



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Investment Agriculture Foundation Contributes nearly \$450K to New Projects

October 19, 2011, Victoria, B.C. – The Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. (IAF) will contribute up to \$449,875 toward 16 new projects to help the B.C. agri-food industry adapt, diversify and grow.

The list includes new projects contracted between May 1 and August 31, 2011. Funding for these projects is provided by IAF through programs it delivers on behalf of the federal and provincial governments. Projects include research into disease management, biosecurity practices, technology development and strategic planning, among others.

“These projects will make a significant impact on a wide variety of sectors facing new challenges,” says Stuart Wilson, IAF chair. “We are pleased to help applicants respond to problems and seize new opportunities, and we encourage industry groups to contact us with their ideas.”

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL ADAPTATION PROGRAM

Funding for the following projects is provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program. CAAP is a five-year, \$163 million national program aimed at helping the sector adapt and remain competitive. The Foundation delivers CAAP in British Columbia and has been allocated \$6.2 million over the period 2009-2014.

B.C. Blueberry Council

\$12,000

Characterization, Detection and Vector Identification of Blueberry Premature Fruit Drop and Blueberry Mosaic Virus (A0659)
Premature fruit drop, blueberry mosaic disease and blueberry scorch virus pose significant problems for blueberry producers in the Pacific Northwest. Plants affected with premature fruit drop do not produce any marketable fruit; blueberry mosaic disease and scorch virus can significantly impact the ability of nurseries to ship plants as well as affecting fruit yield and quality. This two-year applied research project aims to identify the causes and vectors of these diseases, as well as to develop a universal test for scorch virus. In addition to aiding in the removal of infected plants currently under production, research results will ultimately allow blueberry producers in B.C., Oregon and Washington to select disease-free stock during future planting.

North American BioExtracts

\$75,484

Developing High-Value, High-Quality Fractionation Processes for Surplus Berries (W0152 BC0152CO)
Blueberry and Saskatoon Berry industries are facing an emerging imbalance as berry production is beginning to outweigh demand, a problem which is expected to worsen as recent plantings come on line over the next three to five years. One solution to the oversupply lies in the global nutraceutical and functional food markets. This one-year applied research project will help the industry refine a new processing technology to extract nutrient oils from surplus berries and produce a nutrient rich powder to market

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to nutraceutical networks. The new processing technology will give all Western Canadian berry producers affected by overproduction a new outlet for their produce, as well as greater access to global markets. (Funding for this project was also provided by the Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba councils which deliver the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada).

The following projects were funded collectively between IAF and industry councils in other provinces that deliver the CAAP program on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. IAF contributed a portion of the total CAAP contribution for the following projects, as results from each are expected to benefit BC industries.

Research and Development Institute for the Agri-Environment \$5,000

Simple Day-Neutral Strawberry Yield Prediction Method Development (W0154 QP6541)
 Funding for this two-year applied research project will enable the development of a prediction method for weekly strawberry harvest volumes to better coordinate harvests with sales, and to improve profitability and competitiveness across the strawberry industry. Reliable and user-friendly harvest estimation tools will allow strawberry producers across Canada to anticipate fruit yield up to three weeks in advance, and plan for human resource and fertilizer needs. (This project is led by the Conseil pour le Développement de l'agriculture du Québec (CDAQ). The total CAAP contribution is \$100,000).

Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers \$20,250

Increasing Efficacy and Effectiveness of Application of Disinfectants Against Persistent Viruses of Greenhouse Vegetables Under Commercial Conditions (W0156 ON0130)
 A need has been identified by the Ontario greenhouse industry to evaluate and recommend disinfectants that have low toxicity, low corrosiveness, are environmentally safe, cost effective and easy and safe to apply. This two-year applied research project will examine five of the most promising disinfectants, which will be tested on aluminum, glass and plastic materials. Testing will include several inexpensive, readily-available household chemical products that may be formulated to become suitable disinfectants. (This project is led by the Agricultural Adaptation Council of Ontario. The total CAAP contribution is \$81,000).

