



## HEADLINES

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SECURING FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR PRODUCE SELLERS A TOUGH JOB

AAFC ANNOUNCES NEW ASSOCIATE DEPUTY MINISTER

LONGSTANDING CHC MEMBERS HONOURED BY JAMAICAN PRESIDENT

FARM PRODUCTS COUNCIL OF CANADA ANNOUNCES BEEF IMPORT LEVY

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### CHC Board of Directors Meets in PEI

The CHC Board of Directors travelled to PEI for the summer meeting held on July 25-26. In addition to their regular business, the board met with members of the CHC's PEI Caucus in a special session dedicated to hearing of the importance of horticultural production to the economy and way of life on the Island. PEI Potato Board General Manager, Greg Donald, provided a comprehensive and enlightening presentation on the potato industry and other aspects of Island agriculture.



L to R: CHC Board members Peter Swetnam (NS), Alvin Keenan (PEI) and PEI caucus member, Fulton Hamill

A highlight of the summer meeting is the tour and opportunity to visit CHC members and their operations in order to gain a better insight and understanding of regional issues and particular challenges. The tour included stops at:

**MacKenzie Produce** (Stratford): produces 60 acres of cabbage for the fresh and processing markets, 15 acres of broccoli, 15 acres of turnips, as well as cauliflower, two types of Chinese cabbage, cucumber, pumpkins and gourds.

**Vanco Farms Ltd.** (Mt. Albion): potatoes and tulips and their products are available across Canada and in the eastern USA. Three lines of fresh produce are available: Pure Organics potatoes, Vanco Farms potatoes and Vanco Farms tulips.

### Canada's Smartest Kitchen,

Holland College, Charlottetown: The facility evolved from the incredible success of the Culinary Institute of Canada. The "Kitchen" offers a complete range of culinary food product development and marketing and promotional services to a broad range of clients from PEI and beyond. The PEI Potato Board hosted a dinner for CHC Board members and invited guests. Potato Board Chairman, Gary Linkletter, thanked the CHC for visiting PEI and stressed the importance and relevance of the CHC and its work and the importance of "getting the messages out".



L to R: CHC President Keith Kuhl and Allan Williams, Research & Development Chef, Holland College

**Wyman's of Maine** (Morrell): produces wild blueberries on more than 10,000 acres in Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Wyman's is over doubling its PEI processing plant, and will increase production at the site from eight million to 20 million pounds a year.

**Brookfield Gardens** (Brookfield) grows almost 300 acres, most of which are carrots. Other crops include Green and Yellow Beans, Corn, Beets, Cucumbers, Broccoli, Iceberg and Romaine Lettuce, Green and Red Cabbage, Green and Red Leaf Lettuce, Parsnips, Cauliflower, and Turnips. Their produce can be found in nearly every supermarket on PEI. They also sell to a number of local wholesalers, who then redistribute it to restaurants and food service vendors across PEI and their vegetables are sold around Atlantic Canada and overseas.

The group also stopped at an equipment manufacturing site owned and operated by **Elwood Lawton** and witnessed firsthand the innovation and entrepreneurship which led to the development of mechanization in harvesting wild blueberries.

CHC President, Keith Kuhl, noted that the Board of Directors appreciated the tremendous warmth and hospitality shown during the visit and the “leadership, vision and commitment PEI has always brought to CHC”.

### **Securing financial protection for produce sellers a tough job**

Industry efforts towards securing financial protection for produce sellers continue. However, this is proving to be a tough job even though the issue has been identified as an action item for resolution under the Canada-US Regulatory Cooperation Council initiative.

In April 2013 AAFC confirmed a willingness to consider a single licensing approach, which has been an industry objective since the Dispute Resolution Corporation was established. However, the “getting paid” piece remains outstanding and is the final piece of the puzzle. Finding a means to achieve an outcome equivalent to that provided by the US PACA (Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act) is proving to be a significant challenge.

Since the formal government/industry bilateral meeting held in Washington in June, a number of facilitated “think tank” sessions have been held in Ottawa. The most recent session was held at the CPMA offices on August 13. In addition to members from CHC, CPMA and the DRC participation in the facilitated session also included representation from AAFC, CFIA, Industry Canada, Farm Credit Canada, Privy Council Office (PCO), USDA, Western Growers, The Blue Book and others.

