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L'HORTICULTURE

HORTICULTURE WORKS

***A Call to Action
to Develop the Workforce
for the Future of Horticulture in Canada***

April 2004

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HORTICULTURE WORKS –

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary	1
2. Background to the Development of This Report	3
2.1 The Role of the Canadian Horticultural Council	3
2.2 Commitment to Human Resources and Issues Within Horticulture	4
2.3 CHC Human Resources Committee and Terms of Reference	5
2.4 CHC Human Resources Committee Membership	6
3. Why Horticulture Matters to Canada's Future	7
3.1 Horticulture Is a Growth Sector of Canadian Agriculture	7
3.2 Canadian Horticulture Is Important in International Trade	8
3.3 Labour Is a Major Part of the Cost Structure of Horticultural Production	9
3.4 The Current Workforce for Horticulture in Canada	10
3.5 How Canadian Horticulture Differs From Other Sectors of Agriculture	10
3.6 Market-Driven Integration Across the Supply Chain	11
3.7 Different Skills Will Be Needed as the Industry Changes	11
3.8 The Health, Aesthetic and Environmental Benefits of Horticulture	12
4. Human Resources in Horticulture	13
4.1 Strengths	14
4.2 Weaknesses	14
4.3 Opportunities	15
4.4 Threats	15
5. Key Issues and Desired Outcomes	16
5.1 Recruit and Retain Sufficient Numbers of Trained Employees at Competitive Wages	16
5.2 Raise the Profile of Seasonal Workers on the Agenda for Urgent Policy Reform	16
5.3 Undertake a Campaign to Reshape and Effectively Market the Image of Canada's Horticultural Sector as a Desirable Place to Work	17
5.4 Promote a Culture of Continuous Learning and Skills Training	18
6. Implementation	20
6.1 Strategic Actions	20
6.2 Next Steps	20
7. Appendices	
Appendix I Acronyms	22
Appendix II Definitions	23
Appendix III CHC Human Resources Committee Membership	24
Appendix IV CHC Membership	25
Appendix V CHC Corporate Profile	28
Appendix VI Project Listing	30
Appendix VII Bibliography	36

1. Executive Summary

Canadian horticulture is a vibrant, dynamic part of Canadian agriculture. It provides us with healthy, nutritious food; enhances the beauty of our cities and gardens; enriches our environment; contributes to our agricultural exports; and employs thousands of workers. Horticulture is more labour intensive than other parts of agriculture. Its future success depends particularly on its workforce; that is, a sufficient number of properly trained workers ranging from unskilled field workers to highly skilled technicians.

Because of the general labour situation in Canada, one in which there are fewer workers entering the workforce relative to those leaving, ensuring the availability of sufficient numbers of workers for the future is the highest priority for the continued growth and success of Canadian horticulture. This report is a call to action to mobilize all stakeholders into an effective, coordinated plan to proactively address the future needs of the sector. While there have been some successful initiatives, now is the time to increase the pace of efforts, and strengthen coordination across Canada, as well as across subsectors, in order to nip an emerging crisis in the bud.

In recent years, public policy in Canada has been increasingly oriented towards the delegation of responsibility for training and human resources decisions to industry and other key stakeholders who are closest to the dynamics of the labour market. With this change, there has been a shift from a historical focus on the problems of labour supply, to a more encompassing view of human resources management and skills training as an investment in the long-term competitiveness of the industry. The recommendations found in this report take this public policy orientation into account and seek to provide a comprehensive approach.

Through the consultation process exercised in this initiative, key issues have been identified and possible solutions developed, at least in a conceptual way. As a result of this work, the Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC) is persuaded that the availability of human resources and training needs of stakeholders and employees is critical to the long-term growth and prosperity of the industry in Canada. It is for this reason that the CHC has asked Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to participate and provide resources for a process chosen for further discussions on the development of an action plan for human resources for Canadian horticulture. The first step proposed in this process is the formation of a National Sectoral Council for Human Resources in Horticulture, in keeping with the mandate of HRSDC, to address the urgent needs of the horticultural sector. In this report, the uniqueness of horticulture as compared to other sectors of agriculture, with respect to labour, is elaborated. Not only is horticulture much more labour intensive and diverse, it also requires unique skills as the technological requirements increase in areas such as greenhouse production. For these reasons, Canadian horticulture needs its own focus and commitment from HRSDC.

More horticultural products are imported into Canada each year than the total value of farm gate cash receipts for those grown here. In part, this flow of imports is due to the production of tropical fruits such as citrus and bananas that cannot be grown this far north, but is also due to intense competition from less regulated jurisdictions (e.g., China, South America and Mexico) where labour costs are lower, regulations and benefits are fewer, and there is less concern for the welfare of workers. Labour is therefore not only a key cost factor in production horticulture but is also critical to the competitiveness of the sector.

This report has been written as a call to action and outlines specific next steps and goals to be achieved. It is not a call for large sums of government money to subsidize an industry sector. The amount of funding needed to accomplish the goals is relatively modest, especially in relation to the benefits to be gained. Many of the changes which government can effect, such as suggested amendments to specific social programs, have modest costs associated with them. Such changes would result in programs which are more conducive to the needs of both employees and employers and thus benefit the Canadian public at large.

The recommendations, as set out in Section 5, revolve around four key areas:

1. Recruit and retain sufficient numbers of trained employees at competitive wages;
2. Raise the profile of seasonal workers on the agenda for urgent policy reform;
3. Undertake a campaign to reshape and effectively market the image of Canada's horticultural sector as a desirable place to work; and
4. Promote a culture of continuous learning and skills training.

The support of HRSDC in the development of this call for action is appreciated.

2. Background to the Development of This Report

The purpose of this section is to provide background information on the role of the CHC and the consultations it has undertaken to develop the recommendations that are outlined in this report.

2.1 The Role of the Canadian Horticultural Council

Founded in 1922, the CHC is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization which represents over 20,000 producers operating in the horticultural sector across Canada.

The CHC's mission is an unwavering commitment to advance the growth and economic viability of horticulture by encouraging cooperation and understanding to build national consensus on key issues, thereby delivering a unified and clear representation to governments as well as other national and international parties.

The CHC's members are involved in the production, packing, processing and marketing of fruit, vegetables, flowers, ornamental plants and related goods and services. More precisely, horticulture can be subdivided into two broad subsectors that are distinguished as "fruit and vegetables," which are produced for human consumption, and "ornamentals", which are produced for enhancing the environment.

For the purposes of the discussions in this document, horticulture includes field, greenhouse, nursery and ornamental production, as well as the allied services outlined below. When we refer to the horticultural sector of agriculture we include:

- Production, processing, packing and marketing of fruit and vegetables, and related services; and
- Production of floral and ornamental crops, landscape design and contracting, grounds maintenance, lawn and parks care, garden centres, arboriculture, irrigation, and related services.

Horticulture Subsectors	
Fruit and Vegetable Production	Floral and Ornamental
Field vegetables Field fruit Greenhouse vegetables Tree fruits	Greenhouse floriculture Nursery Landscape design and contracting Garden centres Grounds maintenance Lawn and parks care

As the voice of its members, the CHC recognizes the need to urgently address the human resources issues of the horticultural sector in Canada. The availability of sufficient numbers of trained workers is essential for the future of this growing and important sector of Canadian agriculture. In this report, the issues facing the sector are identified and steps that need to be taken to address them are outlined.

2.2 Commitment to Human Resources and Issues within Horticulture

Despite a history of proactive initiatives to address needs and challenges, the horticultural sector has traditionally experienced difficulties in meeting its human resources needs. As outlined in more detail in Section 3 of this report, horticulture is very labour intensive relative to other sectors of agriculture. Aside from challenges presented by nature, the success or failure of a crop in any given production season or growing cycle, or in ornamental-related activities, is highly dependent on the timely availability of workers.