Les Eleveurs de volailles du Québec \$10,000

The Effect of Biosecurity Practices on Bacteria Populations in Poultry Barns Before and After Partial Bird Depopulation (W0157 QP6557)
 This three-year project aims to validate the use of biosecurity practices used by bird catchers to avoid the spread of contamination in poultry barns. Testing these protocols and recording their impact will provide the allied trade of bird catchers with scientific validation that they are a vector of potential biosecurity breaches and that they can control those breaches through a set of realistic protocols in their practices. (This project is led by the Conseil pour le Développement de l'agriculture du Québec (CDAQ). The total CAAP contribution is \$71,640).

Société des éleveurs de chèvres laitières de race du Québec (Quebec Dairy Goat Breeders Society) and Valacta \$16,900

Dairy Goat Production Plan Development (W0153 ES QP6527)
 Producers in the dairy goat sector have been facing unusually high mortality rates with their herds in recent years. Herd replacement depends primarily on goat does – on their health, genetic quality and growth. This two-year applied research project consists of establishing a profile of various factors affecting dairy goat doe operations. Research

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results will provide the dairy goat sector with the data and tools required to improve goat doe management to enhance animal growth, health and future productivity. One thousand goat does from two cohorts born on 30 different farms will be followed from birth to breeding and data collected will help determine mortality rates by age group. This analysis will lead to the establishment of a monitoring program (including preventative medicine) for dairy goat production. (This project is led by the Conseil pour le Développement de l'agriculture du Québec (CDAQ). The total CAAP contribution is \$168,660).

SAFETY NET

Funding for these projects is provided through the former federal-provincial Safety Nets framework.

Invasive Plant Council of B.C.

\$45,000

Building the Foundation Against Invasive Plants (A0644)

The 2003 Invasive Plant Strategy for B.C. is outdated for addressing current problems posed by invasive plants in the province. This one-year project will develop a jointly agreed upon, current and long term invasive plant strategy and social marketing plan for B.C. with the support and involvement of agriculture, government and other stakeholders. The overall goal is to reduce the negative impacts to agriculture, the environment and the economic and social losses caused by invasive plants by increased coordination and efficiencies.

Regional District of East Kootenay

\$20,000

Regional District of East Kootenay Agricultural Plan – Phase I (A0655)

There are numerous obstacles facing agricultural production in East Kootenay, such as continuing demand for residential and non-agricultural uses of the Agricultural Land Reserve, as well as rising land values. A policy recognizing the need for an Agricultural Area Plan was recently integrated into the Lake Windermere Official Community Plan. This one-year project is intended to create a land use inventory which will provide the base data to begin work on the region's agriculture area plan. The data will provide insight relating to the current agricultural production and assist with identification of opportunities and challenges to enhance agriculture in the region.

Regional District of Nanaimo

\$40,000

Regional District of Nanaimo Area Agricultural Plan (B0016.30)

While agriculture is considered a significant contributor to Nanaimo's cultural and economic landscape, farmland protection and the promotion of agriculture as a viable economic sector have become significant issues in the region. In order to investigate and improve issues surrounding agricultural lands, farming practice, engagement of agricultural community, land use and economic development, the Agricultural Advisory Committee has recommended that an Area Agricultural Plan be developed. This two-year project will establish an inventory of agricultural land uses and activities, identify issues, constraints and opportunities, articulate a vision for agriculture and provide a guide for the region to ensure agricultural planning goals are met. The project will also help increase public understanding of the importance of agriculture as an economic driver in the area.

Township of Langley

\$30,000

Township of Langley Agricultural Viability Strategy (Phases 1-2 of 3) (A0590)

This strategy will identify agricultural development issues and opportunities, as well as provide recommendations and proposals to support the agriculture sector in the Township of Langley. Opportunities such as diversification and increased food production will be explored during this

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one-year project, while issues such as urban conflict, environmental challenges and competition for agricultural land will be assessed.