In recent correspondence to CHC President, Keith Kuhl, Minister Ritz noted “the Government also announced that it recognizes the potential to go beyond a single licensing approach and is undertaking further analysis on other possible risk mitigation measures for the fresh produce sector. The ultimate objective remains to develop a made-in-Canada solution that improves our financial risk mitigation system and provides comparable outcomes to what is offered in the U.S.”

The CHC remains hopeful that this final piece will indeed be achieved and is fully committed to contributing to a successful outcome.

### **AAFC Announces New Associate Deputy Minister**

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has announced the appointment of Timothy Sargent as the new Associate Deputy Minister. Mr. Sargent brings to the job extensive experience with the Privy Council Office (PCO) where he was Acting Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet (Operations) after serving as Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet (Economic and Regional Development Policy). Prior to his roles with the PCO, Mr. Sargent held a number of positions with Finance Canada, most recently as Director of the Financial Institutions Division. Mr. Sargent will be supporting Deputy Minister, Suzanne Vinet, and will be taking on specific responsibilities in the areas of food processing, the dairy and grain sectors, and regulation. Of special interest to the fruit and vegetable sector, Mr. Sargent will be leading the departmental efforts to advance agricultural interests within the Canada-United States Regulatory Cooperation Council agenda.

### **Longstanding CHC members and pioneers of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program Honoured by the President of Jamaica**

On August 6, 2013 the Office of the Prime Minister of Jamaica announced appointments to the Orders of the Societies of Honour and recipients of the Badge of Honour. Among those recognized were **Ken Forth** and **Hector Delanghe** who have been awarded the Badge of Honour for Long and Faithful Service. Congratulations to both Ken and Hector for their well-deserved recognition.

### **Farm Products Council of Canada Announces Beef Import Levy**

Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz and Canada Beef Chair Chuck MacLean recently welcomed a new import levy that will provide new investments in research and market development for Canada's beef industry. An amendment to the Beef Cattle Research, Market Development and Promotion Levies Order will see the current levy of \$1 per head of cattle for beef marketed in Canada applied to importers.

Canada Beef estimates an additional \$800,000 will be collected through the import levy on an annual basis, and these funds will help increase the profitability of Canada's beef sector.

Canada Beef, formerly known as the Canadian Beef Cattle Research, Market Development and Promotion Agency, was established in 2002 under Part III of the *Farm Products Agencies Act*. The Agency was formed to fund promotion and research initiatives and was the first Promotion and Research Agency established under the Act. Promotion and research agencies enable agricultural groups to conduct generic promotion and research to expand their markets and increase sales through advertising. The FPCC supervises agencies established under the Act to ensure that they fulfill their objectives.

The Canadian Potato Council is currently conducting a feasibility study into the establishment of a promotion and research agency for Canada's potato industry. Results are expected late in 2013.

## **COMMODITY CORNER**

### **Innovation is Key in Canadian Greenhouses**

Greenhouse operators are seeing a bright future with new growing techniques and technologies. Mastronardi is working with Phillips to trial an LED interlighting system at its Coldwater, Mich. facility, with the intention of growing tomatoes 12 months a year. The company's EnviroFresh Farms in Courtright, ON, is on the cutting-edge of green technology, utilizing waste steam and carbon dioxide from a neighbouring fertilizer company to grow produce.

Another quantum leap forward in vegetable greenhouses is the potential use of robotics to undertake tasks like harvesting. Vineland Research and Innovation Centre in Ontario's Niagara region is developing robots that harvest and package mushrooms. The software that indicates what mushrooms to pick has already been developed, and Vineland is currently testing individual components of the robot, such as the gripper tool that grabs the mushroom. The aim of the technology is to alleviate both the cost of labour and challenges in labour supply.

### **Canada Invests \$2.9m in Nigerian Vegetable Research Project**

Canada has invested \$2.9 million in a Nigerian research project for the 'Sustainable Production and Utilisation of Under-utilised Nigerian Vegetables', which will enhance food security. The study, which is currently being carried out by the Osun State University, Osogbo, was only announced after a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by all parties.

It is jointly funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under the Canadian International Food Security Research Fund (CIFSRF), and will see the University of Manitoba and Cape Breton University, both from Canada, also participate in the project.