The CHC and its members have given priority to, and demonstrated strong commitment to, identifying and addressing human resources needs and proposing potential solutions. This commitment resulted in the creation of the Horticultural Human Resource Council (HHRC) over 10 years ago. The principal mandate of the HHRC was to propose various solutions to industry problems concerning human resources issues. The work of the HHRC deserves part of the credit for the impressive growth in horticulture over the past 10 years. The Council was instrumental in accelerating human resources development activity and it also provides a successful reference point for the work which this call to action identifies as necessary today. Though the circumstances of the industry are different now than in the past, a similar organized and collaborative approach can experience the same success now as it did then.

Spurred on by the work of the HHRC, an important number of activities and programs have been developed and have contributed to the improvement and viability of the horticultural sector in Canada:

- One example is the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP). Since its implementation, this program has proven its worth and reliability for many businesses in Canada, particularly in the fruit and vegetables sector, but also for nurseries in ornamental subsectors. It allows for the stabilization of manpower by ensuring the attendance of a core group of trained workers throughout the production period, from seeding until the final harvest of the products. Because the SAWP is not available across Canada, or for all subsectors, there are opportunities to expand the reach and effectiveness of this program.
- The general shortage of labour has led to innovative ways of finding and developing workers. In Québec, an integration program for young, disabled people in the horticultural sector has given opportunities for businesses to utilize this source for recruiting labour, while developing the employability and skills of the participating workers. These young people are given the opportunity to acquire new knowledge, develop their confidence and find work in the horticultural sector.
- The Science and Technology Internship Program offers young people that have completed a post-secondary diploma to enter a first job in horticulture and allows horticultural businesses to recruit specialized workers to meet the challenge of adopting new technologies. There is opportunity to expand on this success and consider apprenticeship programs for people currently employed in horticulture in order to raise their skill levels.
- The sector has introduced measures to improve health and security while reducing contributions to the Health and Security Program. In one Canadian region, a horticultural safety group has been created to allow horticultural businesses to obtain reduced premiums in return for maintaining a good safety record in the working environment. This approach has resulted in an improved working environment, better employee awareness with respect to safety, and a reduction in costs for the horticultural employer.

- The CHC's Human Resources Committee has also developed tools to assist in human resources management. In many regions, manuals have been produced on problem solving, communication, and hiring and evaluating personnel. These documents have been publicized and made available free of charge to managers of different horticultural businesses. There is further opportunity to develop additional tools which can be used by management and to increase the utilization of those that have already been completed.
- Research has been conducted in order to better understand working conditions in the horticultural sector, to evaluate the degree of worker satisfaction and/or to determine the profile of seasonal workers. The goal of these studies is to help businesses develop new ways to fulfill their human resources needs. While this research has been quite helpful, these studies are limited and not applicable to all regions. In addition, the findings become dated with the passage of time.

While there has been a great deal of progress and results achieved, the industry is at a critical crossroads with respect to sustainability. The ability to access sufficient numbers of skilled workers, when needed, is critical to long-term stability and sustainability. As a result, it is imperative that the industry plan proactively for the future, rather than continue to rest on its laurels from the past (see Appendix VI).

2.3 CHC Human Resources Committee and Terms of Reference

The mandate of the CHC's Human Resources Committee is to provide a forum for concerned stakeholders to discuss human resources issues, identify the main obstacles to recruiting and training workers, and propose realistic short, medium and long-term solutions for the Canadian horticultural industry.

Starting with an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which affect the Canadian horticultural industry, a number of recommendations are outlined. These recommendations form the basis of a strategy to secure sufficient numbers of reliable and qualified workers, thereby enabling the industry to respond to present and future needs.

More precisely, the seven objectives of the CHC's Human Resources Committee are to:

1. Have roundtable discussions on the key human resources issues in the horticultural sector;
2. Define key human resources issues;
3. If possible, determine linkages between human resources issues in horticulture and those existing in other segments of agriculture;
4. Develop a national strategic human resources business plan to enable the sector to respond to its human resources needs;
5. Determine actions to support needs regarding human resources management;
6. Determine how the human resources business plan will be implemented; and
7. Prioritize national human resources projects (in coordination with other sectors of agriculture where feasible).

2.4 CHC Human Resources Committee Membership

The CHC Human Resources Committee is comprised of members identified by and from the membership of the CHC. In addition, a number of federal government ministries and other technical resources were invited to the discussion table and/or to present data to committee members. Please refer to Appendix III for a list of members.

3. Why Horticulture Matters to Canada's Future

The purpose of this section is to explain the important contribution that the horticultural sector makes to Canada. This contribution goes beyond that which can be measured with economic statistics, even though such statistics do help to explain its importance. Horticulture also makes a vital contribution to the quality of life in Canada.

3.1 Horticulture Is a Growth Sector of Canadian Agriculture

The Canadian horticultural sector is a large, diverse and growing sector. As the graph in Figure 1 shows, total cash receipts for the sector have increased over the past 5 years, led by the expansion of Canada's greenhouse industry. Canada is a world leader in ginseng production and the North American leader in greenhouse vegetable production.

In addition to annual farm gate receipts, annual shipments of processed fruit and vegetables have an estimated value of \$5.8 billion. Significant value is added to Canadian-grown horticultural crops through further processing. The sector is an important source of raw product for a vital part of Canadian food manufacturing for products such as ketchup, fruit juices, pickles, relish, apple juice and sauce, tomato sauces, frozen and canned fruit and vegetables and other products.

The following graph illustrates the growth in farm gate Canadian horticulture over a 5 year period:

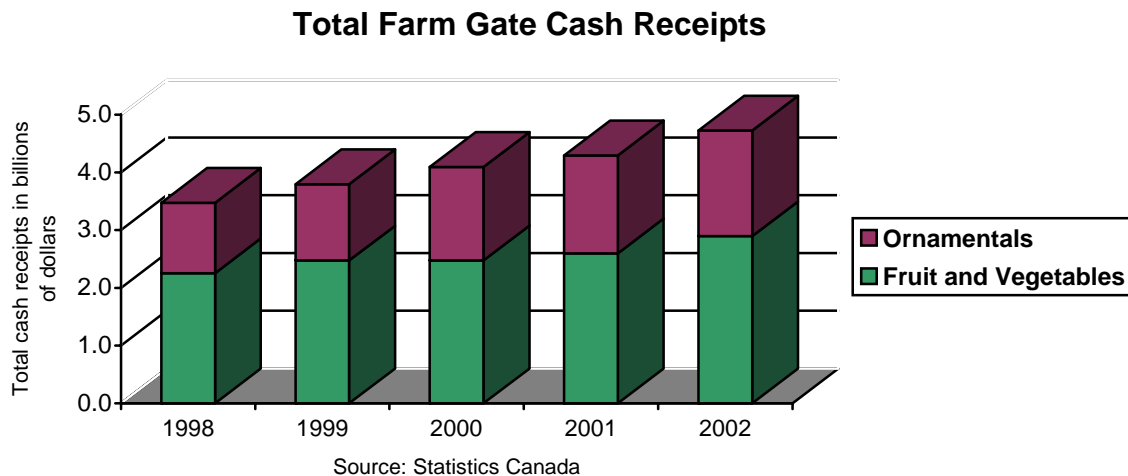


Figure 1 Growth Trends in Canadian Horticulture

On a per capita basis, the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables has been relatively stable for the past 10 years. They are recognized as an important part of a balanced and healthy diet.

3.2 Canadian Horticulture Is Important in International Trade

Canadian horticulture is a large contributor to the economic well-being of Canada, exporting over \$3 billion in products, with the United States (US) accounting for 90 percent of the export shipments. A significant share of the total production of Canadian frozen potato products and greenhouse products are shipped to the US market.

