for all Canadians and put the sector's ability to produce food at risk.

As the situation evolves by the hour, I am optimistic that

by the time this article is published, pragmatic solutions to allow essential agricultural workers into Canada will be implemented. We are fortunate to have built strong stakeholder and government relationships as well as financial reserves. These assets enable us to pivot quickly to the crisis and to ensure a quick resolution.

Just as the provincial and federal governments found themselves in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, so did the OFVGA. To its credit, the provincial government began contacting the OFVGA nearly a week before significant actions were announced, to understand where impacts were anticipated by the industry. Strong relationships with government eased discussions about the need for seasonal workers once the travel restrictions were announced.

A large team started working around the clock on this issue as soon as the federal government announced travel restrictions. Within hours the OFVGA board met by phone with national partners, including Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS), the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and

the Canadian Horticultural Council.

Behind the scenes, we developed messaging for government and media. Meanwhile, social media was going wild as growers and other stakeholders raised concerns about access to workers. As tension built quickly the week of March 16, the OFVGA worked to balance the need to communicate with stakeholders, while ensuring that we shared accurate information in a timely fashion.

With the speed at which governments were making decisions, it is not surprising that decisions with unintended consequences were made – decision makers were doing the best with the information available. The industry is fortunate that domestic food security is a necessity to help maintain the public's health.

Less than 48 hours after the travel restrictions were announced, news of exemptions began to surface. While great news, so many details had not been worked out and while there was government support, the logistics of how to ensure workers would enter Canada without risking further spread of



the virus were not yet agreed to. The OFVGA had to balance how and what it communicated to ensure we did not further muddle any misinformation. The logistical details could make or break whether workers arrive in time for the 2020 season.

The outcome of this industry crisis is not yet known. What I do know is that there continues to be a full court press to enable

the travel of workers into Canada to secure a supply of fresh produce for the grocery shelves this coming season.

Want to see an issue highlighted here, or learn more about how OFVGA represents growers? Contact Gordon Stock, senior policy and government relations advisor, at gstock@ofvga.org or 519-763-6160, ext. 125. For more go to www.ofvga.org/news.

CROSS COUNTRY DIGEST

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Maritimes wild hops could provide unique flavours

As a dynamic craft beer industry continues to look for more refined flavours and aromas, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) phytochemist Jason McCallum is moving closer to releasing his team's highly anticipated wild hops to bring aromas like melon, cotton candy and cucumber to the brewing industry.

From 2015 to 2017, McCallum and colleague Aaron Mills, an AAFC agronomist, trekked across the Maritimes searching for wild hops and discovered more than 60 different wild-growing hop populations that were well suited to the cool, wet, Maritimes climate. The newly acquired hops were planted at the AAFC Harrington Research Farm hopyard on Prince Edward Island. Since that time, Jason and Aaron have been researching the chemical composition of each variety to determine their origin, including which hops were brought to the Maritimes from Europe or other locations and which hops were native to the

Maritimes. They also researched each hop's potential value to the brewing industry.

While studying the characteristics of these varieties, the team made two interesting discoveries. Wild hops that are native to the Maritimes have increased levels of a key chemical that is attractive in the brewing industry, compared to hops native to western parts of North America or Europe.

"Maritimes hops have a naturally high level of alpha acids. This means they can be used for bittering the brew or to add various aromas and flavours," says McCallum. "This is known in the industry as dual use and makes these varieties appealing to brewers."

They also discovered a new and simpler method for analyzing North American hops ancestry, based on leaf chemical profiles.

"We found a new identifier that makes it easier for breeders and researchers to distinguish authentic North American wild hops, simply by looking at chemicals in the leaves, rather than analyzing the chemicals

found in the cones," says McCallum.

After two years of collecting data about different hop plant's disease resistance and chemical characteristics, a dozen of the highest quality wild hops have been chosen for further study in the second phase of the project.

"Our goal is to have five named commercial varieties of wild hops with unique flavours that are available to license at a minimal cost to growers across Canada," says McCallum.

Making use of a product that is locally grown and offers unique flavour options helps Canada's brewing industry innovate as well as develop new and diverse products consumers increasingly want. In order to launch the hops as commercial varieties, the team will submit additional data to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Plant Breeders' Rights Office over the next two years.

"The plan to apply for Plant Breeders' Rights and possibly trademark these unique Maritime hop varieties could lead to a licensing opportunity for many hop growers," says



Wild hops display different characteristics from European hops such as leaf and cone shapes.

AAFC commercialization officer, Christina Stewart.

"This gives the growers access to a high quality wild hop suitable for commercial production to potentially meet the high demand from brewers across Canada."

McCallum and Mills will partner with other producers across Prince Edward Island, Quebec and British Columbia to see if these Maritimes wild hops varieties can be grown in other parts of the country.

"If we can successfully grow varieties of Maritimes hops in other locations throughout Canada, we'll get a better snapshot of their potential for commercialization," says McCallum.

Those hoping to get a first taste of craft-brewed wild hops will need to be patient as the formula is perfected over the next two to three years.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Creating new opportunity for grower involvement with OFVGA



ALISON ROBERTSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFVGA

the activities we participate in – and evaluating our involvement. Under the theme of “status quo isn’t good enough,” our goal is to make sure we are as effective as possible and using our resources and expertise to the best potential on behalf of growers.

It’s not an easy process, and it’s one that is bringing forward some very big picture issues that we need to address both as an organization and as the broader horticulture and agriculture sector.

The fruit and vegetable sector in Ontario is a very diverse one – we have a wide range of farm types and sizes and our members grow more than 120 different crops. And increasingly, the files that we deal with on behalf of growers, from crop protection, labour and safety nets to trade, taxation and all manner of regulatory and legislative issues, are becoming more and more complex.

As well, the public trust landscape is ever changing, as is how government policy is shaped and how advocacy is done, to say nothing of the whole social media world that we must now also consider in everything we do.

All of this means we need more eyes on those files, more heads at the table and more input from a broader cross-section of the growers we represent than we currently do.

For too long, our organization has depended on the hard work and dedication of a small group of section chairs, board members and active committee members to get the job done. And there have been many successes over the years, particularly in areas such as labour, crop protection and safety nets, to name just a few.

Now is the time for us to think about how we can plan for the future and create opportunities for more people to

become involved so that our policies and activities are based on well-rounded, representative decision-making.

We know that it’s not possible for one person or a small team of volunteers to do it all, and that the number of hours some of the OFVGA board and committee positions have required in the past aren’t sustainable.

So, over the last two years, we’ve worked hard to build depth on OFVGA’s staff by adding a team of policy advisors who support our section chairs in their important work. This means volunteering to be part of a committee or stepping into a leadership role is no longer as onerous a job as it used to be.

And in an era where transparency and accountability are paramount, we’re also going to be putting some structure and policy in place around our committees so that people who do step forward have a better

idea of the commitment they are making. As all of our lives become busier, we want to make sure that growers who would like to volunteer their time to our organization can do so in a way that works for them, their families and their farms.

I believe strongly in the importance of increasing our bench strength, and after having done so on the staff side, we’re now looking to spread that out further across the organization. We welcome the involvement of new volunteers and the perspectives of growers from all areas of our sector as we work to ready our organization for the future. We’re building on the shoulders of those who have borne the burden so far and all that they have accomplished so we can use their legacy to shape the future of the Ontario fruit and vegetable sector.

WEATHER VANE



“We have now sold out of Yukon potatoes. For us, that’s two weeks worth of sales in three days.”
Thanks to Nick Ploeg, Sunrise Potato Storage, Alliston, Ontario for sharing his warehouse photo.

STAFF
Publisher: Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association
Editor: Karen Davidson, 416-557-6413, editor@thegrower.org
Advertising: Carlie Melara 519-763-8728, advertising@thegrower.org

The Grower reserves the right to refuse any advertising. Any errors that are the direct result of The Grower will be compensated at our discretion with a correction notice in the next issue. No compensation will be given after the first running of the ad. Client signature is required before insertion.
The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association is the sole owner of The Grower. All editorials and opinions expressed in The Grower are those of the newspaper’s editorial staff and/or contributor, and do not necessarily reflect the view of the association.
All rights reserved. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced either whole or in part without the prior written consent of the publisher.

OFFICE
355 Elmira Road North, Unit 105
Guelph, Ontario N1K 1S5 CANADA
Tel. 519-763-8728 • Fax 519-763-6604

The Grower is printed 12 times a year and sent to all members of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association who have paid \$30.00 (plus G.S.T.) per year for the paper through their commodity group or container fees. Others may subscribe as follows by writing to the office:

\$30.00 (+ HST) /year in Canada
\$40.00/year International

Subscribers must submit a claim for missing issues within four months. If the issue is claimed within four months, but not available, The Grower will extend the subscription by one month. No refunds on subscriptions.

P.M. 40012319

ONTARIO FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS’ ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Chair: Bill George Jr., Beamsville
Vice-chair: Charles Stevens, Newcastle
Fruit: Norm Charbonneau, Port Elgin
Vegetable: Kenny Forth, Lynden
Director: Mike Chromczak, Brownsville
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Apples: Charles Stevens, Newcastle
Fresh Veg other: Kenny Forth, Lynden
Tender Fruit: Fred Meyers, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Asparagus: Mike Chromczak, Brownsville
Fresh Grape: Bill George Jr., Beamsville
Fresh Veg muck: John Hambly, Bradford
Potato: Shawn Brenn, Waterdown
Small Fruit: Norm Charbonneau, Port Elgin
Ginseng: Glen Gilvesy, Tillsonburg
Greenhouse: Jan VanderHout, Waterdown
Processing Vegetables: George Gilvesy, Tillsonburg
Ron Van Damme, Wallaceburg

OFVGA SECTION CHAIRS

Crop Protection: Charles Stevens
Environment and Conservation: Jan VanderHout
Labour: Ken Forth
Safety Nets: Mike Chromczak
Energy, Property, Infrastructure and Food Safety: Brian Gilroy



URBAN COWBOY

Mexican fruit producers step up to help supply hungry markets



OWEN ROBERTS
U OF GUELPH



Raspberry picker Trinidad Gomez (left) has his identification tag scanned by supervisor Guillermina Moreno each time he brings in a flat of berries. Photos by Owen Roberts.



Strawberries are the most prolific berry grown on Jalisco farms, comprising about 35 per cent of the berry production here.



Blueberry picking is manual, but much of the activity at Bloom Farms' processing plant in Mexico's Jalisco state is automated and modern.

Right before the COVID-19 virus pandemic swept in and thwarted travel everywhere, I was fortunate to spend a few days in Mexico in early March. Specifically, I was in Jalisco state, where fruit and vegetable production – especially berries – has risen to new heights.

I was there to work with the new Mexican Guild of Agricultural Journalists, to help its 20 members get its operation off the ground and further develop knowledge mobilization capacity.

