

Cherry Notes



Newsletter of the Okanagan Kootenay Cherry Growers
Association

March 2010

Comments by the Chair

What a great AGM we had in early February. Lynn Long our keynote speaker talked about crop load management and rootstock. Our other well prepared speakers kept us informed on topics ranging from post-harvest care of fruit to climate change. Thanks to all presenters on behalf of the 80 or so attendees.

2010 is shaping up to be yet another challenging one for our industry. With last year's poor market returns, the presence of a new pest (spotted wing drosophila - SWD) ongoing wasp issues and what looks like an early spring and bloom, it's going to be interesting for sure.

We can't do anything about the weather and little about the over planting of cherries by our competitors but we can address the bugs. The OKCGA has committed \$25,000 to a project to monitor SWD. The vinegar fly was found in East Kelowna last fall and we need to see if it is in other areas in our cherry growing area.

Make no mistake, this pest has the potential to be a very high risk to our industry and we all need to be alert. With 5 or 6 generations and eggs laid directly in the fruit, exposure time is short so spraying will be continuous. We do have sprays but most are unacceptable at market. This is a very fast moving pest with several hosts including cherries, peaches, plums and grapes as well as most berries.

The very best we can hope for is it won't do well in our climate and will turn out like apple maggot but we can't assume anything and must be aggressive. We will keep you informed as we learn more.

We also will be continuing our work on wasps. Duane Holder will be expanding his previous work with trapping queens in spring hoping to have an impact on summer populations. Once again we'll keep you posted.

While our finances are in very good shape with the infusion from our "Fruitsize" royalty, the DIAP agreement with PICO and the feds and of course your voluntary levies, there is much to do. We were fortunate to have the means to contribute to the SWD project as it appears there is no funding from BCMAL. I'd like to thank all those members who did contribute their levies in a challenging year. It is not lost on our board that you see value in our work on your behalf. Thanks.

There's so much more to report. Hopefully we can stay on top of the many issues that are part of growing top quality cherries in BC. Enjoy our newsletter, thanks to Frank Kappel again. I'm looking forward to reporting on the

Pesticide Minor Use March meetings in Ottawa next time.

Good luck with all the pruning, frost and pollination.

Greg Norton, OKCGA President



FOOD SAFETY - Help and Options

Whether you are considering becoming certified through one of the many Food Safety programs for the first time or are renewing an existing certification, there finally may be help available.

The Government of Canada's 'Growing Forward' initiative for agriculture offers the 'Food Safety Systems Initiative' (FSSI) program which has been designed to develop information resources for producers looking to make a more informed decision, to offer financial assistance with costs and assist with the logistics of implementing a food safety program. The FSSI program offers cost sharing of up to \$3,000 at a 90% cost share from the program!

To find out more about what the FSSI program has to offer, eligibility criteria and application deadlines you can visit the BC Agriculture Development Corporation's (ARDCORP) website, www.ardcorp.ca then clicking on the Food Safety System Implementation link.

Under this program the Okanagan Kootenay Cherry Growers Association have cooperated to see Joe Lariviere and Dwight Brown recognized as Canada GAP trainers. Joe and Dwight are also certified auditors for the Canada GAP program and have been providing producers and packers assistance in the implementation of various On Farm Food Safety (OFFS) and Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) programs for over 5 years.

Joe Lariviere is also a certified Planning Advisor for the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program. While Food Safety is not the focus of the EFP program, it offers some entry level information relating to on farm food safety, is delivered at no cost to agricultural producers and may also provide financial assistance relating to infrastructure improvements that may be required to achieve Food Safety

Certification. For more information on the EFP program you can contact Joe Lariviere directly (joe.lariviere@vip.net or 250-689-0498) or visit the EFP web site, www.ardcorp.ca then clicking on the Environmental Farm Plan link.

For cherry growers, GLOBALGAP has been the program that has been most demanded and recognized by overseas markets. But we are beginning to see a growing demand by both domestic and foreign markets for Food Safety programs other than or additional to GLOBALGAP. We are also hearing talk of the various programs being benchmarked against the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) standard, (www.mygfsi.com). The hope being that this will allow a producer to have one Food Safety certification that will be recognized by multiple destination markets.