### **Global Warming Thought to Cause Apples to Lose Crunch**

Global warming is causing apples to lose some of their crunch but is also making them sweeter, according to a recently released study.

Analysing data gathered from 1970 to 2010 at two orchards in Japan, a research team said there was clear evidence that climate change was having an effect on apple taste and texture. About 60 million tonnes of apples are produced every year, making it the world's third most popular fruit.

Previous studies had shown that global warming was causing apple trees to flower later, and that harvests were also affected by changes in rainfall and air temperature.

### **PEI Blueberry Growers Expecting Above Average Season**

Prince Edward Island blueberry growers are expecting a banner crop this year and are hoping prices won't drop.

Dave MacNearney, president of the P.E.I. Wild Blueberry Growers Association, is hoping for an above average season this year, but is certain things won't duck below normal. "We could be anywhere between an average year to a big year," he said, noting the final yield should be between 12 and 14 million pounds.

As for price, he's expecting to see a price in line with what they received last year, which is near the breakeven point of 60 cents-per-pound.

### **PEI Poor Raspberry Crop a Mystery for Farmers**

P.E.I. consumers felt a shortage of raspberries on grocery store shelves as a result of low yields in the province. The situation was much the same for growers and consumers around the Maritimes. It is suspected that climate change, and last year's dry summer may be contributing factors.

### **Kelowna Orchards Devastated by Hail Storm**

A hail storm hit a section of East Kelowna on August 12 and devastated local orchards and vineyards. Roughly 15% of the 2013 apple orchard production has been lost, according to Glen Lucas, General Manager of the BC Fruit Growers' Association. "The damage equals probably about twenty to thirty thousand bins, and at three hundred dollars a bin, that's roughly six million dollars, so it's a big loss for growers," noted Lucas. According to BC Fruit Growers' Association President, Jeet Dukhia "It's not just the apples, it's the leaves too and the body of the trees are damaged too. Some of the buds on the trees have been hit, and that will show up in next year's production so it will be a couple of years before these trees will recover."

### **Nova Scotia Strawberry Damage Extensive**

Damage suffered by Nova Scotia's strawberry growers is worse than the province first estimated. Berry operations around the province have been decimated by a complex virus transported by aphids, which likely arrived via purchased plants. Although the department is still calculating numbers, damage may well exceed the 40% estimated earlier.

### **Cornell Releases Two New Apple Varieties under New Program**

Two new apple varieties, formerly known as NY1 and NY2, developed by the Cornell University apple-breeding program, have been released. Before being released, the apples underwent rigorous agronomic review as well as a year of intensive consumer testing. According to the announcement SnapDragon's name is derived from its crispy texture. The variety gets its texture from a Honeycrisp parent and has a spicy-sweet flavor.

RubyFrost, a later variety, stores well and "should appeal to consumers who also like Empire and Granny Smith. It has a crispy juiciness and a nice sugar-acid ratio.

Both varieties have been more than a decade in the works and mark a new way for varieties to be commercialized in the Northeast (US). In the past, universities developed varieties and released them into the public domain, no strings attached. In May 2010, Cornell and the New York Apple Growers formed a partnership for managed releases. Under the program, growers pay royalties on trees purchased, acreage planted and fruit produced. Income generated is used to market the new varieties and support Cornell's apple-breeding program. The first trees were planted commercially in 2011, and about 400 acres are now growing across New York state. A limited volume of the two varieties will be available for the 2014 season, according to the release.

## **CROP AND PLANT PROTECTION**

### **Spotted-Wing Drosophila Detected in North Dakota**

The spotted-wing drosophila has been detected in North Dakota for the first time. It was discovered in a cherry fruit sample from the North Dakota State University Carrington Research Extension Center. The damaged fruit sample was submitted to the NDSU Plant Diagnostic Laboratory and identified by Patrick Beauzay, NDSU Extension Service entomologist.

The tiny spotted-wing drosophila belongs to the fruit fly or vinegar fly group. It is two to three millimetres long, and has bright-red eyes, a light-brown body and dark-brown stripes on its abdomen. It is native to Japan, Korea and China.

It first was detected in the US in central California in 2008 and is now widespread in fruit-producing areas. This is the first confirmed record for North Dakota.

It was detected in western Montana in 2011 and Southeastern Minnesota in 2012. Human-assisted transportation, rather than natural dispersion, most likely is the cause of its rapid spread because the spotted-wing drosophila does not fly far.

