



HEADLINES

CHC Executive meets with Minister Ritz and House of Commons Standing Committee Chair Merv Tweed Meet

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Mark Your Calendar

CHC Executive meets with Minister Ritz

On February 28 CHC President, Murray Porteous, and First Vice-President, Keith Kuhl, and CHC EVP, Anne Fowlie, met with Minister Gerry Ritz. The discussions touched on the need to expedite changes to Plant Breeders' Rights to extend the period of protection; working with industry to give full and careful consideration to proposed transition measures to mitigate the impact of the repeal of *Standard Container Regulations*, and the need for AAFC and CFIA interventions to secure access to the lucrative Chinese market for Canadian cherries.



L to R: Keith Kuhl, Hon. Gerry Ritz, Murray Porteous (February 28)

However, the focus of the meeting was the Canada-US Regulatory Cooperation Council and the Financial Protection for Produce Sellers Action Item. "First and foremost, this is about Canadian farmers getting paid. Secondly, we must ensure we maintain our privilege to access provisions of the US Perishability Commodities Act (i.e.: reciprocity) and bring resolve to a trade irritant with our most important trading partner - the United States" said Porteous. AAFC is due to provide a report to the RCC on March 31.

Cost recovery related to PCN testing and the rationale for requesting a one year delay in implementing the Seed Potato Quality Management Program were also discussed. Keith Kuhl, who also serves as Chair of the Canadian Potato Council, noted members of the CPC would be discussing these two issues during the upcoming annual meeting in order to provide follow-up requested by the Minister.



L to R: Murray Porteous, Merv Tweed (MP Brandon- Souris) and Chair, House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food (February 27)

CHC Meets with House of Commons Standing Committee Chair Merv Tweed

On February CHC President, Murray Porteous, and EVP, Anne Fowlie, met with MP and House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food Chair, Merv Tweed. Discussions focused on the repeal of *Standard Container Regulations* and measures for government consideration to help mitigate the impact and assist with transition.

These include: delaying the implementation to 2017, harmonization of crop protection products and MRLs, accelerated capital cost allowance, increase the threshold for the Small Business Tax Credit, develop and implement a domestic food purchase program and expedited extension of the period of protection under Plant Breeders' Rights. The Standing Committee will soon be undertaking a study on beverages and this will provide a window opportunity for the CHC to speak to the Committee regarding the repeal. RCC Financial Protection for Produce Sellers was touched on briefly and will be the topic of discussion for a subsequent meeting.

CROP PROTECTION

Bayer CropScience Expanding Labels in Canada

Labels for some products from Bayer CropScience, including Admire, Reason and Flint, have been expanded to bring Canadian fruit and vegetable growers access to more diversified crop protection options.

In a press release dated February 19, 2013, Bayer noted that over the past five years, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has modified how registrants can satisfy the data requirements. Today, a zonal approach can be used, allowing U.S. data to be submitted in a Canadian registration. This gives the industry a greater opportunity to address the technology gap between the U.S. and Canada. The gap is closing as a result of coordinated efforts by all stakeholders including the PMRA, Pest Management Advisory Council (PMAC), Canadian Horticultural Council, global regulatory bodies, grower groups and crop protection companies.

COMMODITY CORNER

USA Weekend and "The Doctors" Highlight Cholesterol-lowering Benefits of Apples

Almost 50 million people learned about the cholesterol-lowering capabilities of apples on Feb. 17 from *USA Weekend*. The popular Sunday publication partnered with the Emmy Award-winning medical television show "The Doctors" to advise Americans on small steps to keep their cholesterol on track, including eating apples.

"They're a source of soluble fiber, which helps reduce absorption of cholesterol into the bloodstream," The Doctors' article in *USA Weekend* said. The article also noted that a "small study of healthy, middle-aged adults has found that having one apple a day for four weeks lowered blood levels of oxidized LDL cholesterol," which is the type of "bad" cholesterol that hardens arteries. According to The Doctors authors, study participants who ate the fruit itself had better results than study participants who took capsules of polyphenols, an antioxidant found in apples.

"More than 40 million Americans have high cholesterol, including many New Yorkers, who could benefit from the cholesterol-reducing effects of eating apples grown right here in our home state," Linda Quinn, consulting dietitian to New York Apple Association, said in a press release. "This is more proof that an apple a day may indeed keep the doctor away — in this case, the cardiologist!"