In addition, Canada imports over \$5.3 billion in horticultural products. Some 60 percent of these products originate in the United States, with the remainder coming from all regions of the globe. While not all of these products directly compete with horticulture from Canada (e.g., tropical fruit), all fruit and vegetables compete for a share of the consumers' expenditures on produce. In addition, some of the imports to Canada are products that are also grown and/or processed here (e.g., apples, strawberries, tree fruits, potatoes, tomato paste, cut flowers, etc.). As such, there is direct competition for market share, consumer loyalty and retailer support.



Figure 2 Canada's Trade in Horticultural Products

The export and import figures above include processed products. Domestic production refers to farm gate cash receipts.

3.3 Labour Is a Major Part of the Cost Structure of Horticultural Production

Unlike other sectors of agriculture, where increased levels of mechanization have boosted productivity and reduced labour costs, labour remains a very significant part of the total cost of horticultural production. Because of the need for manual handling in many facets of horticulture (e.g., pruning, picking, etc.), labour will continue to be a major cost in the future. The table below compares the labour cost per acre of certain horticultural crops.

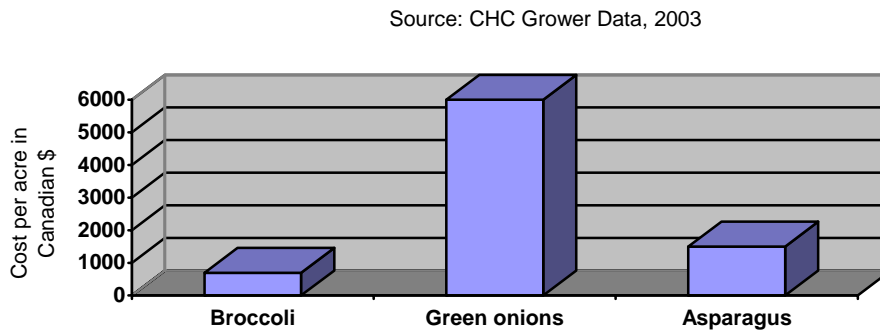


Figure 3 Typical Labour Cost per Acre for Various Crops in Canada

In addition to representing a high absolute cost per acre, labour represents a significant percentage of the total cost of production. As such, the competitiveness of horticultural production in Canada is highly dependent on the cost of labour.

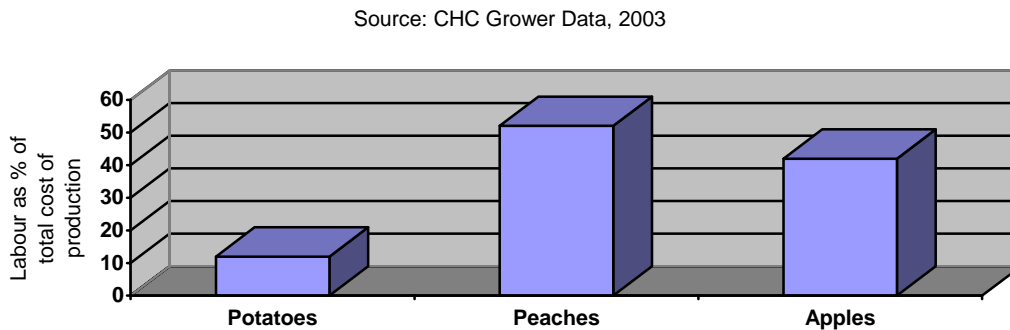


Figure 4 Labour as a Percentage of Total Production Cost for Various Crops in Canada

For some horticultural crops, labour costs are as high as 50 to 60 percent of the total cost of production. Because of higher costs and revenues per acre, horticultural crop land has higher value per acre compared to other uses of land for agriculture. Because municipal taxes are assessed on the basis of land value, horticultural producers pay proportionately more in municipal taxes. Payroll taxes on a per acre basis are also higher (e.g., EI, CPP) due to the higher labour cost per acre than for other sectors of agriculture. The industry's contribution to public sector revenues is significant. It is not unusual for a Canadian horticultural farm to contribute up to \$900 per acre in government taxes. The ornamental sector is estimated to

contribute over \$300 million in GST revenues. It is therefore in the interest of governments to help sustain the success of Canadian horticulture.

3.4 The Current Workforce for Horticulture in Canada

Data on the current workforce for horticulture in Canada is available for the Caribbean and Mexican Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (C/MSAWP). Currently all provinces participate in this program, except for Newfoundland and British Columbia. Although there are other important sources of employees for the sector, the utilization of workers in this program is captured in the graph below.

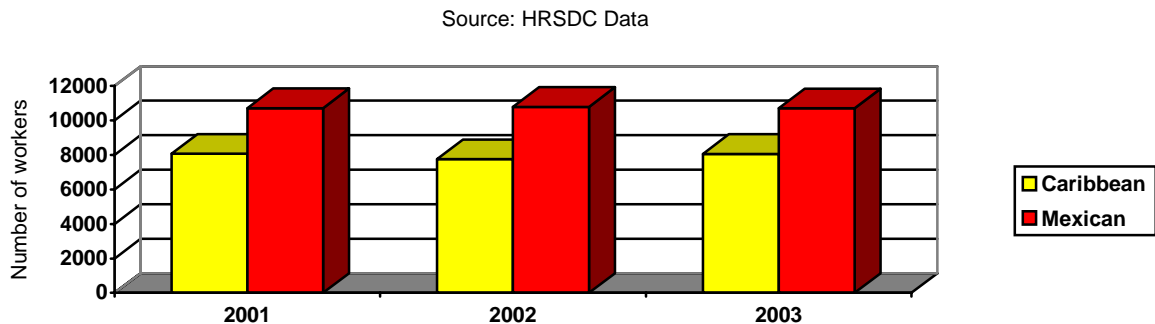


Figure 5 Number of Caribbean and Mexican Seasonal Workers in Canadian Horticulture

Canadian horticulture plays an important role in providing income for these foreign workers. It is also an important source of income for students in Canada, and often their first entry-level job.

The horticultural industry is also responsible for the indirect creation of a significant number of jobs at supply chain, distribution and selling points, as well as in research and development in both private research centers and universities across Canada.

3.5 How Canadian Horticulture Differs From Other Sectors of Agriculture

- Intense import competition, in some cases from low-cost labour and less regulated jurisdictions, as well as jurisdictions with higher productivity due to longer growing seasons;
- Highly perishable product with short harvest windows;
- Highly seasonal demands for labour;
- Less opportunity than in other sectors to automate processes due to the large number of tasks which must be performed manually (e.g., pruning, picking, etc.);
- Significant multi-year investment in the ground (orchards, vineyards, greenhouses, crops such as asparagus and ginseng, etc.);
- Ornamental production is a significant part of the sector (e.g., flowers, nursery stock, etc.);
- Climate controlled storage facilities; and
- Storage costs for horticultural crops are much higher than for grain crops.

Source: CHC Grower Data, 2003

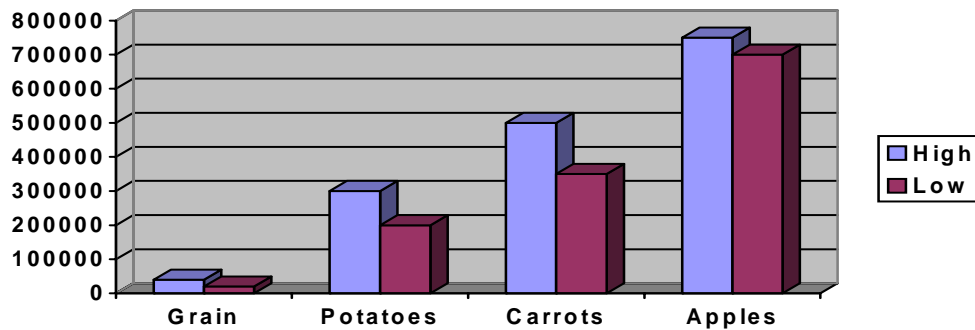


Figure 6 Relative Capital Costs of Storage for 100 Acres of Production

3.6 Market-Driven Integration across the Supply Chain

The expectations of consumers are constantly rising. The plentiful availability of a wide variety of high quality imported produce has educated consumers and raised their expectations for uniformity of size, good colouration without defect, and excellent eating qualities. The number of major retail customers is declining as the grocery industry in Canada consolidates. In an effort to take advantage of economies of scale in distribution and better monitor product quality and food safety, most major retailers have reduced direct store deliveries and are increasingly reliant on central warehousing. To ensure that these higher marketplace standards are consistently met or exceeded, horticultural workers must continuously develop greater skill levels.