Agriculture is becoming increasingly important to the Mexican economy. Before the coronavirus pandemic, it was expected to be the only significant growth sector in 2020. Growers are looking for as much knowledge as they can get to help with increasing production, and agricultural journalists are skilled at, among other things, conveying and explaining technical information.

Over the past 25 years, Mexico has become a significant winter supplier to Canada and the U.S. and to a lesser extent Europe and Asia, of quality fruit and vegetables. It's common here to see Product of Mexico origin stickers on berry clamshell containers and on other fruit, especially avocados. Well-developed transportation corridors from Mexico through to Texas then on to Canada move refrigerated produce from field to table in as little as two days.

Mexico's success mirrors the overall growth of the greenhouse sector across North America, driven by health-conscious consumers' pursuit of affordable, tasty, fresh food. Here at home, Ontario's greenhouse vegetable sector is expanding rapidly at an annual rate of four to five per cent, with greenhouses covering almost 3,200 acres across the province.

Greenhouse production in Jalisco, with its natural advantages such as favourable winter temperatures, rainfall

and groundwater, is huge. Raspberry canes started as seedlings in May can grow up to seven feet tall by the following March. Plastic-covered plots now cover 116,000 acres there, with the industry reporting an average growth of 16.5 per cent per year for the past six years.

Prices have not kept pace, but the industry has an answer for that: technology and innovation.

"We've seen product prices decrease, but production rise," says Aldo Mares, the chair of the executive board of the Mexican Export Berry Association. "That's why we need research, innovation and high-end technology, so production increases can offset price drops."

Mexico's berry industry is highly labour-intensive and now employs 370,000 workers in production and processing. About 64,000 of them work in the state of Jalisco. A competitive situation has arisen for labour, and is credited with helping raise the bar for workers' rights and providing in-country employment for migrant workers from other states with high employment.

The greenhouse sector hires many women, especially as harvesters. In Mexican culture, they are considered to have a gentler touch with tender fruit. This is giving them new opportunities to join the movement to kick back at the second-class treatment women have historically received in Mexican society and generate a decent income and respect as wage earners.

Their plight is bolstered by farmers such as Mares, part owner with his brother and another investor in Green Gold Farms in Jalisco state. They normally hire 1,000 workers, but this year they'll employ 1,600,

to meet demand.

Half of their workers are recruited from states other than Jalisco; some from as far as a 24-hour bus ride away. When new workers arrive, they're given finances to help get established until they begin earning money (they start harvesting after one week of safety and quality training). They're also given housing that complies with international standards for square feet per person.

"They work hard and they appreciate the job," says Mares.

The berry association comprises 30 companies that represent 90 per cent of the berries grown in Mexico. About 85 per cent of the members are certified through Global GAP, with the goal of getting that number to 100 per cent by the end of the 2020-2021 growing

season. Mares believes such high standards are necessary to comply with importers' demands -- not to mention those of Driscoll's, his sole client.

Although the threat of COVID-19 was still in its infancy when I visited, Bloom Farms was already taking new precautions to enhance its safety protocols – visitor reduction, hand sanitizing for all harvesters and face masks.

Mares recognizes the importance of such measures to the company's North American trading partners, and says he and other fruit producers are anxious to get the USMCA trade deal off on the right foot... which Canada ratified just as I was leaving.

"The trade deal provides a lot of certainty to the industry, and benefits," says Mares. "We need trade and private investment to be competitive."

O'NEIL'S
FARM AND LAWN EQUIPMENT (1971) LTD.
2461 Reg Rd 56 Binbrook, Ontario
PH: 905.572.6714 Email: info@oneils.ca

CASE IH
AGRICULTURE

- . 100N's
- . 100 hp
- . U Of G Return
- . Full Factory Warranty
- . 32x16 Hi & Low Power Shuttle
- . 3 Remotes
- . 540 / 540 E PTO

FINANCE SPECIAL

\$ 540.00 MONTHLY
WITH NO DOWN PAYMENT
O.A.C

LIMITED SUPPLY!

AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

U.S. Apple Association: guest workers urgently needed



As of March 17, the U.S. embassy suspended processing of new H-2A worker applications in Mexico City and its offices across the country. The U.S. Apple Association, one of the founders of the Agriculture Workforce Coalition, is asking for a reversal of that position.

Workforce Coalition released a March 17, 2020 letter to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. A large proportion of the total guest workers are needed in spring to prepare apple orchards.

Here are excerpts:

“While we were pleased to hear the Administration announce they will be prioritizing interview waiver cases, the State Department’s own data suggests that such workers eligible for waivers may only comprise a portion of workers employers need this

season as evidenced by approved petition beneficiaries. Therefore, it is imperative that more be done. We agree that governments and the private sector must take all necessary precautions to reduce further transmission of the virus in our communities, however those steps must be proportional and reasonable.”

“The Food and Agriculture Sector remains critical at this trying time and must be able to continue to provide sustenance. As you know, many sectors within the agriculture industry are highly labour-intensive and especially dependent upon foreign labour, including the H-2A agricultural visa program, and other non-immigrant agricultural worker visas to meet labour needs. Like much of agriculture, the production for many of our crops is set to begin this month.”

“An interruption to the processing of agricultural worker visas will undoubtedly cause a significant disruption to the U.S. food supply. As you know, the Food and Agriculture Sector, responsible for food manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities, accounts for one-fifth of the nation’s economic activity and has been designated a “Critical Infrastructure Sector” by the Department of Homeland Security.

“In order to ensure uninterrupted food, crop and commodity production, we urge you to recognize all H-2A, as well as any other non-immigrant visa petition involving an agricultural worker, visa consular processing functions as “essential” and direct the U.S. Consulates to treat all agricultural worker appointments as emergency visa services.”



The Real Dirt on Farming photo contest

JESSICA SILLS

Farm & Food Care is pleased to once again launch The Real Dirt on Farming photo contest. This nation-wide farm photo contest, with \$4,000 in cash prizes in six categories, is open for entries now until July 1, 2020. Winning photos will be used in the updated fifth edition of The Real Dirt on Farming, set to be unveiled later this year.

The Real Dirt on Farming is Farm & Food Care’s flagship publication. It is a nation-wide initiative designed to help Canadians connect with their food and the farmers who produce it – who they are, what they do and why they do it. Using both stories and credible science, the publication addresses common questions and misconceptions about Canadian food and farming. The fifth edition will be updated to reflect the ever-changing landscape of consumer perception, feature new topics and farmer profiles and include the most up-to-date science, statistics, regulations and practices.

In the last photo contest, Farm & Food Care received more than 1000 entries from across the country. The categories for this year’s contest include:

- 1. Canadian Farm Scenes** – Capture the beauty of Canada’s rural landscape;
- 2. Faces Behind Food & Farming** – From farmers to chefs and everyone in between – all the people who make food & farming possible;
- 3. All about Animals** – Farm animals in the barn or field;
- 4. Farm Innovation** – Technology at work on Canadian farms;
- 5. Crazy about Crops** – Photos of crops being grown in fields, orchards or greenhouses across Canada; and
- 6. Farm to Plate** – Showcasing the fresh, delicious and nutritious food grown and produced right here in Canada.

All entries must be photographs taken in Canada and entrants must own the rights to the photos they submit. Visit www.RealDirtOnFarming.ca to view the current edition, see full contest details and to find out how to enter.

Jessica Sills is communications coordinator, Farm & Food Care Ontario.

COMING EVENTS 2020

- April 1 Ontario Tender Fruit Growers’ District 5 (Haldimand-Norfolk) Annual General Meeting, The Blue Elephant, Simcoe, ON **CANCELLED**
- Apr 1 – 2 Muck Vegetable Growers’ Conference, Bradford, ON **POSTPONED**
- April 2 Ontario Tender Fruit Growers’ District 1 & 2 (Niagara) Annual General Meeting, Hernder Estate Winery, St. Catharines, ON **CANCELLED**
- April 2 3rd Annual Ontario Craft Wine Conference & Trade Show, Beanfield Centre, Toronto, ON **POSTPONED**
- April 8 Grape Growers of Ontario Annual General Meeting, St. Catharines, ON **POSTPONED**
- April 15 Farm & Food Care Annual Conference & Speakers’ Program, Country Heritage Park, Milton, ON
- April 24-26 Cuvée Weekend, Scotiabank Conference Centre, Niagara Falls, ON **CANCELLED**
- April 29 AgScape Annual General Meeting, Conestoga College, Cambridge-Fountain Street Campus, Cambridge, ON
- April 30 Strawberry and Raspberry IPM Training, W. Galen Weston Centre for Food, Durham College, Whitby Campus, Whitby, ON
- May International Strawberry Symposium, Rimini, Italy **POSTPONED to May 1-5, 2021**
- May 7 Strawberry and Raspberry IPM Training, OMAFRA Resource Centre, Simcoe, ON
- May 12 Ontario Garlic Workshop, Guelph, ON
- May 12-14 Canadian Produce Marketing Association Trade Show & Convention, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON
- May 28 Food & Beverage Ontario 2020 Conference, Steam Whistle Brewery, Toronto, ON **POSTPONED to October 29**
- June 10 Ontario Produce Marketing Association Annual General Meeting, venue TBA, ON
- June 14 Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Country Heritage Park, Milton, ON
- June 16-19 United Fresh 2020 Convention and Expo, San Diego, CA
- July 15-17 Federal-Provincial-Territorial Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting, Guelph, ON
- July 12-16 International Cool Climate Wine Symposium, Brock University, St. Catharines, ON
- July 19-23 Potato Association of America, Holiday Inn Downtown, Missoula, MT
- July 22-25 International Fruit Tree Association Summer Tour, Richland, WA
- August 6 Nova Scotia Fruit Growers’ Association Annual Summer Tour
- Aug 10-12 International Blueberry Organization Summit, Trujillo, Peru
- August 12 Ontario Apple Summer Tour, Newcastle, ON
- Aug 13-15 73rd annual Quebec Produce Marketing Association Convention, Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal, QC

RETAIL NAVIGATOR

What a difference a few days makes UPDATE



PETER CHAPMAN

In February 2020, the world was watching China as news spread of the virus that was having a profound impact on the 11 million people in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei Province. Originally it was 'over there' but that changed quickly.

We live in a world where people and goods move from country to country or continent to continent every day. In the west we were surprised to see an entire city and then a province on lock down. Some of us probably questioned the civil rights violations. Then, all of a sudden 'over there' became 'over here'. Incredibly quickly our country was staring down the onslaught of coronavirus. Europe felt the impact faster and the news from Italy and Spain seemed to be the wake-up call for Canada and every other country to take action.

Canadian consumers reacted

By Friday March 13th we experienced panic buying in our grocery stores and stockpiling at home. Consumers were advised to be prepared for 14 days of isolation if they contracted the virus or if they returned from travel abroad to stop the spread. If you were in the stores at that time, it was apparent consumers were preparing for more than 14 days.