"Apples are New York state's number one fruit, so this is good news for New York residents and apple growers alike," NYAA President Jim Allen said in the release. "This one article will reach more people with this positive message about apples than we can reach with a year's worth of advertising."

New CFIA National Farm Level Biosecurity Standards on Display at the CHC's AGM 2013

The CFIA Office of Animal Biosecurity will be in attendance with a display at the CHC AGM to provide information on the National Farm Level Biosecurity Standards that have been developed under AAFC funding under Growing Forward. Biosecurity Standards developed to date with extensive input from producers, provincial government, CFIA and AAFC include potatoes, grains & oilseeds, beef cattle, dairy and avian.

The development of a voluntary farm level biosecurity plan will define and formalize many of the risk reduction practices that are already in place in the day-to-day operation on Canadian farms, and will assist producers in addressing potential biosecurity gaps that may exist in current operations. CFIA staff will be available to answer questions related to farm level biosecurity.

TRADE

Outlook for the Canadian Agriculture Sector Shows Positive Performance

Three new reports released today by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are showing a positive outlook for farmers in 2013. "The forecast for 2012 reflects that farm incomes are once again at an all-time high," said Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "The outlook shows that global demand for agricultural commodities will be driven by growth in developing economies, which is why our government continues to place such a strong emphasis on opening new and maintaining existing markets."

The three new reports, the Farm Income Forecast for 2012 and 2013, the Medium Term Outlook, and the Farm Income, Financial Conditions and Government Assistance Data Book 2012, provide an overview of the financial and market outlook for the sector and offer a benchmark for producers, industry stakeholders, and governments as they plan for the years ahead.

Highlights include:

- The Farm Income Forecast report highlights that farmers are prospering from continued high commodity and livestock prices. The sector will once again report record-high income levels for 2012 and can count on a continued positive outlook for 2013.
- When the final figures are in for 2012, net cash income for the entire sector is expected to rise 14 per cent to \$13.1 billion, which is a new record income level, and remain at a near record in 2013 of \$12.9 billion.
- While performance varies by sector, the average net operating income for Canadian farms is expected to reach a new record of \$74,190 in 2012, 17 per cent greater than the 2011 level and 50 per cent above the 2007–11 average. The net worth of an average farm is forecast to grow by 8 per cent in 2012 to reach \$1.8 million.
- Average total income of farm families, which includes family income from all farm and non-farm sources, is

projected to reach \$127,106 in 2012, 8 per cent above 2011 levels.

- Over the medium term, strong global demand, particularly from major emerging economies, will underpin continued strong prices and growth for the sector.
- Farm Cash Receipts for the vegetable sector were down in 2012 but are expected to be stable through 2013.
- Significant growth in Farm Cash Receipts for fruits, due primarily to the high price of apples.
- Blueberries Farm Cash Receipts were up 25% in 2012 from the previous year and are expected to stay steady through 2013.
- Strong growth in strawberries at 20% in 2012.

For more information on the Farm Income Forecast for 2012 and 2013, the Medium Term Outlook, and the Farm Income, Financial Conditions and Government Assistance Data Book 2012, please visit [Economic and Market Information](http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1177676316971&lang=eng). (<http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1177676316971&lang=eng>)

FOOD SAFETY

Extension of Comment Period (to May 16, 2013) for Information Collection Provision Associated with Two FSMA Proposed Rules

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is extending the comment period for the information collection provisions associated with the proposed rules on "Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food" and "Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption" that appeared in the Federal Register of January 16, 2013.

CPMA Repacking and Wholesale Food Safety Program Technically Sound

On February 22, 2013 the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) received notice from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) that the CPMA Repacking and Wholesale Food Safety Program (RWFSP) has successfully completed the Technical Review Part 1 of the Post Farm Food Safety Recognition Program, an assessment of the technical soundness of the program.

The RWFSP food safety program is based on HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) principles and is designed for companies who are involved in wholesale and repacking of fresh fruits and vegetables.

FDA Announces Inspections of Cantaloupe Packinghouses

FDA has announced its intent to start conducting inspections of U.S. cantaloupe packinghouses, specifically targeting *Listeria*, during the 2013 growing season in an effort to assess the current practices of the industry and identify unsanitary conditions that may constitute a health risk to consumers.

