

Growing Tomorrow

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Business Planning Made Easy

Business planning is important for all businesses. To help BC producers meet their business goals, the Canadian Farm Business Advisory Services (CFBAS) is now available. These services are being offered under the Renewal component of the Agricultural Policy Framework. The larger goal of Renewal is to help farmers access the skills, knowledge and tools they need to increase their profitability.

CFBAS offers various consulting services to suit each producer's needs. The process begins by sitting down with a CFBAS advisor to discuss the service options and benefits

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Pete Lockett and Jacqui Bullock behind new KLO Apple Wine Bar.

Fresh Ideas for Fruit Growers

A partnership between the BC Agri-Tourism Alliance (BCATA) and the BC Fruit Growers' Association (BCFGA) provided an occasion to showcase agri-tourism opportunities and successful marketing techniques at a recent gathering in the Okanagan.

The initiative flows from the BCATA's Strategic Plan, which aims to grow the province's agri-tourism sector by supporting partnerships, standards, education and awareness, and market and product development. The plan is funded through the Agri-Food Futures

Fund, with IAF contributing \$1 million for implementation of the five-year strategy.

"Partnering with the Alliance gives fruit growers better access to a broad range of market opportunities for diversifying their incomes," said Glen Lucas, Executive Director of BC Fruit Growers Association.

Agri-tourism is an industry that brings with it potential benefits ranging from new consumer markets for growers to diversifying and stabilizing rural

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Business Planning Made Easy *continued*

open to the producer. After the initial meeting, producers can use each of the consulting services offered once in the five year period of the program.

One of the components of CFBAS is the farm business assessment and action plan which consists of up to five days worth of consultative services. A consultant will review the producer's past business records, assess the current situation, discuss goals and objectives, and help the producer determine the options available to meet profitability goals. The follow up is work with the producer to develop an action plan and the best ways to implement it.

A second component of CFBAS is specialized business planning services. It offers up to two days worth of consultative services to assist the producer in preparing plans in specific areas such as diversification, marketing, human resources, expansion, risk management and succession. Consultants with expertise in these areas will work with producers to develop the plan.

The CFBAS are offered to farmers at a reduced cost. For further details on the CFBAS please call 1-866-452-5558 or visit <http://www.agr.gc.ca/renewal> ■

"Fresh Ideas" *continued*

economies. As such, the conference theme of maximizing grower returns was a natural fit at the fruit growers' Annual Horticultural Forum, held in Penticton in November. A tour of four agri-tourism venues in the region was organized, each venue offering a different yet successful approach. For example, KLO

Orchards of Kelowna, which is a large high density orchard, also has an on-farm store, market, teahouse, bakery, farm animal display and recently, an award winning cidery. Bill Morrison's "Jammery" in Winfield, the first of its kind in North America, shows visitors how jam is made and features a sales area with quality products that include sugar-free jam for diabetics as well as a lunch area for over 40 guests.



Bill Morrison and Pete Luckett at the "Jammery" in Windfield, BC.

The BCATA and BCFGA co-sponsored keynote speaker Pete Luckett, a nationally known TV host (The Food Hunter), creator, owner of Pete's Frootique in Bedford, Nova Scotia. As one of North America's most innovative produce marketers, Luckett served up practical ideas on how to capitalize on innovative marketing ideas. ■

Canadian Quality Milk Program Comes to BC

Consumers can have even greater confidence in BC dairy products as the province's dairy industry has joined in implementing Dairy Farmers of Canada's national program to ensure milk and meat safety.

The Canadian Quality Milk Program (CQM) promotes best management practices at all levels of the production chain to minimize the risk of milk and meat safety hazards. The program responds to increased consumer food safety awareness and expectations, as well as the changing needs of retailers – where quality assured products are increasingly a requirement for marketplace competitiveness.

"BC's record for producing quality milk is excellent, and now producers have an opportunity to improve it even more by implementing a well-recognized program that addresses milk and meat safety," says Annette Moore, CQM project coordinator in BC. "Now, we're making great progress increasing the understanding of program benefits for

producers. CQM helps BC producers better meet existing regulations by establishing everyday steps to reduce food safety risks."

Implementing CQM increases on-farm awareness and understanding of milk and meat safety risks, and reduces potential income loss for producers from rejected milk. Using BC-specific training materials, the CQM project helps producers learn new skills and assists the province in developing a cost-effi-



Chris Gaillbrathe, Pendray Farms, North Saanich.

Canadian Quality Milk Program *continued*

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cient infrastructure to support the program. BC also gains a greater voice in further development of the national program.

CQM is based on the internationally recognized Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points program, a tool used by all 19 Canadian commodities currently developing their own on-farm food safety programs. With the program in place, potential hazards can be controlled before they become a problem.

Farm Writers Have BC Innovation To Write About

Consumer Friendly Agriculture was the theme of the 2003 Canadian Farm Writers' Federation national conference held October 1-5 in Kelowna.

The Investment Agricultural Foundation played a key role, helping farm writers from across Canada understand BC agriculture's story of innovation and success.