It put an incredible strain on the food supply chain system. Usually this is a slow time of year in retail. Consumers travel south. There are no holidays to celebrate and most people are looking ahead to spring. Inventories are based on historical sales and forecasts. They are managed aggressively to be as low as possible. This is done to reduce cost and deliver the best possible freshness.

This strategy does not stand up well in a situation where consumers are buying three to four times the regular volumes. I talked to employees in store and they said Friday March 13th was the busiest day they had ever experienced. They did more sales than any day leading into Christmas or Easter. The system struggled to stand up and when that happens, consumers buy even more.

When they plan to pick up two English cucumbers but there are only six left and the peppers and tomatoes are gone, they buy four English cucumbers.

It is interesting to learn about consumer reaction in different markets. In Italy where the situation was more severe earlier, consumers did not wipe food stores clean of products. Access was limited and although the average household kitchens and fridges are smaller in that market, the North American response to hoard food was not experienced.

Retailers react to consumers

It is a very different time to be working at a retailer. Food is essential and for most employees there is an underlying sense of responsibility to make food available. When the stores are wiped of inventory there is some in distribution centres but the real response has to come from suppliers. Inventory in distribution centres is limited and depleted quickly.

Merchandising and procurement teams prioritized items and contacted suppliers to assess the situation. Retailers do compete against each other and when supply is restricted, they expect and in some cases demand stock. It is a challenge for suppliers because every customer wants everything you have.

As a supplier, you need to take a quick breath, assess the situation and allocate the inventory. You also need to look to the short term and determine what your business is capable of and be realistic. In stressful times, your customers want accurate information. Just because they issue a purchase order does not mean you can supply it. You might want to supply it but you can't, so they need you to be up front and honest.

What is on the horizon?

The honest answer is no one knows. Consumers cannot continue to buy three and four times the normal amounts so demand will level out. It is also likely the new demand will be different than the old demand. There are some reasons for this:

1. Consumers will be more conscious of money they are spending. They will trade down within categories to less expensive items. They will also shift buying to items with longer shelf-life as they will be concerned about buying items that might spoil before they can be consumed.

2. The border will be a challenge. Not because

products will be prevented from crossing, but because capacity in U.S. and Mexico could be reduced. If they are not able to produce the regular amounts due to shortages of workers or other inputs, we will not get as much as we used to. Canada will work closely with these countries however if there is less, we will get less. There is an opportunity for some domestic producers to fill some of these gaps if they have product. Local produce season could be very different. If domestic product is available retailers will be looking for dependable supply.

3. Labour will be a challenge, which will impact capacity to produce. Canadian workers will be stressed and in some cases not able to work. Either illness, caring for someone who might be sick or dealing with childcare challenges will all impact productivity. The temporary foreign worker programs have been suspended at time of writing. This will put a huge strain on industry. In the end food will have to be produced but if industry does not have access to these workers it will be challenging to train and manage local workers.

4. Pricing will fluctuate; it just has to with supply and demand. Retailers will push as hard as possible to keep prices in line but if there is greater demand for some storage crops and the amount is limited, price will go



up. It is possible there will have to be some regulations implemented in the short term. Social media was full of stories about hand sanitizer and toilet paper, which cannot spread across many commodities. We might even see limits imposed to ensure everyone has a share.

5. Retailers will be stressed and programs that were planned will not be implemented. It is true working in food during a crisis is job security but retailers will also experience the same labour challenges I outlined above for your business.

6. Consumers will be eating at home. All of the statistics about millennials eating out will change in the short term. Retail sales will increase and food service sales will decrease. The duration will depend on how long public health experts recommend people stay home. If you have any questions about relationships with your customers during a crisis please give me a call at (902) 489-2900 or send me an email at peter@skufood.com.

WHAT'S IN STORE?

Empty shelves

Stores across North America experienced a flood of consumers like they had never seen before. Online shopping increased exponentially as consumers stayed close to home. It started with toilet paper and hand sanitizer then spread to the rest of the store. Consumers take our supply of food for granted some times and this was a wake-up call that consistent food supplies are not guaranteed.

Peter Chapman is a retail consultant, professional speaker and the author of A la Cart-A suppliers' guide to retailer's priorities. Peter is based in Halifax N.S. where he is the principal at GPS Business Solutions and a partner in SKUfood.com, an on line resource for food producers. Peter works with producers and processors to help them navigate through the retail environment with the ultimate goal to get more of their items in the shopping cart.

High-Density Orchards Require Intensive Vole Management with 

COMMERCIAL PRODUCT

- **Labeled for two (2) treatments! Additional protection for High-Density production**
- **Rozol paraffinized pellets are ideal for wet conditions**
- **Perfect for use during snow melt-offs**



Voles gnaw on tree trunks and roots (girdling) causing disruption of the tree's flow of nutrients and water.

PROTECT VALUABLE ROOTSTOCK AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS



Learn More

Ground Force (PCP #20239) features the same active ingredient as Rozol Vole Bait, trusted for decades in the U.S.



Meadow vole.

Distributed in Canada by:

905.563.8261

www.bartlett.ca



Manufactured by:

LIPHA TECH

888-331-7900 • www.liphatech.ca

Outstanding Control



EURO TOUR

Snapshots of indoor growing on the continent



The rafts are designed so that only the roots touch the water, helping to prevent bacterial growth and disease.



The Dry Hydroponics demo fields are used for testing different varieties and conducting research to continue optimizing the innovative system



Bato's new pot and tray system for indoor soft fruit production reduces risk of disease and enables air pruning.

ELISE JOHNSON

Indoor growing is taking off at an incredible rate in North America, with Ontario among the largest greenhouse clusters in the world. Whether it's berries, lettuce, tomatoes or peppers, growers are bringing produce into the greenhouse where they can use technology and innovation to streamline production, increase density, improve quality and more.

"Growers are making major investments in this business and they are committed to staying ahead of the curve," says Shawn

Mallen, manager of hydroponics and manufacturing at A.M.A. Horticulture Inc. "Our customers want solutions that will optimize product, open new niche markets and ensure value for money. Many of those solutions are coming from Europe, particularly the Netherlands, so it's important for us to pay attention to what's going on there."

In early 2020, Mallen embarked on a 10-day continental road trip, stopping to see growers, suppliers and trade shows to learn what's new and what will be coming to indoor growers in North America.

Across the (lettuce) pond

The trip kicked off in England, where Mallen met Maurice van der Knaap, inventor of the Dry Hydroponics pond system. Together, they visited a commercial lettuce grower who recently expanded production to 21,000 square meters using the Dry Hydroponics system, which supports clean, reliable leafy green cultivation year-round. The system's rafts are uniquely designed so that the plant itself never touches the water – hence "dry" hydroponics. All greens are

retail-ready, and can be cut, washed and bagged right in the greenhouse.

Next, the duo flew to the Netherlands to visit the Dry Hydroponics demo field to see different varieties and research trials. A.M.A. Horticulture has been working with Dry Hydroponics for nearly a decade.

"After testing and customer collaboration, we've started making the rafts out of solid polypropylene, which combines lightness and insulation with durability," explains van der Knaap, who invented the system in 2009. "Now, growers can wash the rafts on any standard crate washing line, which makes this system that much more convenient."

market.

"We introduced a new tray for young plant production of soft fruit, mainly raspberries," says Raymond van Mierlo, account manager at Bato. "The system is designed to increase the air buffer below the bottom of the pot. With this extra height, the risk of diseases caused by splashing water is reduced. More air pruning helps to ensure consistency in root growth and enables a fixed planting distance."

All about CO2

Next, Mallen visited several leading horticultural suppliers across the Netherlands, including Van Krimpen, BVB Substrates, C&E, Bato, and others.

In the little town of Genderen, he had a chance to tour Oerlemans Plastics manufacturing facility and learn how they create CO2 tubing, horticultural film and other horticultural supplies.

Plastic particles are melted down into liquid form, blown into a film and formed into products such as CO2 tubing or control and ground cover sheets.

CO2 tubing plays a vital role in the greenhouse, especially for production of peppers, tomatoes or even cucumbers. The tubes disperse the carbon dioxide needed to support plant growth and photosynthesis, and they often run directly under the plants.

At the end of the twine

The final stop of the whirlwind tour was a visit to Lankhorst Yarns manufacturing facility in Portugal. There Mallen was met by senior manager, Joris Van Calcar.

AI, bugs and blackberries

Leaving leafy greens behind, Mallen attended the International Soft Fruit Conference in 's-Hertogenbosch.

"The research at the symposium has become increasingly targeted to help growers solve specific problems," says Mallen. "This year, one stand-out topic was artificial intelligence (AI) and pest control. Tech companies are using AI to predict the spread of pests and disease, and then using robotics for targeted scouting in areas where a problem has been identified."

Walking the trade show floor, Mallen also saw interest in an emerging blackberry market.

"The blackberry market in North America is fairly small, but we might see that start to change," he says. "Here in the Netherlands, they're not only growing blackberries, they're growing them indoors and with new innovations."

Bato Plastics, for example, is among the companies offering new solutions for the soft fruit

Solstice
Earlier Nirvana type. A particularly sweet and tender variety. Strong emergence and strong tip fill. Stands out for its quality, just like Nirvana.

Flagler
Superior field vigour and exceptional eating quality. Large ears with clean and bright kernels with a remarkable sweet fruity taste.

Customer Service
order@norseco.com
514 332-2275 | 800 561-9693
450 682-4959 | 800 567-4594

Our Team of Experts
Warren Peacock
Ontario
warren.peacock@norseco.com
519 426-1131 | 519 426-6156
Gilliane Bisson
South Shore of Montreal and Manitoba
gilliane.bisson@norseco.com
450 781-6049

Proud of our roots since 1928

norseco.com

Continued on next page

EURO TOUR

Snapshots of indoor growing on the continent



Extrusion through clear plastic film to form CO2 tubing for commercial greenhouses.



Fibriated twine from Lankhorst helps to improve softness.



Shawn Mallen, A.M.A.'s manager of hydroponics and manufacturing, at Lankhorst Yarns facility in Portugal.

Lankhorst produces horticultural twine using an extrusion process similar to Oerlemans'. In their case, an increasing number of products are made with industrially compostable PLA – maize starch plant-based raw material. After extrusion, the material is blown into sheets and cut into thin strands. The strands are

fibriated to improve softness and pliability, helping to prevent peppers and other produce crops from getting bruised or scratched.

Compostable horticultural twine continues to be a desirable alternative for indoor vegetable growers. "In a few years, plastic horticultural yarn/twines will be a thing of

the past, and in Canada we continue to see a movement towards more sustainable alternatives," says Van Calcar. "We will be working with A.M.A. Horticulture to conduct a large-scale test with pre-wound compostable twine in coming months."