For example, a producer of annual plants will partner with one or more distributors. As the party closest to the consumer, the distributor will determine the preferred colors and the most appropriate containers to achieve maximum sales and returns. It is therefore very important that producers and garden centre retailers receive appropriate training so that they can be responsive to the needs of consumers and work in close collaboration with one another.

All future implementation of human resources initiatives in the Canadian horticultural sector need to take into account the business relationships existing in the supply chain.

3.7 Different Skills Will Be Needed as the Industry Changes

The horticultural industry is dispersed all across Canada. The industry is exposed to a wide variety of climatic conditions, which are a risk factor affecting product yield from one year to another, as well as from one region to another.

Horticulture is adopting new technologies and cultural methods that are consistent with environmentally sustainable agriculture. For example, the increased use of integrated pest management strategies has resulted in a decline in the utilization of pesticides, instead targeting their use to specific intervention when scouting indicates that they are necessary and will be effective. As the horticultural sector becomes more sophisticated in its application of technology (e.g., drip irrigation, removing field heat, GPS technology for field monitoring, greater use of scanning technologies to provide traceability to the field, etc.), the type and level of skills needed for work in horticulture will change.

3.8 The Health, Aesthetic and Environmental Benefits of Horticulture

Horticulture promotes health by providing fruit and vegetables with many known health benefits. For example, the lycopene in tomatoes has been clinically shown to reduce the risk of prostate cancer in men.

The ornamental sector of horticulture contributes to higher property values because effective landscaping with Canadian-grown nursery stock enhances the value of real estate.

Horticulture beautifies communities and promotes a general pride of place and home. In addition, it stimulates garden inspired tourism and encourages both passive and active recreational activities that bring communities and families together.

Horticulture provides measurable benefits from an environmental point of view because plants:

- Produce oxygen;
- Reduce soil erosion;
- Reduce noise pollution;
- Provide shade and windbreaks, thereby conserving heat energy in the winter and reducing the need for air-conditioning in the summer; and
- Trap environmentally harmful carbon dioxide (greenhouse gasses), naturally filtering pollutants in the air, water and soil.

Horticulture enhances nature and provides many other benefits which will last for generations to come.

4. Human Resources in Horticulture

The Canadian horticultural sector has experienced consistent, double-digit growth over the past 10 years. As a result of market trends, this growth is expected to continue. As such, any barriers to growth must be addressed proactively. One major challenge facing the horticultural sector is that of ensuring a sufficient supply of the right human resources, at rates which are competitive. In order for the industry to grow successfully, human resources issues that must be effectively addressed include the recruitment, retention, training and continuing education of horticultural workers.

Changing demographics, as the Baby Boom Generation ages and retires from the workforce, are creating a shortage of labour. This unprecedented situation, in which the absolute number of people leaving the workforce at the end of their careers will be greater than the absolute number entering, has been identified as a serious issue for some time now. It is already taking place in some parts of Canada, and even with aggressive immigration rates, will continue to occur across Canada over the next 10 years. The imbalance between the supply of workers and the needs of the horticultural industry will be adversely affected by these general trends in labour in Canada.

Since the early 1990's, many activities (refer to the list in Appendix VI) have been undertaken in an effort to support the day-to-day management of horticultural businesses. The implementation of human resources councils in different regions, initially supported by federal dollars at the national level, has contributed significantly to constructive outcomes for the industry.

When federal financial support ended, it became more difficult for some regional councils to pursue their missions. However, others did make progress towards pursuing their mandates and were able to complete a number of important activities to support the horticultural sector in their respective regions. In the absence of a funded national structure the various associations exchanged ideas and resources and continued their important human resources activities. However, our human resources development results could be accelerated if the sector council becomes a reality.

Stakeholders agree that a number of actions must be taken in order to implement a more coordinated approach to resolving barriers to growth that stem from human resources issues. The first action is to implement an effective national council. As well as playing a pivotal role in coordinating issues across regions, the council will arrange for an analysis of the prevailing labour situation in the Canadian horticultural industry. With this current research in hand, it will be possible to set appropriate priorities and deliver actions which will have the greatest positive impact possible.

Progress in this regard was made through an initial industry roundtable session in November, 2003. A second, follow-up roundtable session took place in January, 2004. While the first session served more of a problem identification purpose, the focus of the second session was on developing proposed solutions to the problems identified during the first roundtable.

These sessions have united stakeholders representing all sectors of horticulture from across Canada and have focused specifically on the identification of significant strengths as well as emerging opportunities. In addition, the industry identified a number of critical weaknesses and threats that could have a serious impact on horticulture if insufficient action is undertaken.

Collectively, these sessions produced recommendations around four key themes that are presented in Section 5. From these discussions, there was consensus that there is a need for an ongoing national structure to facilitate exchanges between stakeholders. This forum will enable the development of common activities and strategies regarding human resources management and provide the coordination necessary to make progress.

However, before proceeding any further, we think it is important to present an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Canadian horticultural industry, with respect to human resources issues. This background will enable a better understanding of the recommendations for action which follow.

4.1 Strengths

- Horticulture has experienced sustained growth across many sectors over the last 10 years;
- The sector has drawn more workers from the C/MSAWP and integrated them as a core part of the workforce – this has been a win/win situation, providing valuable service for Canadian horticultural producers and allowing the repatriation of worker earnings to less advantaged regions of the world where they are making a profound difference to the living standards of the workers and their families;
- Training has been expanded, for example, to provide leadership training for supervisors, and conferences on conflict management and communication, as well as on-the-job training for certain groups of workers with increased use of signage and training materials in languages other than English and French;
- Several improvements in monetary and non-monetary incentives to horticultural workers, such as holiday pay, overtime pay and/or end-of-season bonuses, have had positive impacts and increased the attractiveness of the sector for workers; and
- Innovative technology has been implemented in a number of sectors to increase productivity, allowing certain manual tasks to be automated – the application has been greatest in crops for processing.

4.2 Weaknesses

- Difficulties in recruiting sufficient numbers of workers for both skilled and unskilled positions for seasonal periods;
- Ongoing need for workers for tasks that must be completed manually (e.g., pruning, picking, etc.), with little opportunity for automation;
- Intense competition from low-cost labour and less regulated jurisdictions such as China, South America and Mexico;
- Access to many workplaces is not available through public transit, requiring the worker to provide his or her own transportation;
- Working conditions are often physically demanding and may include split shifts or extended hours;
- Structure of EI benefits acts as a disincentive with respect to attracting local unemployed workers and contributes to high rates of turnover; and
- The image of the horticultural sector as a desirable place to work is not strong among the local population.

4.3 Opportunities

- Increasing use of high technology equipment, particularly in greenhouse agriculture, creates positions that require higher levels of employee skill;
- Increasing attention to food and worker safety, and reduction in the use of chemically-based crop protection agents, improves the work environment, especially in climate-controlled greenhouses;
- Performance of tasks in which the worker is connected with nature (e.g., working outside, with living plants, in teams, etc.), presents the opportunity to improve the horticultural sector's image as a green industry;
- Horticultural work is often an ideal first job for Canadian youth, in which they can develop new skills while simultaneously earning an income; and
- Horticultural work is a good option for people who only seek short-term or seasonal work, or who are in transition between jobs.

