

Growing Tomorrow

Summer 2004 | Volume 4 | Issue 2

New Funds for BC Exporters

British Columbia food and agriculture exporters can now tap into some of the \$175 million in federal funding over six years announced in June 2002 to support market development for the Canadian Agri-Food industry and efforts to liberalize agricultural trade.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada announced this new funding May 17. Under its Canadian Agriculture and Food International (CAFI) program, launched in 2003, industry is receiving funding over a five-year period to support its goals of gaining international recognition and enhancing market opportunities abroad.

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Garnet Etsell and son Nathan are preparing the brooder rings inside the turkey barn at Coligny Hille Farms in north Mt. Lehman. Photo by Colleen Flanagan.

Quick Response to Avian Flu Crisis Helps Industry

The avian flu epidemic dealt the BC poultry industry a devastating blow earlier this year. The Investment Agriculture Foundation and industry have responded quickly in partnering efforts with government to speed recovery and find solutions to prevent future outbreaks.

Two projects that will provide benefits to the industry during the recovery period and in the future have had their funding fast-tracked by the IAF, with

more than \$126,000 approved towards combined project costs of \$134,000 for:

- *An Economic Impact Study* that allowed the industry to begin assessing the crisis while they were still in it. The federal and provincial governments are paralleling the industry's modeling exercise with their own and, together, they'll provide a thorough examination of the total impact on the industry.

- *A Bio-Security Recovery Project* that will establish a set of standards

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New Funds for BC Exporters *continued*

Canada exports more than \$24 billion worth of food products every year to more than 180 countries around the world. The CAFI program is a key element of Canada's international strategy, which is aimed at branding Canada in world markets, building recognition for Canadian industry's excellence, improving market access and overcoming technical barriers to trade. The CAFI program matches funds for activities that enhance and promote Canada's reputation as a world leader in supplying high quality, safe and innovative products produced in an environmentally responsible manner. It supports marketing and promotion activities in key markets, educational programs for foreign buyers, and industry-led trade advocacy initiatives to improve market access, build alliances and defend Canada's trade interests.

Across the country, 36 industry associations are receiving funding to support their long-term marketing and trade promotion activities. Other groups can apply to the CAFI program throughout the year for funding support of short-term projects.

For more information, please contact Tracey Innes, Sr. *Marketing and Trade Officer*, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, at 604.666.9353, by email: innest@agr.gc.ca or visit www.agr.gc.ca/int/caf-picaa ■

Quick Response to Avian Flu *continued*

toward which all of industry will subscribe. Producers will get the necessary tools to help assess their own bio-security status, including reference material to assist in strengthening bio-security programs. The industry is starting up again with the assurance that risk of another outbreak has been reduced.

"Perhaps the major success was that we demonstrated that industry and government can work together in crisis," said Garnet

Etsell, president of the BC Turkey Producers Association and chair of the Industry Economic Committee. "And without the quick response from the Foundation these projects wouldn't have gotten off the ground as fast and efficiently as they did."

The poultry industry is vital to BC where annual farm gate receipts for the four feather groups are about \$350 million. More than 1,700 jobs were affected from input supply through to processing. ■

Farming Future in Hands of Youth

Sunny Kelowna played host to the next generation of farm leaders in July. Approximately 70 rural 4-H youth and non-4-H First Nations 15-year-olds spent a week at Okanagan University College to

share knowledge and learn more about the industry. The occasion was the BC 4-H Rural Urban Connections (RUC) Youth Conference.

The delegates spent their days participating in a variety of guest presentations and excursions in and around Kelowna. They learned about issues facing the industry, explored possible solutions – such as ways for rural and urban communities to better understand agriculture – and how they can become involved in the agricultural process.

The teenagers also visited Davison's Orchards in Vernon where they made presentations to the public about what they'd learned. "The public should care about youth's role in agriculture," said delegate Justin von Lienen of the Shifting Saddles 4-H Horse Club in the Sorrento/Salmon Arm area. "Members of the agriculture industry today are getting older and they need youth to fill their places."

Rural Urban Connections is a 4-H partnership program sponsored by BC 4-H, BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Investment Agriculture Foundation, First Nations Agriculture Lending Association, and Agrium and Syngenta Crop Protection Canada. IAF provided \$10,000 towards the conference total cost of just under \$40,000. ■



Mike Wallace explains Salmon River restoration to the 69 Rural Urban Connections delegates.



Rural Urban Connections delegates preparing for the "What the Week Has Meant to Us" presentations.