Shawn Mallen's Travel Log

Total Mileage: 20,000 KM
 Modes of Transit: Car, airplane, train, bus, taxi, walking
 Biggest Takeaway: Even though we have advanced so much, there is so much more innovation to come, especially in the areas of AI, production efficiency and sustainability.

Tip for North American growers: Get ready for blackberries and think outside the box in terms of what can be grown indoors.

Elise Johnson is manager, communications and marketing, A.M.A. Horticulture.



Green Acre Services

LOOKING TO LOCK IN YOUR 2020 PLASTIC INSTALL

Green Acre Services is booking timeslots now

Call: (226) 626-9929

Email: info@greenacreservice.com

www.greenacreservices.ca

CANADIAN PRODUCE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

365 days to the best booth ever

KAREN DAVIDSON

More than 50 per cent of trade show communication is non-verbal, in a chaotic and distracting environment. That insight inspires the planning for DelFrescoPure, a Leamington, Ontario greenhouse grower exhibiting for the fourth time at the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) Convention and Trade Show May 12-14 in Toronto.

To cut through that cacophony, the booth will be offering soft serve ice cream with locally-grown YES!Berries strawberries. It's the perfect sensory-packed moment for the CEO to say: Did you know that DelFrescoPure grows 17 acres of strawberries that are now available mid-October through to August 1.

"We have to be relevant," says Jamie D'Alimonte, CEO, DelFrescoPure. "It's important to be at this local show. We have to show our retail partners our new offering from merchandising to new packaging concepts."

A key feature at the 2020

show will be a 24-ounce clamshell for strawberries. DelFrescoPure's management team is looking for feedback on biodegradable packaging before it's adopted in house.

"In Ontario, we know all the major players," says Carl Mastronardi, president, DelFrescoPure, who has been growing marketing greenhouse tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers since 2006. He will be reminding customers that greenhouse vegetables, as well as new specialty Euro beans, are available March through July as well as a new organic line of produce peppers. "It's important to refresh our contacts and get feedback."

This particular trade show is valuable in deepening relationships with retailers who bring new personnel such as the heads of procurement, quality assurance staff and receiving personnel. DelFrescoPure has been growing greenhouse strawberries for four years now, but the learning curve has been steep for all players along the chain. A trade show is a venue to have more in-depth conversations about how to

receive a greenhouse berry compared to a field berry.

DelFrescoPure created a new SKU for retailers, explains D'Alimonte, and demonstrated how greenhouse berries are unloaded at higher temperatures of 48°F to 52°F than a field berry that's been picked green and is arriving at 33°F from across the border. The warmer the berry, the more flavour.

"We've been shipping greenhouse-grown strawberries since October 2016, and we haven't had one rejection," says D'Alimonte. Communicating these operating procedures is key to the success of the product at retail. It's one thing to sell the product, but another to handle it correctly through the cold chain.

Timelines for booth planning

The value of meeting behind-the-scenes personalities can't be underestimated because staffing changes all the time. That's why Fiona McLean, marketing manager, DelFrescoPure, booked her 20 foot by 30 foot booth a year in advance. Then she informs her exhibit vendor of not only the footprint but what other exhibitors will be in the surrounding environment.

About six months prior to the show, decisions are made as to what new or refreshed creative will be needed for that particular show to match the featured produce and key messaging. In Canada, both English and French captions are needed.

About three months before the show, the marketing and sales teams meet to review contacts on the client list and to invite them to the booth. Sell sheets are created for the various specialty products.

The day of event is about executing the homework planning with all elements of the booth.

The company holds a post-mortem two days after the event to compare notes and to prioritize phone calls to current clients and prospects. With any luck, those clients will remember the lick of berry-laced ice cream the week before.



L-R: Ray Mastronardi, VP sales, Jamie D'Alimonte, CEO and Carl Mastronardi, president, DelFrescoPure will be showcasing their Ontario greenhouse-grown strawberries at the CPMA convention and trade show, May 12-14 in Toronto. Coincidentally, this is the fourth year of greenhouse production and exhibiting at the trade show.



DelFresco Pure featured a Living Lettuce booth at the CPMA trade show in 2019 in Montreal.

BIPLANTOL[®]
Your advantage - use and effect



- ➔ Helps to reinforce the plants ability to **cope with stress situations and fungal diseases**
- ➔ Stimulates the plant's natural ability for regeneration
- ➔ Promotes a healthy symbiosis between soil organisms and roots
- ➔ Supports root growth and thus nutrient uptake
- ➔ Increases **flower formation and the ability to flower**
- ➔ Stimulate mycorrhizal fungi and microorganism
- ➔ Reduces the default rate, more marketable plants
- ➔ Support a **better quality of fruit vegetable and other crops**
- ➔ Promotes **crop stability**

NOW available on request:

* A systemic remedy that helps to **PREVENT CHERRIES FROM SPLINING**

* Our compost blend for **NEW PLANTINGS** and **TOP DRESSING** of weak blocks.

www.theorchardrevitalizers.com

Editor's note:

Due to the COVID-19 virus crisis, the Canadian Produce Marketing Association has cancelled its conference and trade show for May 12-14, 2020 in Toronto. This abbreviated editorial package with a CPMA focus is, nonetheless, relevant for the future.

CANADIAN PRODUCE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

Forward-looking packaging introduced by Vineland Growers' Cooperative



Steve Roberts, Mike Ecker, Matt Ecker, Vineland Growers' Cooperative



Back to the future pulp paper packaging with Canadian-sourced materials.



KAREN DAVIDSON

Recyclable and sustainable. Both bioplastic and paper packaging is new from Vineland Growers' Cooperative for the 2020 tender fruit season.

"We wanted to create a new look that emphasizes local and clearly identifies us as Ontario," says Mike Ecker, president, Vineland Growers' Cooperative, which markets 70 per cent of the tender fruit in the Niagara peninsula. "Consumers are driving this trend and it's a good opportunity for us to deliver on that trend to retailers."

The raw materials for the bioplastic packaging are sourced from several Canadian suppliers. It's 100 per cent recyclable.

"Paper is our best resource in Canada," says Ecker. "We are just using paper packaging commercially this year with a test on pulp fibre. Paper


packaging will be used with all crops this year: peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots, grapes, pears and apples. We will also be doing a trial with strawberries."

"This is a real chance to identify a unique local product," says Ecker.

2019 was the latest season on record, but 2020 is looking more like a normal season with regards to weather. There's no winter damage.

Vineland Growers' Cooperative plans to use this packaging for strawberries, raspberries and blueberries in 2021. Retailers are reporting that the biggest growth in the fruit category is berries. A big demand is for in-season, Ontario-grown berries that would replace imports.

As the COVID-19 virus pandemic continues to affect the produce industry, the local fruit industry will play an even bigger role in the months to come.



visit us at CPMA booth 620
BEST WISHES FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONVENTION

GRAPES
PEACHES
NECTARINES
APPLES
PEARS
PLUMS
APRICOTS
STRAWBERRIES

see our
new
sustainable
packaging

Matthew Ecker
905-562-4133 ext. 127
matthew.ecker@vinelandgrowers.com

www.vinelandgrowers.com

Steve Roberts
905-562-4133 ext. 120
sroberts@vinelandgrowers.com

visit www.thegrower.org for breaking news

CANADIAN PRODUCE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

The transparent path to more sustainable packaging is not straightforward

KAREN DAVIDSON

Reduce, innovate, recycle is the new mantra for earning public trust in produce packaging. But putting that into practice is tough in Canada where infrastructure is lacking.

“There are 2,400 landfills across Canada but only 350 composting facilities,” says Ron Lemaire, president, Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA). “Look at the systems. They are all different. For example, there is no harmonization between Toronto and London, Ontario.”

As much as growers and packaging companies are prepared to change, there may be no system to dispose of sustainable packaging at the end of its life cycle. And therein lies the conundrum for the food chain. All players are struggling with the trade-offs between using plastic containers for ensuring food safety, extending shelf life and reducing food waste, while still respecting the environment.

“Virgin plastic is too cheap,” Lemaire told the annual general meeting of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association on February 18. “This low-cost option is a barrier to encouraging more recycled content in our packages, as Canadians won’t pay more for their food, even though they want industry to change to more sustainable material inputs that cost more.”

Lemaire added “Moving forward, we need to address the life cycles of packaging to enable the development of a circular economy to drive demand and volumes for post-consumer recycled (PCR) content. To achieve this, we need governments to effectively align and harmonize systems across Canada and understand how stewardship dollars are

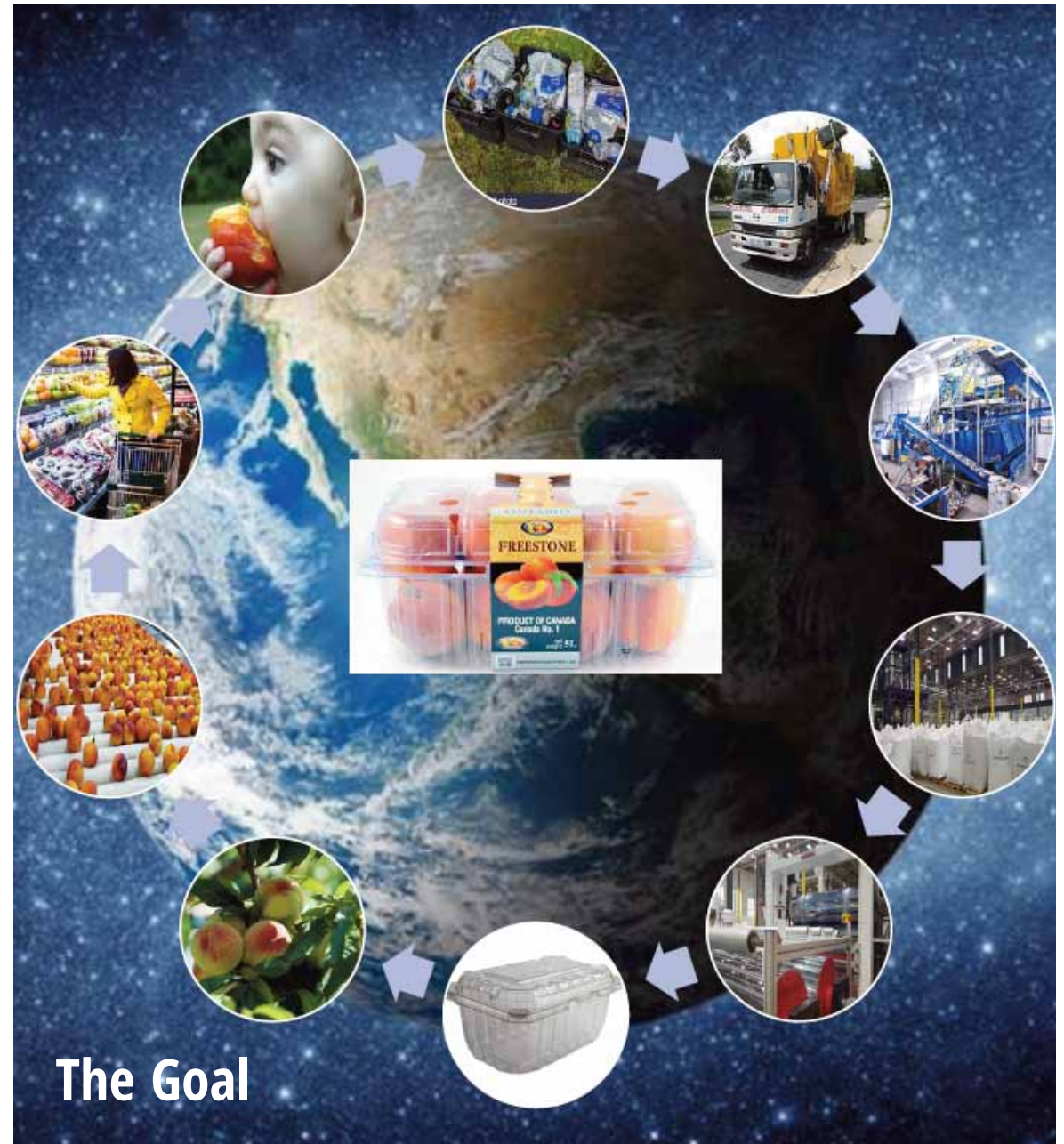
being spent to support the development of more PCR, reducing waste.”