### **EPA Introduces New Pesticide Labels to Better Protect Bees and Other Pollinators**

In an ongoing effort to protect bees and other pollinators, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed new pesticide labels that prohibit use of some neonicotinoid pesticide products where bees are present.

The new labels will have a bee advisory box and icon with information on routes of exposure and spray drift precautions. Today's announcement affects products containing the neonicotinoids imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin and thiamethoxam. The EPA will work with pesticide manufacturers to change labels so that they will meet the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) safety standard.

In May, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and EPA released a comprehensive scientific report on honey bee health, showing scientific consensus that there are a complex set of stressors associated with honey bee declines, including loss of habitat, parasites and disease, genetics, poor nutrition and pesticide exposure.

The agency continues to work with beekeepers, growers, pesticide applicators, pesticide and seed companies, and federal and state agencies to reduce pesticide drift dust and advance best management practices. The EPA recently released new enforcement guidance to federal, state and tribal enforcement officials to enhance investigations of beekill incidents.

More on the EPA's label changes and pollinator protection efforts:

<http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/ecosystem/pollinator/index.html>

View the infographic on EPA's new bee advisory box: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/ecosystem/pollinator/bee-label-info-graphic.pdf>

## **TRADE**

### **Canada Wholesale Sales Fall From Record in Widespread Drop**

Canadian wholesale sales fell in June from a record the previous month with declines in every major category, led by farming and building supplies, adding to signs of a mid-year slowdown in the world's 11th largest economy.

Statistics Canada reported that wholesale sales dropped 2.8 percent to C\$48.8 billion (\$47.1 billion), the fastest since January 2009. All seven major categories tracked by the agency fell in June, Agricultural supplies plunged 22.6 percent to C\$2.02 billion, offsetting a similar increase the month before, to lead an 8 percent drop by miscellaneous wholesalers.

### **PMA Fresh Summit Returns to New Orleans**

This year's Fresh Summit Convention & Expo has been designed to make it easier for attendees to find the innovative ideas that keep businesses ahead of the curve, and to connect with other attendees who have similar interests during Produce Marketing Association's (PMA) 2013 Fresh Summit convenes October 18-20, returning to New Orleans for the first time since 2002. <http://www.freshsummit.com/>

### **FDA Issues New Foreign Supplier Verification Programs**

On July 26, the Food and Drug Administration issued the Foreign Supplier Verification Programs — proposed rules covering oversight of imported produce and accreditation of third-party auditors — as part of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

For a copy of the new rules please contact CHC Commodity Coordinator, Craig Anderson, at [canderson@hortcouncil.ca](mailto:canderson@hortcouncil.ca)

## **Modernization of the Automated Import Reference System (AIRS) Web Site**

The Automated Import Reference System (AIRS) is a user friendly, searchable database of CFIA import requirements. Through a series of questions and answers the system leads users through the applicable regulations and policies to information on all CFIA import requirements for specific commodities.

Please be advised that a modernized version of the AIRS website was released on August 6, 2013. The following changes were made to make the AIRS website compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG):

- An updated look and feel;
- Making the AIRS website WCAG Compliant for accessibility screen readers;
- The addition of various features and tools to enhance overall user experience;
- Links to User Guide and to register for update emails will be more user accessible; and
- Reflects more logical workflows to application functions for users

Four information sessions were offered to the public in both official languages to provide an overview of the improvements to the AIRS website, as well as to gather user comments prior to the official release.

## **FOOD SAFETY**

### **Report on the CFIA Food Safety Regulatory Forum Released**

On June 4, 2013, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) hosted a Food Safety Regulatory Forum with 200 external stakeholders in Gatineau, Quebec. The forum formally launched consultations with stakeholders on key food safety and consumer protection initiatives that the CFIA is pursuing in order to modernize food safety.

To read a report of what was heard during the forum, visit the CFIA website at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/action-plan/food-safety-regulatory-forum/what-we-heard-report/eng/1376322785251/1376323248143>

### **FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) – UPDATE: New Resource for Farmers Now Available**

The [I have a Farm - Does the proposed preventive controls rule affect me?](#) (PDF: 292KB) will help you determine if the proposed rule on preventive controls would apply to your farm.