Tours were conducted of area farms and wineries, including highlights of IAF-supported projects such as: the Ambrosia apple growers' New Tree Fruit Varieties Development Council and promotional projects; the BC Wine Institute's Integrated Pest Management project aimed at enhancing BC's image as a producer of safe, high quality grapes and wines; and the BC Fruit Growers' Association's Integrated Fruit Production Program, with work underway to design a user-friendly certification program.

IAF chair Walter Goerzen told delegates that federal/provincial/industry partnership is providing a major benefit for the BC agri-food industry. Over the past seven years, the IAF has approved over 300 projects with its partners that have an overall value in excess

For the latest program information on BC-CQM events and newsletters, check out the website – <http://www.agrologist.com/qfirst/cqm.htm>.

Dairy industry and government representatives worked together to form the steering committee in charge of implementing BC-CQM. IAF contributed \$46,500 toward the \$98,000 project. ■



Tony DiMaria hosting Farm Writer Orchard Tour.

of \$52 million. In the future, he said, the Foundation will continue to work with government through the Advancing Canadian Agriculture Program (ACAP) in determining the path to follow, one with flexibility and creativity to meet industry needs and opportunities.

A seminar on "branding" chaired by Al Helmersen, IAF Manager, delivered a message of the BC industry improving its market position, pointing to such successes as Buy BC, the Milk Quality Program and Organic Certification.

"BC put together a great convention and it seems everyone agreed," says David Schmidt, president of the BC Farm Writers' Association. "We gave farm writers a chance to view BC's uniqueness, inventiveness and diversity, and it worked." ■

Access to tax credits for growers

BC agriculture producers have greater access to investment tax credits through the Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) program, a federal initiative aimed at encouraging R&D investment that will lead to technologically advanced products or processes.

Prior to 2001, farm producers making SR&ED financial contributions to agricultural organizations by way of check offs, levies, or cash assistance were not able to take advantage of investment tax credits (ITCs) because of legislative provisions governing the program. Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) changed the rules and now producers can access ITCs earned on contributions made to agricultural organizations that fund SR&ED.

The BC Greenhouse Growers' Association (BCGGA) is one organization whose members have taken advantage of the SR&ED program tax incentives.

"We have greatly benefited from participating in the program as it helps support valuable research for the BC greenhouse vegetable industry," says Marcus Janzen, BCGGA chair of research. "This research has helped our members become world leaders in using natural biological controls against plant pests."

For your contributions to qualify, payments must be made to approved associations, universities, colleges and research institutes, or non-profit SR&ED corporations. As well, the SR&ED must be conducted in Canada and be related to the claimant's business. The claimant must also have a preferential right to exploit the results of the SR&ED.

Janzen says consultation with a SR&ED advisor will assist in determining what research is eligible under the program. For more information, check the CCRA website at www.ccradrc.gc.ca/sred/ ■

Horse-Fest Breeds Success

With almost 100,000 horses, excellent bloodlines and more than 12,000 farms, the BC horse industry is an important part of the province's agricultural sector.

Horse Council BC, the non-profit organization responsible for equestrian activities in British Columbia, recently launched an industry development plan to build on that record. The project – Horse-Fest – aims to establish BC as a premier location with internationally recognized expertise in the breeding and production of quality pleasure, work and sport horses.

"Horse-Fest was created to assist in the education and skill development of BC equestrians, as well as to improve the farm gate sales of BC-bred young horses," says Karen Ashby, a Horse-Fest director. "BC breeders have a product that can become an even more important export, sustainable over the long term."

Developed in partnership with the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Kwantlen University College, Langley's Thunderbird Show Park and public and private enterprise, Horse-Fest – which wrapped up its 15-month program in September – featured three components:



Showing young horses, Langley.

young horse marketing, skills and education seminars, and a trade show.

Activities included classes for young horse breeders at Thunderbird Show Park in spring 2003, and such seminars as 'Dress for Success', 'Can Canada Compete?' and 'Reach for the Stars'. Additionally, a BC driving legend, Muffy Seaton, provided coaching for members of the province's driving community in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island.

Total cost of Horse-Fest was \$212,000, with the Investment Agriculture Foundation providing more than \$54,000 towards the project's education component, as well as HCBC website development (www.horsecouncilbcsite.com).

2004 Application Deadlines

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals well in advance of the following deadlines.

Jan 5 • Feb 10 • April 2 • April 30 • May 28, 2004

For more information on the application process, see our website or email application@iafbc.ca

Overview of Projects Funded

The Foundation is a non-profit organization that invests funds to help the agri-food industry adapt, diversify and grow.

Summary of total projects approved by the Foundation to December 31, 2003

Number of Projects Approved	301
Total Funding Commitment	\$16,396,955
Total Value of Projects Approved	\$52,832,928

Milestone of 300 Projects Surpassed!!

For a detailed listing of approved projects please check out the foundation web site www.iafbc.ca.

Funding for the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia is provided by:

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