Since May 2019, CPMA has been active with its Plastics Packaging Working Group, inviting Environment and Climate Change Canada and other stakeholders to its meetings. One of its tasks is to bring forward global research and models that could be replicated in Canada. Lemaire points out the British example of Tesco, the third largest retailer in the world as measured by gross revenues.

Tesco has initiated a red, amber and green light scoring system for polyethylene terephthalate (PET) packaging. The system evaluates the amount of carbon footprint for different types of packaging. Realizing that total elimination of PET packaging may be a distance down the road, the company is trying to reduce the impact as soon as possible. And by communicating company efforts, Tesco is asking for the patience of consumers.

As Lemaire explains, transitional packaging can be used to tell the story. Just because a package is compostable, doesn’t mean that the end of life will result in composting. Depending on jurisdiction, the compostable package could be buried below six inches of earth in a landfill, he says, and it just sits there. It needs the right system and aerobic activity to decompose.

CPMA’s roadmap is taking shape. Under a broad heading of guidelines, standards and best practices, Lemaire says the produce industry wants to address any ambiguity by ensuring common definitions for key terms such as single-use plastics, recyclable, and so on. Of importance is that recycling standards are harmonized across key markets and jurisdictions. CPMA wants to work with



The Goal

packaging industry stakeholders to develop guidelines to advance state-of-the-art sustainable packaging that can be recycled.

As these efforts are undertaken, measurement of progress must be collected and shared about baseline data on plastics packaging in Canada. For this exercise, best practices need to be developed. The question is how to analyze packaging options for various produce sector considerations including costs and lifecycle impacts.

For the produce sector to mobilize, collaboration will be needed with the recycling and waste management community. What’s needed are key innovations and pilot projects that can be shared as models that work. Alongside these

efforts are outreach to provincial and federal stakeholders to harmonize recycling standards and other best practices. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will require companies that manufacture plastic products or sell items with plastic packaging to be responsible for their collection and recycling.

The worry in all of these changes is that innovation will be stifled. With greenhouse vegetables, for example, packaging is important for differentiation. But will deals be struck between the manufacturer and the producer for a proprietary packaging solution? Some say that packaging should not become a competitive advantage.

Another grower concern is that retailers have private label

packaging. Already, growers must manage different food safety auditing schemes by different retailers. They don’t want additional burdens of adhering to specific packaging.

To reduce costs, some Canadian companies are buying packaging offshore, however the benefits are short-lived if the packaging is coming from a country with no audits in place to confirm the percentage of PET in the packaging.

These thorny issues will be debated and solved in due course. CPMA plans to release more details at its Convention and Trade Show on May 13 and 14 in Toronto.

For updates, go here: cpma.info/Plastics



NNZ INC. EASTERN CANADA

3-136 Main Street, West Norwich, Ontario
Email: adejonge@nnz.ca

**FOR YOUR PACKAGING SUPPLIES CALL US AT 1-519-863-5782.
AGRICULTURE / INDUSTRIAL PACKAGING**

Shopping Bags, Biodegradable • Plastic pallet/wrap • Net wrap
Mesh Bags for Corn / Onions / Firewood
Cardboard boxes Waxed • Paper Bags for Potatoes
Wood Bushels and Baskets
Plastic Trays: Clamshells / Punnett Trays
Fibre Trays: 1pt / 1/2 pt

**VISIT US
AT CPMA
BOOTH
333**

NNZ INC. WESTERN CANADA

Unit 107 - 2076 192 Street, Surrey, British Columbia
Email: Bcolquhoun@nnz.ca ph: 778.819.1139

LOCAL HORTICULTURE

A self-contained growing container is right-sized for the times

KAREN DAVIDSON

With the Canadian-U.S. border closed to only essential business as of March 21, the concept of a shipping container geared with all the necessities for growing greens is timely. The Ottawa-based company The Growcer has been in business to provide equipment that allows year-round food production in a controlled, indoor environment.

“These are portable, prefabricated structures that we’ve manufactured into an indoor, hydroponic, vertical farm,” explains Nick Halverson, business development manager. “We have 20 farm sites up and running across North America. Our client base includes northern communities, universities, farm business, co-op grocery stores, and social enterprises.”

These insulated portable structures are 40 feet by 10 feet by 10 feet, and contain hydroponic growing systems to grow more than 140-plus varieties of produce commercially,

sustainably, and profitably in any climate. A typical project costs \$187,000 plus shipping, installation, and training, with a payback period of five years. The Growcer has been setting up their modules across Canada and Alaska; from remote communities and Co-op stores, to traditional soil farms and university campuses.

The turnkey operation provides farmers with everything they need from seed to harvest. That includes support finding sales channels, business planning, ensuring their inventory needs are met, and ongoing support for troubleshooting. Seed to harvest takes on average six weeks.

“This is plug-and-play technology,” says Halverson. “The nature of these modules makes them easy to install and easy to scale up. Our FarmPlex involves six to 10 of these modules connected together, with each one dedicated to a different crop. Each container takes roughly 15 hours of management per week - often less.”

Existing customers are



always looking to scale up their current farms, he says.

The co-founders Corey Ellis and Alida Burke have ambitious plans to grow the agricultural market in 2020. The year-round production capabilities of these containers translate to stable cash flows. Growcer team members help suggest the best cultivars for your region and local market, and can adapt easily to consumer demand by changing planting and harvesting schedules. For growers who sell produce at farmers’ markets, the Growcer concept could help extend the season.

The Growcer staff encourage interested parties to visit the website: www.thegrowcer.ca.



It's more than just a box.


It's Food Safe.
It's Reliable.
It's Recyclable.
It's a Billboard.



For these reasons and more, the corrugated box is your **safe** bet.



Canadian Corrugated and Containerboard Association
Association canadienne du cartonnage ondulé et du carton-caisse

Proud supporter of the Paper & Paperboard Packaging Environmental Council (PPEC)  www.ppec-paper.com



ONvegetables

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Can sterile insect releases control onion maggot?

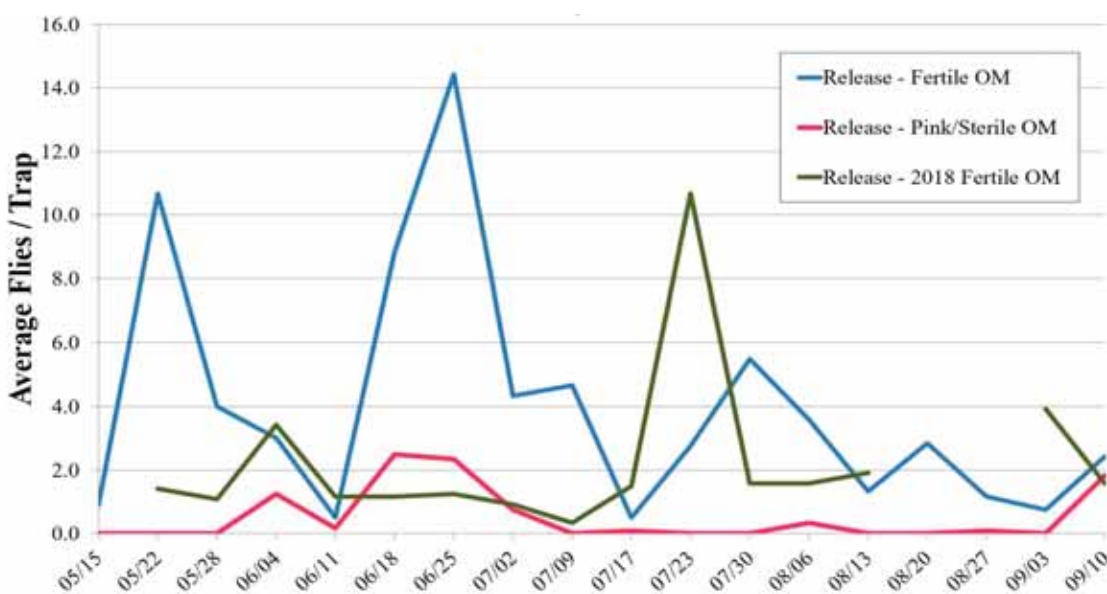


Figure 1. Average onion maggot (OM) flies per sticky trap per week at both field sites. Fertile fly counts for 2019 showed three main peaks (blue). Sterile flies were found in relatively low numbers at the release field (pink). Fertile fly counts from an adjacent field from 2018 are shown in green.



Figure 2. The 2019 field site (A) was seeded approximately 300 m from the 2018 field where sterile flies were released during the 2018 field season (B).

TRAVIS CRANMER

The onion maggot (*Delia antiqua*) is the larval stage of the onion maggot fly which can cause severe damage to every stage of onion development. Its first generation targets seedlings or newly-transplanted onions, its second generation targets the plant before bulbing and the third generation creates wounds that compromise storage quality. In addition to consuming onions, it has also been known to feed on other Alliums including garlic, leeks, shallots and chives.

Currently, onion maggot management relies heavily on seed treatments (such as Supresto 75 WS), or on group 1B organophosphates, specifically chlorpyrifos insecticides. The future use of chlorpyrifos and neonicotinoids is uncertain and other registered onion maggot insecticides have not provided the same level of control. Without these insecticides, onion maggot populations may increase dramatically. One maggot can kill up to 20 plants early in the season and without control, *D. antiqua* can reduce plant stands by more than 50 per cent if crops are not protected.