4.4 Threats

- Reduced availability of employees due to the profound demographic changes facing Canada;
- Social activism, leading to calls for unionization of horticultural workers, could result in the imposition of additional costs which cannot be recovered from the market, thereby threatening the viability of horticultural production and making it uncompetitive;
- Possible dumping of products from foreign jurisdictions in the Canadian market, with little organized opposition or independent review of the pricing practices of importers;
- Low worker productivity due to high rates of turnover;
- Disincentive for working in horticulture inherent in the current EI program, which steers unemployed workers away from accepting seasonal work;
- Lack of government action to address labour issues in horticulture;
- Unless labour needs are satisfactorily addressed, horticultural production in Canada will diminish and as a result, the horticultural industry's contribution to the domestic economy, trade balance and Canada's lifestyle and standard of living will decline correspondingly.

5. Keys Issues and Desired Outcomes

The roundtables' analysis of the current human resources situation in the horticultural sector indicates that there are four major areas which must be addressed. Prompt action to effectively address these issues will improve the sector's competitiveness and remove barriers to growth.

5.1 Recruit and Retain Sufficient Numbers of Trained Employees at Competitive Wages

- 5.1.1** Undertake market research to determine what factors will provide effective messages for attracting and retaining skilled and semi-skilled horticultural employees across all growing regions. This research will begin by attempting to gain an understanding of why horticultural work is perceived negatively by Canadians, and then will assess how attitudinal change might be most effectively undertaken.
- 5.1.2** Develop a database for measuring key performance indicators (e.g., retention/turnover rate, number of unfilled positions, etc.) on an ongoing basis so that the industry has reliable information on which to base its representations to legislators.
- 5.1.3** Survey existing workers' needs with respect to working conditions and overall job satisfaction. Use this information to develop a priority list to determine where the greatest cost/benefit lies with respect to making improvements.
- 5.1.4** Document and communicate best practices for recruiting and retaining workers, such as a healthy work environment focus, communication in the workers' language of choice, opportunities for training and advancement, wage incentives, etc.
- 5.1.5** Develop an effective system for identifying other areas of horticulture or other industries with counter-seasonal labour needs in order to facilitate sharing and pooling of seasonal labour.
- 5.1.6** Work for government policy reform and regulations that facilitate flexibility and mobility, as well as recognize the diversity of horticultural worker roles, including marketing activities.
- 5.1.7** Create working agreements between existing agencies (e.g., immigrants, youth, aboriginals, etc.) and horticultural employers to facilitate recruitment from these sources and follow-up with joint assessment of the outcomes achieved.
- 5.1.8** Encourage innovation in workplace organization and operating methods to focus greater attention on issues such as ergonomic design to reduce worker strain and improve productivity.
- 5.1.9** Work for government policy changes to facilitate the immigration of unskilled workers to Canada to undertake work in agriculture.

5.2 Raise the Profile of Seasonal Workers on the Agenda for Urgent Policy Reform

- 5.2.1** Make the appropriate federal ministries aware of the value and importance of seasonal labour.
- 5.2.2** Determine which regulations need to be changed in order to recognize the value of seasonal work and prioritize which reforms are most urgent.

- 5.2.3** Work with all levels of government to examine and provide incentives and/or recognize and remove disincentives (e.g., CPP, OAS, disability, etc.) for horticultural workers:
- Specifically, the federal government should modify the EI system to allow individuals claiming EI to work on a part-time or seasonal basis in the horticultural sector, without losing or reducing their existing EI benefits;
 - Other changes to EI regulations are urgently needed to remove the disincentives inherent in the system to unemployed workers accepting seasonal work in horticulture; and
 - The relevant provincial ministries need to amend social welfare legislation to enable individuals to work in horticulture without losing their cash and in-kind (non-monetary) social welfare benefits.
- 5.2.4** The C/MSAWP should be expanded at the national level and made affordable for, and accessible to, all stakeholders.
- 5.2.5** The C/MSAWP should also be made available to the marketing and related allied services in ornamental subsectors and farms in which there are on-farm marketing activities.
- 5.2.6** Horticulture should establish a joint industry-government committee to:
- a) Review applications by growers to recruit skilled immigrant labour;
 - b) Identify skilled horticultural occupations which are in short supply and add these to the designated occupations qualifying for points under the *Immigration Act*; and
 - c) Review and reform immigration policies to allow for the arrival of immigrants that will accept horticultural sector jobs, including unskilled positions.
- 5.2.7** Review the EI and CPP premiums paid by seasonal workers and their employers under the C/MSAWP so that these payroll taxes are reduced and/or redirected to provide services of direct benefit to participating employers and workers.
- 5.2.8** Government training funds should be reassessed with a larger share allocated to upgrading programs for those already employed in the industry.
- 5.2.9** Facilitate transportation access from urban centres to rural workplaces.
- 5.2.10** Retain the special status of horticultural workers in provincial legislation, recognizing the increasing diversity of horticultural work - including field work, greenhouse work and marketing.
- 5.3 **Undertake a Campaign to Reshape and Effectively Market the Image of Horticulture as a Desirable Place to Work****
- 5.3.1** The horticultural industry needs to develop and distribute materials to promote and highlight the numerous career options which can be pursued in the various subsectors of horticulture:
- More effective participation at school career days;
 - High school co-operative education programs to provide working experience and develop a positive work ethic in prospective workers;
 - Awards for excellence to top growers for outstanding contributions in worker development and management; and

- National and international exchange programs for students.

5.3.2 Make key people in the education system aware of careers in horticulture:

- Make students who do not plan to attain a high school diploma aware of unskilled entry-level positions, and opportunities to grow with the horticultural industry and acquire skills on-the-job; and
- Make students with technical proficiencies aware of skilled and semi-skilled opportunities in horticulture.

5.3.3 Inform legislators and the public about the critical importance of horticulture to Canada.

5.3.4 Present the “green” image of horticulture; that is, as an attractive employment opportunity and a satisfying way to contribute to society.

5.3.5 Explain the benefits that foreign seasonal workers gain from their work in Canadian horticulture, including the ability to invest their earnings in their home countries, thereby indirectly providing a form of foreign aid.

5.4 Promote a Culture of Continuous Learning and Skills Training

To meet its objectives relative to human resources, the horticultural sector needs to develop the ability to deliver training in short cycle times. All training needs to be designed and delivered with this requirement in mind.

5.4.1 Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the industry’s current training materials by subsector, and make existing materials readily accessible and available to producers.

5.4.2 Identify gaps in current training materials and prioritize a plan for addressing the gaps:

- Materials could include short courses, study groups, video-based instructional materials, independent study modules, correspondence/distance education and modular-based training;
- Horticulture should develop short-term training modules in several technical areas. These may be of general value to more than one sector, or may be specific to particular subsectors or regions. Modules could include topics such as integrated pest management, crop technologies within each sector, pruning techniques, operation and service of farming equipment, grading of products, etc.;
- Upgrade the management skills of owner-operators and supervisors through appropriate courses and international exchange opportunities. Course curriculum topics could include marketing strategy, competitiveness, global marketing, marketing information systems, financial and capital planning, technology and human resources management, etc.;
- Develop an integrated and ladder skills enhancement program linking high school co-op, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and professional development activities; and
- Concentrate owner-manager training on people management and widely disseminate best practices in order to facilitate shared learning.

- 5.4.3** In order to support the needs of the horticultural sector, allow workers receiving EI benefits to access training support for jobs in horticulture through the regional HRSDC offices, regardless of whether or not the jobs are seasonal in nature.
- 5.4.4** Equip supervisory employees with “train-the-trainer” tools to enable them to deliver on-the-job training to workers more effectively.
- 5.4.5** Formalize the training structure to give recognition to workers that have achieved specific levels of knowledge and skill:
- Recognition of skill levels could include voluntary certification; and
 - Apprenticeship standards are needed for certain subsectors such as ornamental.