New food safety resources are available for the cantaloupe industry, including the availability of the National Commodity-Specific Food Safety Guidelines for Cantaloupes and Netted Melons. Released this month, this guidance was developed cooperatively by many industry stakeholders and provides a modern framework for production, harvest, post-harvest and handling of cantaloupes. The guidance can be downloaded at no charge by visiting this website: www.cantaloupe-guidance.org.

CanadaGAP Food Safety Manuals Updated for 2013

Updated versions of the CanadaGAP Food Safety Manuals have now been released

1) Fruit and Vegetable Manual, Version 6.1: covers field/orchard/vineyard-grown crops (i.e., Combined Vegetable, Leafy Vegetable and Cruciferae, Potato, Small Fruit, Tree and Vine Fruit)

2) Greenhouse Manual, Version 6.1: covers greenhouse-grown vegetables.

The revised CanadaGAP manuals have been reviewed and the changes approved by CFIA. For certification purposes, the new manuals take effect on **April 1, 2013**. A corresponding update to the CanadaGAP audit checklist will be issued prior to that effective date.

To facilitate the transition to the updated manuals, the following resources can be found at:

<http://www.canadagap.ca/manuals/manual-downloads/>

The updated manuals are available as a free download

A document summarizing commodity-specific differences is available

Revisions documents tracking the changes from previous versions of the manuals are available

CanadaGAP continues to maintain six separate generic HACCP models, which are available upon request. This approach ensures that any issues or scientific developments affecting only certain crop groupings or commodities will continue to be addressed with the appropriate technical rigour.

In general, requirements for all crop groupings remain largely unchanged for 2013, except where additions were needed to meet requirements of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), to which the CanadaGAP program is benchmarked. Otherwise the majority of revisions to the manuals are editorial in nature, to clarify or further explain existing requirements. Please direct any questions to info@canadagap.ca

CanadaGAP Audit Checklist – Release of Version 6.2

Now available on the CanadaGAP website is Version 6.2 of the CanadaGAP Audit Checklist for 2013. A revisions document showing the changes between Versions 6.1 and 6.2 is available for download at: www.canadagap.ca/en/tools/audit-checklist.aspx.

The CanadaGAP Self-Declaration and Self-Assessment checklist has also been updated for 2013. A copy of the updated version is available for download at www.canadagap.ca/en/tools/audit-checklist.aspx.

The Corrective Actions Report has also been updated for 2013. The document is now an Excel file and can be downloaded from www.canadagap.ca/Uploads/Content/8991e628-03ff-4a80-9cfc-063927f8ae4e_Corrective_Actions_Report_-_2013_ENG_en.xls.

Also available for download is the Group Management System Checklist Version 6.0 for 2013. A copy is available at www.canadagap.ca/en/tools/audit-checklist.aspx.

REGULATORY UPDATES

China Notifies WTO Trading Partners of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Notification Related to 137 MRL's for 62 Pesticides

On August 15, 2012, Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China issued a notice on its website, announcing the National Standard of Maximum Residue Limits of Avermectins and 63 others kinds of pesticides in food draft which was released for comments. The standard provides main application, acceptable daily intake, residue definition and maximum residue limits of 64 pesticides in food.

For more information and associated documents please contact Craig Anderson at canderson@hortcouncil.ca. If you identify any impact that these MRL's may have on your sector, please advise CHC by March 21st, 2013.

LINKS OF THE MONTH

CFIA: Horticulture Info Page

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/plants/horticulture/eng/1299167784070/1299167874884>

Find direct information and links to: Importing plants and plant products: What you need to know

Plant Protection Policy Directives

- Export requirements for horticulture products
- Import requirements for horticulture products
- Horticulture pests of concern

Mark Your Calendar

MARCH	12	Invasive Alien Species Symposium, The Westin Ottawa (canderson@hortcouncil.ca)
	12 - 15	Canadian Horticultural Council Annual General Meeting, The Westin Ottawa, ON www.hortcouncil.ca
MAY	30	4H Canada 100th Anniversary Gala Celebration http://www.4-h-canada.ca/core/en/celebrate-2013

To list your event in HortShorts, please submit details to question@hortcouncil.ca