Floating row covers are not an option for onion production, and hooped exclusion nets are costly, time consuming and ultimately impractical for large-scale production. In Quebec, Sterile Insect Technology (SIT) has proven to eliminate the application of soil and foliar chlorpyrifos insecticides in most fields while maintaining onion yields comparable to pesticide-based programs. Sterile male onion maggot flies are released into the field on a weekly basis and as a result, the eggs that pre-existing female flies will lay will not be fertile. As a result, the population of flies decreases over time. Work in Quebec has shown that the release rates of sterile flies could be decreased by up to 90 per cent within five years of repeated releases.

Over the past two years, sterile flies have been released as part of an AAFC project in

collaboration with Phytodata Inc. and OMAFRA. In the first year, the trial was set up in two fields of onion sets approximately 4.3 km apart which made it easier to compare the two fields. Onion maggot fly is a community pest, meaning that even if you manage the insect well and your neighbour chooses not to, their flies will easily find your field. For this project, no other major onion fields were within a 20km radius. Sticky cards were used weekly to monitor natural onion maggot populations as well as the displacement of sterile flies throughout the growing season. Sterile flies were differentiated on sticky cards by their colour as these flies were dyed pink before they were released.

In 2018, sticky card counts at the control field had a higher fertile fly pressure than the release field from June 13th until harvest. An average of 2.2 flies/trap/week were counted per trap in the release field compared to 5.4 flies/trap/week in the control showing a 50 per cent reduction in fertile flies at the end of the season. In 2019, flies were only released at a single field site as there was not a control field that was planted nearby. The 2019 field site was directly adjacent to the 2018 field site, allowing for overwintered flies to easily find a food source and get established. An average of 3.8 flies/trap/week were counted during the 2019 field season at the release field, and without a control field it is difficult to make comparisons. However, despite the 2019 field being directly adjacent to the 2018 field, the number of flies did not increase substantially.

This work will be continued for the 2020 field season and hopefully we will be able to draw more conclusive results as more data are collected. A full report of this trial will be posted on ONvegetables.com shortly and if you are interested in applying this management strategy on your farm, please contact myself or Anne-Marie Fortier at afortier@phytodata.ca.

Travis Cranmer is an Ontario vegetable crop specialist.

TIMOREX

GOLD






NEW GENERATION FUNGICIDE

- Effective Group 46 fungicide
- Helps manage resistance and protects fruit and vegetable crops
- New approved uses including HOPS for Powdery Mildew & Botrytis
- New reduced rates as low as 1 – 2 litres / hectare
- Exceptional protection, flexible and safe!

Part of the BioPriority crop health program

Timorex Gold is a registered trademark of Stockton Group.



www.belchimcanada.com

ONTARIO VEGETABLE NEWS

Seed potatoes: full of growth potential

Table 1. Certified Seed Potato Classes in Canada

Class	Field Generations	Total Viruses (%)	Total blackleg and wilts (%)
Nuclear	Grown in controlled environment	0	0
Pre Elite (PE)	1	0	0
Elite I (EI)	2	0	0.1
Elite II (E2)	3	0.1	0.2
Elite III (E3)	4	0.2	0.3
Elite IV (E4)	5	0.3	0.5
Foundation (F)	6	0.5	1
Certified (C)	7	2	2

DENNIS VAN DYK

Successful potato growers know and appreciate the value of good quality seed. Good seed is important for vigorous growth and uniform emergence which leads to a consistent stand. In contrast, starting off with poor quality seed ensures that crop will never reach its yield potential, no matter how much fertilizer is top-dressed or irrigation and fungicide applied.

To ensure Canadian potato growers are receiving quality seed, Canada has a federally regulated seed program run through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). This program ensures that a certified seed lot is not grown for more than seven years in the field. In each successive field season, seed becomes a sink for viruses and diseases that the plants become exposed to, which allows these pathogens to build up in subsequent generations. To prevent this build-up over time, seed lots have set guidelines on tolerances for virus, disease, and varietal purity (Table 1). Varieties begin as nuclear stock which exist as clean cuttings in a sterile environment. From the time the seed lot is first grown in the field, the clock is started. Potato seed loses at least one class level every year it is grown.

A research study in 2009 looked at the different *Streptomyces* species causing common scab in North America. The study found that while most potato-producing states/provinces had one to three common strains, Ontario had five strains with many present in the same field. A recent survey in 2018-2019 by Eugenia Banks, an Ontario potato specialist, confirmed four common species found in

Ontario. One potential reason for these results is that Ontario has a small potato seed industry and imports most of its seed from many different provinces and states across North America. Imported seed often carries imported pathogens and new strains. This leaves the province with a need for home-grown seed and an industry with great growth potential.

One of the provincial assets that has been available to seed growers is the University of Guelph SPUD unit which is uniquely positioned to continue supplying the nuclear stock for the flush-through system. Housed near New Liskeard, Ontario, the SPUD unit is geographically removed from many of the common insects and diseases faced in the southern part of the province. Due to the jet stream, the location also has a very low pressure of aphids, which is the key vector for potato viruses. Sterile plant cuttings are maintained and plantlets are multiplied to produce nuclear stock material in the form of minitubers (Figure 1). Early generation seed growers will then multiply these minitubers to sell to growers or other seed producers. There is also a growing recognition of the benefits of earlier generation seed and the demand is opening up opportunities for growers to enter the seed growing market. Some potato growers have started to purchase minitubers and multiply them on their own in order to have full control over their seed supply.

If you are serious about getting into or expanding your business to include seed production, it is important to contact CFIA to get the ball rolling. There are two important things to consider; 1) CFIA has



Figure 1. Potato plantlets in sterile environment at the SPUD unit. The varieties from L to R are Yukon Gold, Superior, Shepody, Yukon Gem and Onaway. Plantlets sometimes exhibit similar traits as in the field. Notice the earlier maturing Superior.

to supervise the initial storage and equipment disinfestation before you receive seed for this year and 2) any fields growing certified seed can't have grown potatoes in the last two years.

In this quickly changing

world of pandemics, border closures, trade disputes, rail shutdowns and trucking challenges, a local supply of seed potatoes is becoming all the more important. Developing and strengthening the seed

industry will become a critical part of maintaining our resilience and strengthening our industry as a whole.

Dennis Van Dyk is a vegetable crop specialist for OMAFRA.

GINTEC

Irrigation Solutions



GINTEC

Growers
HELPING
Growers

Phone: 877-443-4743

Email: gintec@gintec-shade.com

ADVOCACY

Horticulture lobbies in Ottawa

KAREN DAVIDSON

Horticulture in Canada matters. Whether it's about the sector's contributions to the nation's economy or to the health of Canadians, filling half of the dinner plate with fruit and vegetables is more important than ever.

This year's February 25 Farm to Plate lobbying event was organized by the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) and the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC). Their outreach was to as many influencers as possible about how fruit and vegetables move from the farm to the plate. And while this year's messages were consistent with what was delivered during the federal election, the target audience has changed immensely. Of 338 Members of Parliament, 91 are newly elected. That's 27 per cent.

As Ron Lemaire, CPMA president explained, "No

matter what the key issues are, access to labour always comes up. We've been doing these lobby events since 2010. It's a marathon, not a sprint."

This year's event holds promise in that the produce chain is meeting with a minority government.

"If we can convince an MP to introduce a private member's bill on moving forward with a PACA-like trust, that would be momentum," said Lemaire.

Rebecca Lee, executive director, Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) shared her perspective of the day: "We had a warm reception from all parties. The issue of rural bandwidth came up and we emphasized that farmers need this service. Regarding climate change, we would like to see support for infrastructure to adapt and mitigate damages. That could be irrigation equipment or hail netting."

More than 40 meetings were held with MPs including John Barlow, the Conservative



L-R: Rebecca Lee, executive director CHC; Brian Gilroy, president, CHC; Neil Ellis, MP Bay of Quinte; Oleen Smethurst, chair, CPMA; Ron Lemaire, president, CPMA.

shadow minister for agriculture and agri-food; Irek Kusmierczyk, parliamentary secretary for Employment and Workforce Development; Neil Ellis, parliamentary secretary for Agriculture and Agri-Food, staff in the minister of health's office, senior staff at the Pest Management Regulatory Agency and Canadian Food Inspection Agency.



L-R: Ken Forth, Dr. Justine Taylor, Irek Kusmierczyk, MP, Windsor-Tecumseh.



L-R: Caleigh Hallink-Irwin, CHC; Dr. Justine Taylor, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers; MP Brad Vis, MP Mission-Matsqui-Fraser Canyon; Jason Smith, CHC; Charles Stevens, OFVGA.

Canadian produce leaders addressed key issues including the need for financial protection for farmers and produce sellers, crop protection measures based on sound science, and support of the agricultural sector's sustainability initiatives such as climate adaptation practices, mitigation of plastic use and food loss and waste challenges.

One of the more memorable questions from MPs focussed on how horticulture is bringing new talent into the produce chain. That stood out for Steve Bamford, CEO Fresh Advancements. This was his third time participating in the

lobby effort. "It's very important to be educating MPs about real-world issues and how they affect business," said Bamford. "Sustainability, for example, is an important issue but what does that mean. There is no silver bullet without collaboration nationally and indeed internationally."

With an estimated impact of \$17.4 billion in real GDP, and supporting 249,000 jobs and \$9.8 billion in salaries and wages in 2017 alone, the produce industry and its supply chain are major contributors to Canada's economy.



A NEW GENERATION fungicide and bactericide

Double Nickel®

BIOFUNGICIDE

- Works on both foliar & soil-borne diseases
- Multiple modes of action
- Low use rates with no MRLs & offers fast worker reentry



ON & Maritimes 800-265-5444
 Quebec 800-361-9369
 Prairies 800-561-5444
 BC 604-864-2866



www.uap.ca

Always read and follow label directions.
 Double Nickel is manufactured by Certis USA, LLC and distributed in Canada by UAP Canada Inc.

MARKETPLACE WORKS

advertising@thegrower.org
866-898-8488 x 221

CONTAINERS



CROWN STORAGE
CORP. 2003

P: 519-373-9679 F: 519-599-2609
Email: 27west@bmts.com

We manufacture standard fir plywood bins and half bins.
Right now we have some inventory of both sizes.
We also sell a complete line of parts.
All bins are stenciled according to purchasers wishes.
Please don't hesitate to call us!!!

Feenstra Flowers

We are a greenhouse located in Dunnville, ON and we have some black crates available for purchasing. They are 15.25" wide x 23.5" long x 9.5" high. For large volume orders, 1500 crates or more they are \$1.00/crate. For orders under 1500 they are \$2.50/crate. Please contact Rachel at 905-774-7427 if interested.