6. Implementation

6.1 Strategic Actions

- 6.1.1** Establish a National Sectoral Council for Human Resources in Horticulture to focus on implementing the priority recommendations of this report. This organization should be industry-driven with the majority of its representation coming directly from industry. Representation should include the key horticultural sectors and each of the main regions in Canada.
- 6.1.2** Establish effective mechanisms to promptly identify regional issues and ensure that they are addressed by a horticultural sector council. Key stakeholders, including government and training institutions, need to have access to a horticultural sector council for bringing issues forward.
- 6.1.3** Conduct baseline demographic research to identify how changes in the age structure and ethnicity of the Canadian workforce will impact the availability of workers for horticulture.
- 6.1.4** Lobby federal ministries to undertake reforms to address the urgent need for workers in the horticultural sector. These efforts should be led by a National Sectoral Council for Human Resources in Horticulture to ensure an effective, consistent, and unified voice that is able to focus on the urgent and diverse needs of horticulture.
- 6.1.5** Develop employee programs to recognize training received, such as apprenticeship programs based on the European model, which take into account existing Canadian programs.
- 6.1.6** Promote/publicize case studies demonstrating the contributions of foreign workers to the Canadian economy, particularly in horticulture, and the benefits to their home countries from the earnings they gain through their horticultural work in Canada.
- 6.1.7** Improve ongoing monitoring of key performance indicators of worker trends in Canadian horticulture so that the industry has up-to-date statistics on which to base its recommendations.

6.2 Next Steps

Immediate – Organize for Action

- 6.2.1** Establish a National Sectoral Council for Human Resources in Horticulture.
- 6.2.2** Establish subcommittees to focus on action in each of the four key areas:
 - Recruit and retain sufficient numbers of trained employees at competitive wages;
 - Raise the profile of seasonal workers on the agenda for urgent policy reform;
 - Undertake a campaign to reshape and effectively market the image of Canada's horticultural sector as a desirable place to work; and
 - Promote a culture of continuous learning and skills training.
- 6.2.3** Establish a business plan for the horticultural sector council, including mandate, performance measures, linkages, budget, etc.

By the End of 2004 – Determine Where We Stand

- 6.2.4** Complete the research into the profile of Canadian horticultural workers for the 2004 season and develop projections of expected industry needs over the next 10 years in the larger context of our changing demographics.
- 6.2.5** Complete the documentation of all Canadian horticultural training materials available across Canada and from other parts of the world with relevance to Canada.
- 6.2.6** Complete research and development for the campaign to focus, enhance and build the image of horticulture as a desirable place to work.
- 6.2.7** Summarize legislation and regulation governing horticultural workers and prioritize areas where changes are most urgently needed.

In 2005 and Beyond – Continue to Make a Positive Difference through Effective Action

- 6.2.8** Press the case for legislative/regulatory changes to improve worker availability from the local population.
- 6.2.9** Launch a campaign to positively reposition the horticultural industry as an attractive place to work, including testimonials of the benefits gained by foreign workers.
- 6.2.10** Initiate enhanced training programs for regions and subsectors to address as many urgent deficiencies/gaps as possible.
- 6.2.11** Communicate best practices in horticultural sector human resources policies and implement effective workplace changes to enhance worker satisfaction and productivity.

Appendix I Acronyms

CHC	Canadian Horticultural Council
HRRC	Horticultural Human Resource Council
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
SAWP	Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program
C/MSAWP	Caribbean and Mexican Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program

Appendix II Definitions

Horticulture is broadly divided into two categories. In this report, the “edible” category is referred to as fruit and vegetables, and the “non-edible” category is referred to as “ornamentals”. The details of each section are defined further in the table on p.6.

Appendix III

CHC Human Resources Committee Membership

André Mousseau
Conseil Québécois de L'horticulture
3230 rue Sicotte
Saint-Hyacinthe, QC J2S 2M2

Bruce McTavish
Chair,
Department of Production & Retail Horticulture,
Instructor, Business
Kwantlen University College
12666 - 72nd Ave
Surrey, BC V3W 2M8

Chris Andrews
Executive Director
Canadian Nursery Landscape Association
7856 Fifth Line South, RR # 4
Milton, ON L9T 2X8

Claude Laniel
Secrétaire-Coordonnateur
Conseil Québécois de L'horticulture
3230 rue Sicotte
Saint-Hyacinthe, QC J2S 2M2

Dave Sangster
Executive Director
Wild Blueberry Producers Association of
Nova Scotia
168 Dakota Road
P.O. Box 119
Debert, NS B0M 1G0

Doug Connery
Connery's Riverdale Farms
Box 158
Portage La Prairie, MB R1N 3B2

Gilles Szwedzka
La Maison des fleurs vivaces (Ornemental)
807 rue Arthur-Sauvé
St-Eustache, QC J7R 4K6

Glen Lucas
General Manager
BC Fruit Growers' Association
1473 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J6

Greg Webster
Horticulture Nova Scotia
Box 84
Cambridge, NS B0P 1G0

Harold Deenen
Hank Deenen Landscaping Ltd.
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Scarborough, ON M1P 3C2

Ken Forth
Forthdale Farms
RR #1
Lynden, ON L0R 1T0

Laurent Cousineau
Président
Institut Québécois des Ressources Humaines en horticulture
570 boul Roland-Therrien, Bureau 206
Longueuil, QC J4H 3V9

Luce Daigneault
Directrice générale
Fédération Interdisciplinaire de l'Horticulture du Québec
Université Laval
Environtron, Cité Universitaire
Sainte-Foy, QC G1K 7P4

Martine Matteau
Institut Québécois des Ressources Humaines en Horticulture
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Saint-Hyacinthe, QC J2S 7B3

Michael Murray
Murray's Horticultural Services Ltd.
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Portugal Cove, NL A1M 3R6

Terry Murphy
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RR #4, Station Main
Milton, ON L9T2X8

Tony DiGiovanni
Executive Director
Landscape Ontario
7856 Fifth Line South, RR #4
Milton, ON L9T 2X8

Wayne Dorsey
Ontario Potato Board
RR #4
Cookstown, ON L0L 1L0

Appendix IV CHC Membership

British Columbia

B.C. Blueberry Council
B.C. Fruit Growers' Association
B.C. Greenhouse Growers' Association
B.C. Tree Fruits Limited
B.C. Vegetable Marketing Commission
B.C. Potato and Vegetable Growers' Association
Fraser Valley Pea Growers' Association
Interior Vegetable Marketing Cooperative Agency
Island Vegetable Co-op Association
Lower Mainland Vegetable Distributors Inc.
Okanagan Federated Shippers

Representative

Ray Biln
Penny Gambell
Marcus Janzen
Adrian Abbott
Murray Driediger
Judy Galey
John Savage
Jack Wessel
Terry Mitchell
Rick Gilmour
Richard King

Alberta

Alberta Seed Potato Growers Association
Alberta Vegetable Growers' (Processing)
Potato Growers of Alberta
Red Hat Cooperative

Gord Visser
Rob Oudman
Larry Buba
Ralph Van Dam

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Fruit Growers' Association
Saskatchewan Greenhouse Growers' Association
Saskatchewan Nursery Trades Association
Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers' Association Inc.
Saskatchewan Vegetable Growers' Association

Arne Strom
Peter Charles
Tim Van Duyvendyk
Steve Sanders
Shawn Hansen

Manitoba

Chipping Potato Growers' Association of Manitoba
Keystone Vegetable Producers' Association Inc.
Manitoba Root Crop Producers' Marketing Board
Peak of the Market
Seed Potato Growers' Association of Manitoba
Vegetable Growers' Association of Manitoba

Wayne Rempel
Eric Adriaansen
Dave Jeffries
Keith Kuhl
Garry Sloik
Doug Connery

Ontario

Bradford and District Vegetable Growers' Association
Grape Growers of Ontario
Ontario Asparagus Growers' Marketing Board
Ontario Fresh Grape Growers' Marketing Board
Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association
Ont. Greenhouse Vegetable Producers' Marketing Board
Ontario Potato Board
Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board

No rep attended
Ray Duc
John Jacques
Larry Hipple
Ken Porteous
Burkhard Metzger
Wayne Dorsey
Len Troup

Theford Grand Bend Vegetable Growers' Association

John Smits

Québec

Association des jardiniers maraîchers du Québec

Conseil québécois de l'horticulture

Fédération des producteurs de pommes de terre
du Québec

Fédération des producteurs de pommes du Québec

Fédération des producteurs maraîchers du Québec

Fédération interdisciplinaire de l'horticulture
ornementale du Québec

Fédération québécoise des producteurs de fruits et
légumes de transformation

Groupe Vegco Inc.