For additional information, see the [FSMA Proposed Rule for Preventive Controls for Human Food Factsheet](#).

### **CFIA and AAFC Collaborating on Key Plant Health Research in BC**

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) researchers are joining forces to support Canada's horticulture industry. This collaborative plant health research is being carried out in British Columbia at the Sidney Centre for Plant Health and the Pacific Agri-food Research Centre in Summerland. In this venture, CFIA and AAFC researchers and staff are working closely and collaborating on joint research priorities to improve efficiencies and share critical knowledge and expertise in matters of plant health.

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/eng/1376345688469/1376345694835>

### **FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) – UPDATE – New Fee Rates**

FDA is announcing the fiscal year (FY) 2014 fee rates for certain domestic and foreign facility re-inspections, failures to comply with a recall order, and importer re-inspections that are authorized by the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (the FD&C Act), as amended by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

For more information:

- [Federal Register Notice for FSMA Domestic and Foreign Facility Reinspection, Recall, and Importer Reinspection Fee Rates, Fiscal Year 2014](#)
- [FSMA Fees](#)

## **REGULATORY UPDATES**

### **Summer/Fall 2013 Edition of USDA's Fruit and Vegetable News Released**

The USDA is pleased to present the Summer/Fall 2013 edition of USDA's "[AMS Fruit and Vegetable Program News](#)." In this issue, USDA introduces Anne L. Alonzo, the new Administrator of the [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service \(AMS\)](#). You'll also find program updates; information about additional resources offered by USDA, including our [webinar series](#); and, the following articles:

- Market News Introduces the New Custom Average Tool
- PACA - An Ounce of Prevention: Oranges
- AMS Commodity Procurement: Meeting the Needs of Schools and U.S. Agriculture
- Specialty Crop Inspection Division Supports the USDA Commodity Purchase Program
- Blendability Builds New Mushroom Market
- An Industry and Government Partnership to Expand Almond Exports

This and previous issues of the newsletter can be found in the ["AMS Fruit and Vegetable Program News" library](#).

## LINKS OF THE MONTH

### Interesting Look at the Holland Marsh in Ontario

The **Holland Marsh Growers' Association** (HMGA) is releasing seven video clips highlighting the experiences of farmers in the Marsh.

- Safe Food Sound Practices: <https://vimeo.com/channels/561375>
- Feeding the Golden Horseshoe & Beyond: <https://vimeo.com/channels/561042>
- Moving Farming Forward <https://vimeo.com/channels/561377>

### Fourth Annual Canadian Agricultural Policy Conference

The Fourth Annual Canadian Agricultural Policy Conference will be held at the Château Laurier in Ottawa, Ontario on January 29-31, 2014. The general theme of this year's conference is *Policies and Regulations for a Thriving Canadian Agri-food System*.

See the attached flyer and check the conference website in the coming weeks for more information: <http://www.ag-innovation.usask.ca/2014policyconference.html>

In order to highlight some of the current agri-food research, a poster presentation is held in conjunction with the evening Wine & Cheese reception on Thursday evening. In 2014, the evening reception will be January 30th. Conference delegates are invited to view the posters and direct any questions on the research to the researchers. Delegates viewing the posters have an opportunity to vote for their first, second and third choice winners for the poster awards.

The Call for Posters is now open. Submission details can be found by in the Call for Posters. Poster submissions are being accepted until October 31, 2013.

### AAFC – PRR Program: 2013 Implementation Projects

A list of new [pesticide risk reduction projects for 2013](#) has been published on the [Pest Management Centre](#) of [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#) website.

Brief descriptions of the projects are available, and these are hyperlinked below. All projects funded through the [Pesticide Risk Reduction Program](#) can be viewed [here](#).

## *Mark Your Calendar*

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<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>13-14</b>	NAFTA Technical Working Group on Pesticides, Stakeholder Government Meeting, Ottawa, ON.
	<b>18</b>	CanAgPlus Annual General Meeting, Sheraton Hotel, Ottawa, ON Info at: <a href="http://www.canadagap.ca/events/annual-general-meeting/">http://www.canadagap.ca/events/annual-general-meeting/</a>
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>4-6</b>	Canadian Horticultural Council, Annual General Meeting. Kelowna, BC

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***To list your event in HortShorts, please submit details to [question@hortcouncil.ca](mailto:question@hortcouncil.ca)***