AUCTION UPDATE



ALL AUCTIONS POSTPONED

To our dedicated Auction Patrons,
We have been carefully monitoring the situation and following guidance from the Federal and Provincial guidelines, Public Health Organization and other health authorities. After the announcement this morning that Ontario is under a State of Emergency and public events of more than 50 people have been banned in order to curb the spread of COVID-19, we have made the extremely difficult decision to postpone our upcoming auctions.

This has been a difficult few weeks for people all around the world, but we want you to know, our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees.

We will keep you posted with further details and dates in regards to the upcoming auctions. With information and guidelines changing daily we are unsure when we will be allowed to be back up and running but as soon we know, you'll know.

At this time our retail location remains open, but we ask that you take every precaution when visiting us and ask that if you are not feeling well you please stay home.

Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates. We are extremely sorry for this inconvenience and appreciate your understanding at this time.

Please take care of yourselves, your families, and each other during these uncertain times.

Tom, Ted, and Stan Hamulecki
and all the Staff at Sunrise Equipment Auctions.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US

TOM HAMULECKI 519-421-6957
JARED PETTMAN 519-281-1447
MIKE HAMULECKI 519-535-0202
AUCTION OFFICE 519-424-1562
E-MAIL sunriseauctions@outlook.com



593249 Oxford Rd 13, RR #3, Norwich, ON N0J 1P0
Tel. (519) 424-9993
Fax. (519) 424-2524
Email: sunriseeq@execulink.com

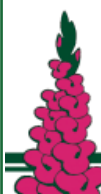
BULBS

GLADIOLUS BULBS

Wide variety selection for retail sales and commercial cut flower production.

Order by phone, fax, email or online at www.lmbolle.com

813083 Base Line Norwich, ON
T: 519-468-2090 F: 519-468-2099
E: lbolle@execulink.com



L.M. Bolle & Sons



ORCHARD AND VINEYARD SUPPLIES

Farm | Orchard | Vineyard | Berry Trellising

Princeton Wood Preservers

Kiln Dried Pressure Treated
Round Wood Posts and Rails



www.pwppost.com

Preferred Supplier for BC Ministries & Parks Canada.
Guaranteed Life Expectancy of 25 years if not damaged or altered before or after installation.
Contact Greg Ardiel 705-443-7613

TREEFORM PRODUCTS

Shaping your trees



35 years strong | treeform86@bell.net | www.treeformproducts.com

PLUG TRAYS



Make the smart choice.
Reusable EPS trays



bpgrower.com
BEAVER PLASTICS

1-888-453-5961 growerinfo@beaverplastics.com

MARKETPLACE WORKS

advertising@thegrower.org
866-898-8488 x 221

EQUIPMENT

SALE - 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

SINCE 1980 DON HAS SOLD OVER 600 SPRAYERS IN 6 PROVINCES

\$1,000 OFF ANY SPRAYER

(OFFER ENDS APRIL 30)



Turbo-Mist 400 gal, 30" fan, nice clean condition	\$13,500
Turbo-Mist 500 diaphragm, short turn, hitch, tower	\$14,900
Turbo-Mist 500 centrifugal pump, hydraulic, low hours	\$14,500
Turbo-Mist 500 centrifugal, tall spray tower	\$15,900
Turbo-Mist 600 centrifugal, electric controls	\$13,500
Turbo-Mist 600 centrifugal, hydraulic, tall towers	\$14,500
Perfect KG-220 HD flail mower, almost new (\$12,575)	\$8,800
APPLE BIN CARRIER 5-bin for wood or plastic	\$3,450
Vicon 3-ph fertilizer spreader, (holds 500 kg), like new	\$1,400

PERFECT H.D. FLAIL MULCHERS AND ROTARY MOWERS

DON ARTHUR ORCHARD EQUIPMENT
(519) 599-3058 donarthur3@gmail.com Thornbury, ON

REFRIGERATION

Refrigeration (all types)
Heating
Air conditioning
Controlled atmosphere

18 Seapark Drive St. Catharines ON L2M 6S6
Tel: 905-685-4255 Fax: 905-685-0333
info@pennrefrigeration.com
www.pennrefrigeration.com

CLASSIFIEDS

Drip irrigation system. 4" layflat 800-1000 feet, \$800.00. 3" layflat 400 feet, \$400.00. 2" layflat 400 feet, \$400.00. 4 Spin on filter systems for in field use with regulators, \$ 400.00 each. 30 spools of Netafin drip tape used one crop. 18" spacing 5/8" with .25 g/hr emitters, \$30.00/spool. 3-unit automatic filter with controller (used at water source), \$4,400.00. International 45 Cultivator, \$750.00. Call 519-427-4124

Surplus Bird Netting: Blue-green filament to be used on a structure. Assorted lengths from 650 - 775 ft long by 20ft wide. Deep discounts. Call Dennis at 226-757-0067 or email dennismeleg@gmail.com.

FERRIS 2-row in plastic corn planter with insecticide. Like new. Call 519-977-3335

Wanted- asparagus packing equipment - for sale: 1000 green hampers, 60 drip irrigation reels, Mulch planter water wheels, Melon sizer, bin dumper. Call 519-521-8455

2018 2 row Garford in-row hoeing machine. Only used for 50 acres. Call 905-961-8643 for price.

To place a classified ad call 1-866-898-8488 x 221 or email advertising@thegrower.org

BK Machinery

IRRIGATION PUMPSETS & POWERUNITS
Cornell - Gorman Rupp - Pioneer - Berkeley - Rovatti

RR#1 NORWICH, ON NOJ 1P0 | BKMACHINERY@EXECULINK.COM TEL: 519-688-6973



CUMMINS - CATERPILLAR - JOHN DEERE - PERKINS - DEUTZ

IPAK Box Maker

Automatic forming mandrel for fruit/vegetable boxes with re-inforced corner. Excellent condition \$28,000



Niagara Orchard & Vineyard Corp
1196 Irvine Rd. RR 5,
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON 905-646-5777
www.niagaraorchard.com

FREE COOLING EXPERTS

PLUG AND PLAY

KOOLJET
RELIABLE REFRIGERATION SYSTEMS

KOOLJET • (866) 748-7786 • www.kooljet.com

SELLING FARM EQUIPMENT?

866-898-8488 x221
advertising@thegrower.org



www.thegrower.org



@growernews



@thegrowernews

MARKETPLACE WORKS

advertising@thegrower.org
866-898-8488 x 221

SEED, ROOTSTOCK & ORCHARD SUPPLIES

Oriental Vegetable Seeds
www.AgroHaitai.com Seed@agrohaitai.com
Ph: 519-647-2280 Fax: 519-647-3188

Haitai Seeds
AgroHaitai Ltd
2764 Governors Road (HWY 99)
Lynden, ON L0R 1F0
Canada

Oriental Melon Golden Giant F1
White Pak Choy Nebal Spring F1
Squash Tetsukabota F1
Cabbage Seoul 65 F1

VBEF Nursery

Providing quality apple trees for 40 years.

- Bench graft
- 9 month bench
- KNIP tree
- Top grafting existing orchard

Brian Van Brenk
31760 Erin Line
Fingal ON, Canada
N0L 1K0
519-902-6353
www.vanbrenk.ca
brian@vanbrenk.ca

HASKAP
EDIBLE BLUE HONEYSUCKLE

Visit our website for information about our varieties, pricing, research, and production guide.

Plants for sale at
www.phytocultures.com
admin@phytocultures.com | 902.629.1229

GN GRINDSTONE CREEK NURSERY
Shade • Nut • Flowering • Native • Fruit

35+ years experience growing trees for wholesale markets

Apples, Pears, Fruiting Quince, Plums, Apricots,
Sweet & Sour Cherries, Peaches & Nectarines
Custom/Contract Growing Available

Nursery Location: 148 Concession 6 Rd. E., Millgrove, ON L8B 1M4
Phone: 905.689.5466 | Fax: 905.689.8584 | Email: info@gcmtrees.com
www.gcmtrees.com

STOKES
BLUEBERRY FARM & NURSERY, INC
STOKES
BLUEBERRIES FRESHPRO, INC

54239 14TH AVE / GRAND JUNCTION, MI
269.427.8675 269.427.7226

Varieties
BLUE CROP / BLUE JAY / BLUE RAY
JERSEY / DUKE / ELLIOT / NELSON / NORTHLAND
PATRIOT / RUBEL / SPARTAN & MORE

ALL PLANTS ARE STATE INSPECTED

Exclusively BLUEBERRY PLANTS
SINCE 1978

BARE ROOT 1 / 2 / 3 YEAR
CONTAINER GROWN 2 / 3 YEAR

Order direct from our wholesale nursery
Call or write for a current price list and brochure

www.stokesblueberries.com / stokes@stokesblueberries.com

WARWICK
ORCHARDS & NURSERY LTD
7056 Egremont Rd. R.R. #8
Waford, Ontario
N0M 2S0
warwickorchards@brktel.on.ca
Tel: (519) 849-6730
Toll free: 877-550-7412
Fax: (519) 849-6731

QUALITY FRUIT TREES

- APPLE on M9, B9 and M26
- Peach on Bailey
- PEAR on Quince
- * Custom Budding Available

ORDER NOW FOR BEST SELECTION

C.O. KEDDY

Certified Strawberry Plants & Raspberry Canes

- All popular varieties available
- Grown under the Nova Scotia Certification program
- Plants shipped across North America.

Contact us for a **FREE** brochure

C.O. Keddy Nursery Inc
982 Charles Keddy RD, Lakeville, NS, Canada B4N 3V7
Ph: (902) 678-4497 Fax: (902) 678-0067
Email: keddynursery@xcountry.tv

ASPARGUS ROOTS

Millennium

Wrightland Farm
RR 1 • 1000 Ridge Rd.
Harrow, ON N0R 1G0
Keith: 519-738-6120
Fax: 519-738-3358
wrightland@hotmail.ca

V. KRAUS NURSERIES LTD.
A Growing Tradition

FRUIT TREES

Apples
Plums
Cherries
Peaches

Nectarines
Pears
Apricots
Fruiting Quince

Small Fruit

1380 Centre Rd, Box 180, Carlisle, ON L0R 1H0
Tel: 905-689-4022 • Fax: 905-689-8080
www.krausnurseries.com

FERTIGATION

www.lakesidegrain.com

Lakeside

Fertigation PROGRAM

Proven experience in Apples, Berries, Peppers, Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Onions and more!

Call us today! Toll Free:
1-800-265-3899

Lakeside Grain & Feed Limited
7858 Rawlings Road, Forest ON N0N 1J0 Contact: Friedhelm Hoffmann | Cell: 519.312.6842

INCREASED YIELDS + QUALITY

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?
866-898-8488 x221
advertising@thegrower.org

www.thegrower.org

CROP PROTECTION

Light in the tunnel for re-evaluation program



CHRIS DUYVELSHOFF
CROP PROTECTION ADVISOR,
OFVGA

In the world of horticulture crop protection, no other topic has garnered more response from growers in recent years as that of re-evaluation. These mandated reviews of each registered active ingredient in crop protection products are conducted by the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). The Pest Control Products Act (PCPA) requires the PMRA to initiate re-evaluation within 15 years of the first registration. The goal of the re-evaluation process is to ensure crop protection products meet the latest human health and environmental standards.

