



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Four New Directors Join Investment Agriculture Foundation

April 27, 2007 – Victoria, B.C. The Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. (IAF) welcomes four new directors to its board. Debbie Aarts, Chris Byra, Gay Hahn and Peter Levelton were appointed following the April 17, 2007 annual general meeting.

"We were very pleased by the nominations put forward by the B.C. agriculture industry," said Bruce Bakker, chair of the industry members' group that makes appointments to the IAF board. "We have selected a complement of directors that meet the current needs of the Foundation and can provide strong input, expertise and representation to the board."

Debbie Aarts represents the dairy sector on the board. Aarts and her husband reside in the Fraser Valley where they farm approximately 300 acres, milking 250 purebred Holsteins. Debbie has sat on the board of a local private school, spent six years on the board of the B.C. Dairy Foundation and represented B.C. on the National Promotion Board of Dairy Farmers of Canada. More recently, Debbie was elected and served on the B.C. Milk Marketing Board.

Chris Byra, who represents the farm supply sector, has been a practising veterinarian since 1981. Byra currently works with Greenbelt Swine Veterinary Services serving Fraser Valley swine producers and with DairySMART Management providing dairy management consultation services. He has served in a variety of committee roles for the British Columbia Veterinary Medical Association and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and has been involved in many different projects and organizations over the course of his career. Byra holds an MBA from the University of Guelph and a DVM from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatchewan.

Gay Hahn represents the post farm gate sector. A dairy farmer in her own right, Hahn is president and CEO of Avalon Dairy, a highly successful organic milk product producer in Vancouver. She is a founding member and chair of the B.C. Food Processors Association, chair of the B.C. Dairy Foundation and an active member of the Certified Organic Associations of B.C. Hahn also chairs a National Seafood Sector Council initiative to define the human resources needs of the agri-food processing sector.

Peter Levelton represents the greenhouse, floriculture and nursery sectors. Since 1987, Levelton and his wife have owned and operated East Richmond Nurseries. Levelton, who spent six years as president and vice president of the B.C. Landscape and Nursery Association, is currently the environment chair for the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association.

Funding provided by:

“I’d like to thank departing directors William Cheuk, Deborah Henderson, Cornelis Hertgers and Bob McCoubrey for their service,” said Bert Miles, the Foundation’s chair. “They have all shown exemplary commitment and dedication to the industry.”

Continuing Foundation directors are Garnet Berge, Bar Hayre, Derek Janzen, Jens Larsen, Bert Miles, and Stuart Wilson. Directors re-appointed for a further two-year term are Tony DiMaria, Gerry McClintock and Gary Sandberg.

The Investment Agriculture Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that manages and distributes federal and provincial funds in support of innovative projects to benefit the agriculture and food industries in British Columbia. Funding is available to help industry adapt, diversify and grow.

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