Syndicat des producteurs d'oignons du Québec

André Turenne

Claude Laniel

Pierre Chouinard

Steve Levasseur

Louise Tardy

André Mousseau

Gilles McDuff

Jean-Yves Lohé

Jean-Bernard Van Winden

New Brunswick

Apple Growers of New Brunswick

New Brunswick Potato Shippers' Association Inc.

New Brunswick Seed Potato Growers' Association

New Brunswick Wild Blueberry Growers' Association

Potatoes New Brunswick

Paul LeBlanc

Mark Hanscome

Robert Jeppesen

Jennifer Stewart

Patton MacDonald

Nova Scotia

Horticulture Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association

Nova Scotia Potato Marketing Board

Scotian Gold Cooperative Limited

Wild Blueberry Producers' Association of N.S.

Greg Webster

Andrew Bishop

Greg Coldwell

David Cudmore

Dave Sangster

Prince Edward Island

Mid-Isle Farms

P.E.I. Horticultural Association Inc.

P.E.I. Potato Board

P.E.I. Potato Dealers' Association

P.E.I. Potato Processing Council

P.E.I. Seed Potato Growers' Association

Potato Producers' Association of P.E.I.

Bertram Webster

Brenda Simmons

Ivan Noonan

Alvin Keenan

Dwight Gardiner

Robert MacDonald

Gary Linkletter

National and International

Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Canadian Nursery Landscape Association

Canadian Ornamental Plant Foundation

Flowers Canada

Frozen Potato Institute

Beth Patillo

Henry Heuver

Todd Baker

Bob Martin

Chris Kyte

Provincial Governments

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Manitoba Department of Agriculture and Food
N.B. Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Aquaculture
N.S. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
P.E.I. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries,
Aquaculture, and Forestry

Representative

Christine Murray
Andrew Sullivan
Bills Moons

Brian Dykerman
Peter Rideout

Chris Jordan

Appendix V CHC Corporate Profile

The CHC is a voluntary, not-for-profit, national association with a long and proud history of representing the dynamic and diverse sector of Canadian agriculture known as horticulture. The CHC has been committed to promoting the interests of its members since 1922.

From the Atlantic to the Pacific, the CHC's members are primarily involved in the production and packing of over 120 horticulture crops comprised of fruit, vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants.

Our Mission

The CHC's mission is an unwavering commitment to advance the growth and economic viability of horticulture by encouraging cooperation and understanding to build national consensus on key issues, thereby delivering unified and clear representation to governments and other national and international parties.

Membership

Members include provincial and national horticultural commodity organizations representing more than 20,000 producers in Canada, as well as allied and service organizations, provincial governments and individual producers.

There are two levels of membership within the CHC: Associate and Active. Individual producers and industry suppliers are eligible for Associate Membership (non-voting status) while associations and other groups are designated as Active Members and allocated voting status.

Our Mandate

The CHC has a clear mandate to be a strong and active presence in the nation's capital on behalf of the sector by bringing issues to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), and other federal and provincial ministers and departments, as directed by membership.

Our Focus

The CHC maintains a broad focus on behalf of the membership. The issues embrace an extensive range of needs and concerns, such as:

Research and technology:

- access to crop protection tools and new technologies, including biotechnology
- development of tools to facilitate the marketing of horticulture production
- ensuring appropriate research is provided to the sector and that policy makers are kept aware of sector priorities and changing needs

Trade and industry standards:

- food safety, crisis management
- assisting commodity sectors when faced with threats to their business
- providing input on foreign trade agreements and ensuring a favorable business environment through fair import and export rules
- monitoring plant health issues and actions
- ensuring a user-friendly regulatory environment
- communication and dialogue with the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) and its members, the Food Institute of Canada (FIC) and Canadian Snack Food Association (CSFA) so as to foster the relationship between growers, packers, wholesalers, retailers and processors

Finance and human resources:

- promoting equitable safety net programs for all horticultural producers in Canada, monitoring federal employment regulations and continuing to support the Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Service (FARMS) and Fondation des entreprises ayant recours à de la main-d'oeuvre étrangère (F.E.R.M.E.) seasonal worker programs

Collation and dissemination of information to members is a key function of the CHC.

Committee Structure

The following committees are actively involved in addressing and bringing focus and consensus to issues of particular importance to their sector:

Apple and Fruit Committee
Crop, Plant Protection and Environment Committee
Finance and Marketing Committee
Food Safety Committee
Human Resources Committee
Potato Committee
Research and Technology Committee
Trade and Industry Standards Committee
Vegetable Committee

The national office is responsible for coordinating, communicating and advancing the needs of horticulture as directed by the Executive and Finance Committees and the Board of Directors on behalf of the membership.

Governance

Governance of the CHC is the charge of the Executive and Finance Committees, who have been assigned this responsibility by the Board of Directors on behalf of the members.

Appendix VI Project Listing

A) Ontario Region

1. General Activities

- 1.1** Created the Horticultural Training and Education Centre (HORTEC), which is a partnership between the Association and the Community College in order to focus energy on integrating all levels of training into a “laddered”, effective and integrated training delivery model. The model will be housed at the Landscape Ontario 50 Acre site and the students will learn the horticultural trade by building and maintaining extensive public gardens.
- 1.2** Organized an association for horticultural teachers at the post-secondary school level, called the Ontario Horticultural Educators Committee (OHEC). The purpose is to develop synergies and integration possibilities with existing education programs.
- 1.3** Organized a secondary school teachers association called the Horticultural Ontario Secondary Teachers’ Association (HOSTA).
- 1.4** Created a scholarship program that distributes over \$25,000 in post-secondary school scholarships each year.
- 1.5** Developed a secondary school scholarship program aimed at urging young people to study horticulture.
- 1.6** Worked with Skills Canada to develop a horticultural skills competition at the high school and post-secondary school level. The contest is held at the Canada Blooms Flower and Garden Show and it exposes the 125,000 attendees to the horticultural industry.
- 1.7** Participated in numerous job fairs encouraging young people to consider horticulture as a career.
- 1.8** Developed partnerships with the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program in order to link high school co-op students with the horticultural industry.
- 1.9** Working on a high school skills certification program based on the Certified Horticultural Technician Program.
- 1.10** Worked with the Ministry of Environment to develop and deliver the Pesticide Technician Program. This pesticide safety program is unique in that it employs a network of 350 accredited examiners to deliver and test (theory and practical) over 5000 pesticide technicians. The Ministry has given us the right to administer the certification and training model.
- 1.11** Developed and executed a high school communication and awareness program that utilizes regular visits to high schools and participation in guidance counsellor conferences in order to get the horticultural message out to young people.
- 1.12** Developed brochures and posters communicating the details of a horticultural career.
- 1.13** Developed a website called <http://hortcareers.com/>.