While the re-evaluation program has been in place now for nearly two decades, it has received more widespread attention in the past few years than any time previously. Reflecting now, I would say that perhaps more than anything it has been the unexpectedness of decisions on key crop protection materials that has taken growers by surprise. Growers are adamant that the current system isn't working well, and they aren't wrong.

Two re-evaluations – both still ongoing – provided clear examples of what some of the core problems are. It was the neonicotinoid reviews where it first became completely apparent that monitoring data for active ingredients in the Canadian environment are severely lacking. Without such information, PMRA risk assessments are based on conservative assumptions and computer modelling deliberately intended to err on the side of caution. The re-evaluation for

the fungicide mancozeb identified an entirely different challenge – understanding the grower use pattern for a product in the real world. Both the PMRA and registrants need to understand what the industry is actually using in order to conduct risk assessments and to support labelled uses during re-evaluation.

On the PMRA side, it became obvious that the re-evaluation program is not sustainable. The organizational strain from the process continues to increase as does the scientific complexity of re-evaluations. Workloads are already exceeding available resources, resulting in delayed decisions, which will only get worse with a greater expected output. Something had to change. In 2018, PMRA initiated a full review of the re-evaluation program with a goal to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. Stakeholder input from a broad range of groups including grower associations such as the Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association were considered. After a year or so of analysis, PMRA recently presented its proposed ideas going forward.

The new proposed model will be called the integrated approach. The first major change will be a movement towards so called "continuous" re-evaluation as opposed to waiting only for the 15-year interval. Opportunities will be sought during label expansion or the mandatory five-year product renewal process to possibly conduct elements of the risk assessment similar to a re-evaluation. If during these processes, most of the work of re-evaluation has been done anyway, then full re-evaluation of that active ingredient may not be required until later down the road. When it is needed, at least some of the work has likely already been done, creating efficiency, and it's likely more clear what possible risks need refinement. One caveat being we must ensure this does not impede the opportunity for minor uses to be added to product labels which is such a key component of



“
The current model clearly has some serious deficiencies and that's led to some poor outcomes for all stakeholders. The future view is looking much brighter.

horticulture crop protection.

A second important component of the new proposed approach is earlier stakeholder engagement. Currently there is no communication from PMRA to any stakeholders on the direction of a re-evaluation prior to the publication of the Proposed Re-Evaluation Decision (PRVD). The first opportunity to review the assessments and assumptions made by PMRA during a re-evaluation is after the PRVD is published. Stakeholders then have 90 days to submit comments and data to clarify aspects of the review. That does not leave a lot of time to collect data and no chance at all to conduct a new scientific study if it's required.

The integrated approach will involve two new engagement opportunities for grower stakeholders. The first will be a chance to examine and provide input on PMRA assumptions at the beginning of a re-evaluation. The second will be to review a draft risk assessment prior to the publication of a PRVD to help identify potential risk

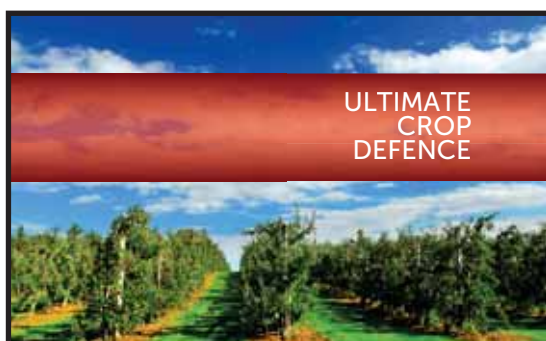
mitigation measures prior to the formal publication of any decisions. These additional engagement opportunities will help ensure that growers have enough time to respond to re-evaluation issues and clarify that PMRA assumptions reflect industry reality.

The final pillar of the integrated approach revolves around getting improved information for regulatory decisions. The two previously mentioned examples are the main challenges: environmental monitoring data and use pattern information. There is an ongoing effort by several organizations to create a governmental body with responsibility for organizing and collecting this environmental monitoring data. This is supported by the PMRA and it is actively trying to take a lead role in its formation.

The use pattern information is the most important thing that growers can do to support re-evaluation decisions. As written previously in the May 2019 Crop Protection Column, this is about collecting

provincial summary statistics on how crop protection products are actually used by growers (e.g. rate, number of applications etc.). Simply providing updated use information prior to a re-evaluation can have a big impact on its outcome. This ball is absolutely in our court for this aspect, and as growers, we need to be better organized and prepared to provide this input.

The PMRA re-evaluation program has a major impact on access to crop protection materials and the competitiveness of Canadian growers. We want to ensure that our continued use of crop protection materials meets human health and environmental standards, that makes sense. The current model clearly has some serious deficiencies and that's led to some poor outcomes for all stakeholders. The future view is looking much brighter. While the tunnel still has a ways to go before a better end is in sight, I am convinced that there is now light to be found.



www.belchimcanada.com

- Group 28 insecticide - powered by CYCLAPRYN
- Outstanding protection against a cross-spectrum of chewing and sucking pests through contact and ingestion
- Both larvicidal and adulticidal activity
- Foliar translaminar movement - excellent residual protection
- Excellent safety profile for beneficial arthropods
- For use on most fruits & vegetables including potatoes

HARVANTA is a registered trademark of Ishihara Sangyo Kaisha, Ltd.

HARVANTA



BELCHIM
CROP PROTECTION CANADA

CROP PROTECTION

XenTari WG biological insecticide label extended



Japanese eggplant

JIM CHAPUT

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) recently announced the approval of minor use label expansion registrations for XenTari WG biological insecticide for control of cabbage looper, corn earworm, and leafrollers on greenhouse strawberries and for control of tomato leafminer on fruiting vegetables in Canada. XenTari WG biological insecticide was

already labeled for use on a wide variety of crops in Canada for control of many caterpillar pests.

These minor use projects were submitted by Ontario as a result of minor use priorities established by growers and extension personnel. Box tree moth was also the subject of an emergency use approval in spring 2019 in response to the first outbreak of box tree moth in Canada.

The following is provided as an abbreviated, general outline

Crop(s)	Target	Rate (g/ha)	Application Information
Boxwood	Box tree moth (<i>Cydalima perspectalis</i>)	750 – 1,000	Treat when larvae are young and actively feeding on exposed plant surfaces. Repeat applications at an interval sufficient to maintain control, usually 3 to 14 days. Use sufficient spray volume to ensure thorough coverage but not to the point of run off.
Greenhouse Strawberries	Cabbage looper, corn earworm, obliquebanded leafroller, variegated leafroller	500 – 1,000	Repeat applications at an interval sufficient to maintain control, usually 3 to 14 days. Use sufficient spray volume to ensure thorough coverage but not to the point of run off. XenTari may be applied up to the day of harvest.
Fruiting Vegetables, Crop Group 8-09*	Tomato Leafminer (<i>Tuta absoluta</i>)	500 – 1000	Apply every 5 to 7 days. Apply using 500 – 1000 L water per hectare to ensure full coverage but not to the point of run off. XenTari may be applied up to the day of harvest.

***African Eggplant, Bush tomato, Cocona, Currant tomato, Eggplant, Garden huckleberry, Goji berry, Groundcherry, Martynia, Naranjilla, Okra, Pea Eggplant, Pepino, Pepper, bell, Pepper, nonball, Roselle, Scarlet Eggplant, Sunberry, Tomatillo, Tomato, Tree tomato. Includes cultivars, varieties and/or hybrids of these.**

only. Users should be making pest management decisions within a robust integrated pest management program and should consult the complete label before using XenTari WG biological insecticide.

XenTari WG biological insecticide is toxic to bees, certain beneficial insects and aquatic organisms.

Do not apply or allow drift of XenTari WG biological insecticide to other crops or non-target areas. Do not contaminate off-target areas or aquatic habitats when spraying or when cleaning and rinsing spray equipment or containers.

Follow all other precautions, restrictions and directions for use on the XenTari WG

biological insecticide label carefully.

For a copy of the new minor use label contact your local crop specialist, regional supply outlet or visit the PMRA label site.

Jim Chaput is minor use coordinator, OMAFRA.

Canadian Minor Use Priority-Setting Workshops cancelled

Ontario's minor use coordinator, Jim Chaput, says that work will continue despite the cancellation of the March 24-26, 2020 priority-setting workshops in Gatineau, Quebec.

"A revised approach to reviewing and selecting the top priority crop-pest minor use projects will be explored in consultation with grower stakeholders, provincial minor use coordinators, registrants,

researchers and AAFC-PMC personnel," says Chaput. "Rest assured that the provinces will play a key role in advocating for the continuation of the process albeit via different methods and approaches to ensure that critically needed pest management tools are developed for all Canadian minor use and specialty crop sectors."

To obtain the latest updates on the minor use program,

contact your provincial minor use coordinator:

Newfoundland and Labrador – Leah Madore
 Prince Edward Island – Sebastian Ibarra

New Brunswick – Gavin Graham
 Nova Scotia – Jason Sproule
 Quebec – Mathieu Cote
 Ontario – Jim Chaput
 Manitoba – Colleen Flynn
 Saskatchewan – Carter Peru

Alberta – Gayah Sieusahai
 British Columbia – Caroline Bedard

Jim Chaput, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

the barnders by gord.coulthart



"I don't think our Emergency Response Plan covers rubber boot extractions"

NEW & USED TRUCKS FOR THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY!




- Over 200 new and used trucks on ground now and ready to go!
- Day Cab, Sleepers, Heavy Specs & Straight trucks ready to go.
- New and used parts for all makes and models in stock.
- Our 26 service bays are equipped with state of the art diagnostic equipment and highly trained Master technicians.
- Call today for a quote on a new truck, rental, parts or service and one of our 70 staff members would be happy to serve you!



RENT OR BUY

SHEEHAN'S TRUCK CENTRE INC.
 4320 Harvester Rd., Burlington, Ontario L7L 5S4
 (905) 632-0300, 1-800-254-2859
www.heavytrux.com




LAKEVIEW
VINEYARD EQUIPMENT INC.

TOGETHER,
WE WILL
LEAVE NO GRAPE
BEHIND.

Lakeview Vineyard Equipment is your homegrown provider of new and used vineyard mechanization solutions for every scale of operation.

- Grape Harvesters
- Undervine Care Equipment
- Canopy Maintenance
- Sprayers
- Frost Protection
- Parts and Service

TEL: 905.646.8085 | TF: 1.866.677.4717 | LAKEVIEWVINEYARDEQUIPMENT.COM

40 LAKESHORE ROAD, R.R. #5 | NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ON | L0S 1J0