Fraser Valley Strawberry Growers' Association

\$7,750

Using Social Media to Increase Sales of Fresh Strawberries in B.C. (SP170)

The B.C. strawberry industry is increasingly becoming a fresh, rather than processed, industry. A major challenge associated with this transition is the ability to market the produce in a timely manner, as the harvest season lasts only four weeks, during which time millions of pounds of berries must be moved. By the time the consumer is aware of the strawberry season, it is almost over. Many harvested strawberries spoil because of their short shelf-life or difficulties reaching the marketplace in time. This one-year demonstration project aims to show producers the benefits of using social media such as Twitter, Facebook and blogging in promoting fresh strawberries and increasing consumer awareness of the harvest.

LIVESTOCK WASTE TISSUE INITIATIVE

Funding for this project is provided through the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture's Livestock Waste Tissue Initiative.

B.C. Association of Abattoirs

\$67,216

Technical Support and OMRR Compliance Training for B.C. Slaughter Waste Composting Facility Operators (LWTI 059)

Since 2009, six small scale slaughter waste composting facilities have been built in B.C. To meet Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR) requirements, the facilities must adhere to specific composting process requirements and ensure that the compost meets OMRR quality standards by conducting annual testing of the finished compost. This one-year project will provide technical support to the operators of slaughter waste compost facilities to assist with meeting OMRR regulatory requirements, and to troubleshoot compost process and facility issues that they may be experiencing.

AGRI-FOOD FUTURES FUND

Funding for these projects is provided through the federal-provincial Agri-Food Futures Fund.

Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government

\$20,600

Chilcotin Apiculture Demonstration Project (A0662 ES)

The Xeni Gwet'in recently developed an integrated Agriculture Development Strategy that incorporates four key industries: grass-fed beef, apiculture, greenhouse production and agroforestry. This two-year demonstration project focuses on increasing interest and awareness about apiculture as a potential new industry in the region. A series of informative hands-on workshops will be hosted by industry experts and mentors in conjunction with the development of a demonstration apiculture site west of 100 Mile House in the Nemiah Valley.

Wine Islands Growers' Association

\$2,475

WIGA 2011 Viticulture and Enology Conference (AF002-I0502)

The Wine Islands Growers' Association seeks to develop a viable, high quality fruit-for-wine growing industry on the Wine Islands that will significantly contribute to the agri-food industry on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. The association held their annual conference in Duncan on May 14 and 15. More than 85 island growers and winemakers

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turned out to learn about topics such as cool climate site selection, vineyard design, canopy control, establishing an identity in the marketplace, and cool climate winemaking issues. Participants also had an opportunity to meet with more than a dozen winery and viticulture suppliers and critically sample the 2010 vintage.

AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE FUND

Funding for this project is provided through the federal-provincial Agriculture Environment & Wildlife Fund.

Agricultural Research and Development Corporation (ARDCorp)

\$21,840

Evaluation of the Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative (AF018-AEWF 11-020)

The Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative was created in July 2001 to address agri-environmental issues and enhance the environmental sustainability of agriculture. Its main purpose was to address regional impacts of agricultural practices on water, soil, air quality, biodiversity and greenhouse gas emissions. This project is seeking feedback on the impacts and effectiveness of the initiative. An objective look will be taken at 35 projects completed across B.C. and a summary of their impacts towards achieving overall program objectives will be provided.

AVIAN INFLUENZA PROGRAM

Funding for this project is provided through the provincial Avian Influenza Program.

Agri-Saki Consulting Incorporated

\$55,360

B.C. Poultry Industry Risk Based Insurance Product for Avian Influenza (AIP007)

Advisory services and support will be provided to the B.C. poultry industry through the development of a business plan to establish and implement an insurance-based approach to cover losses in the event of a future Avian Influenza outbreak.

IAF is an industry-led not-for-profit that strategically invests federal and provincial funds in support of innovative projects that benefit the agriculture and agri-food industry in B.C. For more information on IAF and the programs it delivers, visit www.iafbc.ca.

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For more information on any of these projects, media may contact the organization leading the project or:

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