- 1.14 Developed an interactive CD explaining the benefits of a career in horticulture.
- 1.15 Developed a career PowerPoint presentation that can be used by employers at local career fairs.

2. Owner/Manager Training and Education

- 2.1 Developed a series of Owner/Manager Human Resource Guides that were distributed to all horticultural operations.
- 2.2 Developed seminars and courses to present the material covered in the Owner/Manager Workbook.
- 2.3 Developed over 80 winter workshop seminars covering sector specific human resources subjects. These seminars have been hugely successful, attracting over 1,700 people per year. During the past 10 years, we have delivered training and education to over 17,000 people.
- 2.4 Incorporated human resources related topics at our monthly chapter meetings.
- 2.5 Incorporated human resources related topics at our annual conference attracting an additional 10 to 14 thousand people.
- 2.6 We are in the process of developing a Certified Horticultural Professional (CHP) and Certified Landscape Professional (CLP) designation that will be universally accepted by the industry across Canada. This is almost complete and will serve as a template and guide for continuing professional development.
- 2.7 Sponsored a detailed Seasonality Study through the University of Guelph. This study has been instrumental in helping the industry develop retention programs, such as “Banking Hours” and sharing employees with other seasonal industries.
- 2.8 Developed a Safety Plan that has been instrumental in promoting a safety culture and helping to reduce accidents in the horticultural sector.
- 2.9 Developed a Safety Manual that is used by the industry as a guide for tailgate sessions with employees.
- 2.10 Worked with the Work Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) to develop pioneering safety training programs for the industry. The Safe Communities Program and Safety Groups Program have been instrumental in reducing WSIB Insurance premiums by almost 50 percent because of a reduction in accidents in the sector.
- 2.11 Administered the Science and Technology Grants Program.
- 2.12 In partnership with the Agriculture Human Resource Council, we developed a Safety Audit Program that has helped farmers and horticulturists implement safety systems in their unique workplace.

2.13 Written numerous articles appearing in trade magazines dealing with all aspects of human resources development.

2.14 Developed a national health insurance program for employers and employees.

3. Employee Development

3.1 Developed and delivered a Certified Horticultural Technician Program (CHT) which is a unique practical evaluation program for horticulturists. This program serves as a guide for continued employee training.

3.2 Developed promotional material creating awareness for utilizing CHT graduates.

3.3 Developed a plan to integrate skills based certification at all levels of the education system beginning with high school students and laddering from co-op, pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, apprenticeship, technology, university and professional development. This ambitious plan was the subject of an Education Symposium held at Humber College in January 2004.

3.4 Developed a Winter Workshop Program for employees.

3.5 Delivered a hugely successful Youth Initiatives Program to provide basic training to unemployed youth and then provide them with jobs in the industry. This model has worked very well and there are numerous success stories of changed lives.

3.6 Delivered seven Youth Initiatives structured programs, apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs.

3.7 Coordinated activities of the Industry Advisory Committee to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. We are working to integrate the Industry Certification Program with the Apprenticeship Program.

3.8 Executed communication programs to encourage employers to sponsor apprentices.

Terry Murphy, Director

Tony DiGiovanni, Chair

Ontario Horticultural Human Resource Council

B) Québec Region

1. Promotion of Human Resources Management

1.1 Organization of La Semaine horticole

Annual event that presents two days of conferences and seminars hosting around 800 participants from different specializations of the horticultural production sector.

1.2 Organization of Conferences

Several conferences were organized on:

- Labour legislation;
- Mobilization and discipline; and
- Individual and organization.

1.3 Horticultural Sector Safety Group

Our Horticultural Sector Safety Group boasts a membership of more than 300 businesses, all of which favour prevention in the workplace and together account for a total payroll of \$85,000,000.

1.4 Prix de gestion des ressources humaines en horticulture

This award is to honour and recognize a horticultural business that has distinguished itself in the area of human resources management.

1.5 Inventory of Tools Used to Identify Manpower Costs in the Horticultural Sector

This study aims to look into the tools used to assess manpower costs that may already exist in horticultural production or that could be adapted to businesses in this sector. Canadian and foreign research centers and universities were consulted for this research.

1.6 Communication and Extension

Articles and communiqués are written regularly, in conjunction with horticultural sector associations, to transmit information on human resources issues.

1.7 Labour Standards

Analysis of the recommendations of the Commission des normes du travail (CNT) and the economic impact on horticulture was completed. A document reporting the demands of the horticultural industry was presented and one of the demands was actually retained by the legislator.

1.8 Group Insurance

Provide information to employers to raise awareness of the opportunity to develop a group insurance scheme tailored to horticulture.

1.9 Code of Good Practice for Human Resources

This code, created in 1998, was revised, updated and republished in three languages (French, English and Spanish).

1.10 Employers' Reference Kit

Specifically created for companies offering goods and services in the ornamental horticultural sector, this publication is a reference guide to better human resources management.

1.11 Adaptation of Managing People on Your Farm

The French adaptation of this publication, created in 1997 by the Canadian Farm Business Management Council (CFBMC), was supervised by the IQRHH.

1.12 Study on the State of Québec's Manpower in the Ornamental Horticultural Sector

We were asked to conduct a study to analyse several aspects of the situation regarding manpower in the sector of ornamental horticulture in the province of Québec.

2. Manpower Training and Development

2.1 Development of Training Manuals

Manuals have been written for training sessions on:

- Training of horticultural supervisors; and
- Communication and how to resolve conflictual situations.

2.2 Improving Working Atmosphere

Session (7 hours) given to managers.

2.3 Pay Equity Training

Considering the obligations specified in the *Pay Equity Act*, a training program specifically tailored to horticultural businesses was developed to help them fulfill these new obligations.

2.4 Review of the Training Programs in Ornamental Horticulture

Two programs aimed at students studying towards a secondary school vocational diploma were reviewed. Industry participation was enlisted to ensure that the Ministry of Education would take industry requirements into account.

2.5 Training Program for Young People With Disabilities

Young people with a mental deficiency had the opportunity to take part in a training program, after which they were integrated into the work force.

2.6 Horticultural Skills Development Training Fund

This fund makes it possible to finance the development of training activities needed by the sector.

2.7 Participation in the Agricultural Manpower Sectoral Committee

This committee aims to define the action plan needed in the area of manpower development in the agricultural production sector.

2.8 Science and Technology Internship Program

Assured the administration of this program, which allows graduates to integrate into the work force and acquire valuable work experience directly related to their field of specialization.

2.9 International Internship Program

Designed to help young workers under 35 years of age gain new work experience and become acquainted with other working methods in their area of specialization (businesses in the ornamental horticultural sector are matched up with similar businesses in France).

2.10 Reference Bank of Qualified Candidates

Graduates in the field of horticulture make use of the services provided by the reference bank. There is also the opportunity for businesses to post job openings via the website.

3. Job Promotion

3.1 Information Kit on Horticultural Jobs

A simple, handy document, called *Les métiers de l'horticulture*, has been published and distributed to provide additional information on the job categories, functions and employment conditions found throughout the horticultural sector in Québec.

3.2 Meeting With Students

Each year, the IQRHH meets with students from different schools, providing information on employment throughout the horticultural sector.

3.3 Project for the Development of a Sectoral Communication Framework

The IQRHH asked authorities to finance a communication plan in order to meet the specific needs of the horticultural sector.

3.4 Media Relations

We collaborated with different media to provide information on manpower in the horticultural industry.

3.5 Develop Partnerships and Projects at a National Level

Work in partnership to analyse projects made by sector councils (success stories); to evaluate the possibility of partnership with the Alliance of Sector Councils; to develop tools for the promotion of horticultural jobs; to improve human resources management; etc.

Martine Matteau, directrice générale

Laurent Cousineau, président

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Appendix VII Bibliography

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* Figures 1 and 2 were synthesized from information in the three AAFC documents cited above and other data provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.