



Investment Agriculture Foundation Announces New Executive

Victoria, B.C. – May 20, 2010 The Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. (IAF) today announced the appointment of its new executive committee. Irmi Critcher joins the executive as vice-chair, replacing Derek Janzen, who served as vice-chair since 2008 and will remain an active member of the IAF board. Stuart Wilson, Peter Levelton and Gay Hahn round out the executive.

“IAF supports projects that enable the agriculture and agri-food sector to seize new opportunities, respond to emerging issues and pathfind solutions,” said IAF chair Stuart Wilson. “We are committed to ensuring that our decisions reflect the interests of the entire sector. To this end, our leadership represents a broad range of industry backgrounds, including primary production, processing and post-farm gate.”

About the Executive

Irmi Critcher has served on the IAF board since 2008, representing the grains, oilseeds and forage sector and now joins the executive as **vice-chair**. Irmi continues to serve as president of the B.C. Grain Producers’ Association (BCGPA). She has been on the BCGPA board for ten years, during which time she was active on numerous committees. Prior to these involvements, she served as director of the B.C. Grain Industry Development Council and was a member of the Peace River Regional District’s Wildlife Committee. She also sat on the Management Committee of the Agriculture and Environment Partnership Initiative. Irmi and her husband Barry have been farming for more than 20 years and currently own and operate a 3,000 acre grain and oilseed farm near Taylor.

Stuart Wilson, who represents the post-farm gate sector, joined the IAF board in 2006. Wilson assumed the role of **chair** in 2008 and previously served as treasurer. Wilson spent two years in the private sector with Sun Rype Foods, Dairyland and Lipton Puritan and has 32 years of experience with the federal government working for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). He served as regional director with CFIA and has represented Canadian agriculture on missions to France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Wilson has served on the executives of North American organizations aimed at resolving regulatory issues surrounding the movement of agricultural commodities to and from British Columbia. Now semi-retired, Wilson currently works as a financial consultant in Surrey.

Peter Levelton joined the IAF board in 2007 as a representative of the greenhouse, floriculture and nursery sectors. Levelton assumed the role of **treasurer** in 2009 after serving one year as

secretary. Since 1987, Levelton and his wife Jane have owned and operated East Richmond Nurseries, now a leading supplier to landscapers, garden centers and wholesale nurseries throughout B.C. and the Pacific Northwest. Currently a director representing the nursery sector on the Metro Vancouver (GVRD) Agriculture Advisory Committee, Levelton spent six years as president and vice-president of the B.C. Landscape and Nursery Association. He has also served on the executives of the Kinsmen Club of Richmond and the Richmond Youth Soccer Organization.

Gay Hahn joined the IAF board in 2007, representing the post-farm gate sector and assumed the role of **secretary** in 2009. 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 of the B.C. Food Processors' Association, as well as the past chair of the B.C. Dairy Foundation, an active member of the B.C. Organic Association and the current vice-chair of the B.C. Dairy Council. Hahn has also developed one of the largest annual community dairy celebrations, Avalon Dairy Community Days, and won several community service and marketing awards, including the Barichello Award and Farm Credit Canada's Rosemary Davis Award. Serving tirelessly to improve the industry, Hahn is now chair of the National Food Processing Human Resource Council, an initiative to define the human resources and training needs of the agri-food processing sector.

Working closely with the executive and representing IAF's funding partners are **John Berry**, the B.C. Regional Director with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and **Harvey Sasaki**, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Risk Management and Competitiveness with the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

IAF is an independent, industry-led not-for-profit that manages and distributes federal and provincial funds in support of innovative projects to benefit the agriculture and agri-food industries in B.C. To learn more about the Investment Agriculture Foundation and the funding programs it administers, please visit www.iafbc.ca

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