Western Cooperation Seeds Research



Forage specialist Calvin Yoder describes his herbicide tolerance trials to over 75 growers at the annual forage seed tour on June 28, 2004.

British Columbia turf and forage seed producers are working with their Alberta counterparts on a new research program to improve forage seed quality and consistency.

The Alberta-led, three-year project enables Peace Region producers to start new research and extension initiatives aimed at building the industry's competitiveness, profitability and self-sufficiency. Jointly funded by the Investment Agriculture Foundation and Alberta's Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development fund, the \$440,000 project is being organized by the Peace Region Forage Seed Association (PRFSA). The IAF provided \$77,000 of the total \$220,000 in joint funding assistance for the program. The PRFSA represents growers, seed trade companies and researchers in both provinces.

The Alberta-BC Peace River region is the world's second largest turf and forage seed production area, with annual farm gate sales ranging between \$30 million and \$40 million. International competition is high,

and a consistent supply of high quality seed is essential for Peace region producers to prosper.

Funds will be invested in weed control research and herbicide minor use registration trials. Other projects will investigate and evaluate alternative methods of establishing, removing, rotating, terminating and rejuvenating turf seed crops.

The industry and governments of the two provinces are also working together to develop a streamlined system for administering and collecting a levy that will allow the industry to be self-sustaining. Stakeholder consultations have found most growers and seed companies support a refundable levy to help ensure stable, long-term funding. "We want to make sure growers who have land or are marketing on both sides of the border are operating under the same system," said Sandra Burton, a consulting agrologist who is coordinating the project. ■

Nourishing Agri-Food on the Islands

Communities on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands got some good news in mid-June with the signing of a \$1.6 million Agri-Food Futures Fund agreement between the Investment Agriculture Foundation and the Island Farmers' Alliance.

The Islands Agri-Food Initiative will provide opportunities for the development, strengthening and promotion of the diverse agri-food sector as a whole on the islands, while serving as a catalyst for communities to diversify their economic base. It will reinforce the importance of buying locally with a goal of building loyalty for island products.

The sector is already a significant contributor to the islands' economy, providing direct employment for 3,100 people. Gross farm receipts are estimated at \$137 million, with the value of processed food and beverages on Vancouver Island at \$165 million.

"Agriculture is an industry that is always changing and we have to change also," said Ian Christison, chair of the Island Farmers' Alliance. "This initiative will help us build capacity within our industry and communities. We hope to raise the level of consumer recognition about agriculture and how it contributes to the environment and economic health of our communities."

A Warm Hello to the Hon. Andy Mitchell



The Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC is pleased to welcome Andy Mitchell to his new post as federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Mr. Mitchell's past experience touches areas important to agriculture and the IAF. His former cabinet responsibilities have included: Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern

Development, Secretary of State (Parks) and Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario). He has also served as Chair of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, Vice-Chair of the Industry Committee and Chair of the Northern Ontario Caucus.

We look forward to working with him. ■

Nourishing Agri-Food *continued*



Ian Christison, Island Farmers' Alliance Chair, and Walter Goerzen, Investment Agriculture Foundation Chair, sign the agreement for the Islands Agri-Food Initiative at the Seaview Farms.



Glenn Wakeling displays products of Eatmore Sprouts and Greens Ltd in Courtenay, BC, which employs 30-45 staff throughout the year.

High production costs have forced island producers and processors to be among the most innovative in Canada and the new initiative will promote the continuation of creative ideas in industry project proposals.

“Available funding provides the agri-food sector with an opportunity to implement specific projects at 50% of the cost,” said Peter Versteeg, initiative administrator. “The direct benefit is the 50-50 cost sharing, which will encourage all stakeholders to be innovative in developing new programs that will contribute to the development of a viable and sustainable agri-food sector on the islands.”

The Islands Agri-Food Initiative Advisory Committee, with representatives from agri-business, the financial sector, the agri-food sector, the three levels of government and the IAF, is steward of the initiative's strategic plan and supports its implementation.

The Island Farmers' Alliance is fund administrator. For more information visit www.iafbc.ca/iafi/ ■

Application Deadlines

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

September 3 • October 1 • November 12, 2004 • January 4 • February 24 • April 5 • May 10, 2005

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 funding committed by the Foundation to June 30, 2004.

| | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development | \$8.57 Million | <i>For a detailed listing of approved projects please check out the foundation website www.iafbc.ca/project.listing.htm</i> |
| Agri-Food Futures Fund | \$14.41 Million | |
| Safety Net Companion Program | \$7.45 Million | |

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

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