GFSI is an internationally recognized standard whose mission is 'continuous improvement in food safety management systems to ensure confidence in the delivery of safe food to consumers.' Long established programs such as GLOBALGAP have been benchmarked to the GFSI standard, while younger programs

such as Canada GAP are in the process of becoming benchmarked.

One primary difference between GLOBALGAP and Canada GAP is that while GLOBALGAP sets compliance criteria relating to worker health & safety, environmental stewardship and the sustainable use of resources, the scope of Canada GAP is limited to issues directly related to food safety.

As such the Canada GAP program can be less complicated to implement. The Canada GAP program also provides complete templates for all of the requisite risk assessments and record keeping requirements. Auditors are more available on a regional basis, which contributes to lower certification costs. While a deadline for Canada GAP becoming benchmarked to the GFSI standard has not been set, it is hoped that this will be achieved by 2011. This is the date that Loblaw has set as a deadline for all fresh produce entering their distribution networks to be represented by a Food Safety certification that has been benchmarked to the GFSI standard. To view more complete information on Canada GAP program and benchmarking, visit www.canadagap.ca

Joe Lariviere and Dwight Brown are available to provide general information, training workshops or to work with you directly in preparing for a OFFS or GAP certification audit.

You can contact **Joe Lariviere** at joe.lariviere@vip.net or by calling 250-689-0498.

Dwight Brown can be reached at [dwightbrown@vip.net](mailto:dwrightbrown@vip.net) or by calling 250-498-6367.



Spotted Wing Drosophila

Spotted wing drosophila (SWD), *Drosophila suzukii*, a vinegar fly, was confirmed from a cherry orchard in the Central Okanagan Valley in October 2009. It is an extremely fast-spreading fruit pest originally from Asia. It was established in Hawaii by 1986 and first detected within North America in California in late 2008. During 2009, it was found in

Florida, throughout Oregon and Washington State, and in Spain. By September 2009, spotted wing drosophila had also been confirmed in berries and grapes throughout the Fraser Valley of B.C.

Unlike most vinegar flies, which normally infest overripe, fallen, decaying fruit, spotted wing drosophila females lay their eggs inside sound fruit before harvest. This contaminates fruit with larvae, and causes it to become soft and unmarketable. It is known to infest thin-skinned fruit including cherry, blueberry, strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, peach, plum, nectarine and grape.

Spotted wing drosophila is poorly understood outside Japan. It exists in Hawaii, apparently without serious concern in the context of their established Integrated Pest Management programs. Preliminary climate modelling is conflicting: the Okanagan Valley may be only marginally suitable, or may host 6-7 generations per year with the first generation adult emerging about late May to early June.

OKCGA has already approved up to \$25,000 towards SWD monitoring. Susanna Acheampong, Howard Thistlewood and Molly Thurston

developed a 2-year proposal for monitoring and assessment of SWD in the Similkameen, Okanagan and Creston valleys. Funding requests have been made to the BCMAL Biosecurity Fund, the Tree Fruit Industry Development Fund and the Agriculture Environment & Wildlife Fund. The OKTF Cooperative, PARC and BCMAL will provide coordination, extension and research support. In addition to the monitoring project, emergency registration of control products is underway.

Growers will be kept up to date on SWD activities by email and newsletters as information becomes available. In the meantime growers should be aware of the possible presence of SWD. Information on yeast bait traps is included in the 2010 Tree Fruit Production Guide (new publication this year). Pictures and more detailed information on SWD is available at www.al.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/swd.htm

If you suspect the presence of SWD please contact **Susanna Acheampong** at the BCMAL Offices in Kelowna (1-888-332-3352).



Living Water Smart: British Columbia's Water Plan

BC's water law framework - it's complex

BC's water law framework is as complex as the resource itself. Water falls from the sky and then makes its way into the natural watercourses that flow downstream to the Pacific or the Arctic Oceans. Because of the transitional nature of water and the many land based activities that can affect it, the laws that apply may vary depending on where you are or what you are doing. Federal, provincial and local government laws all play a role in managing water resources.

The Water Act is the primary water law in BC requiring licences for all water uses, except for limited domestic and prospecting uses, and the use of ground water which is not presently regulated. Water supplies for future needs may be protected by water reserves and Water Management

Plans may be developed and implemented to address conflicts.

Water that flows across BC's borders may be subject to international laws and treaties or interprovincial agreements. In national and provincial parks water is a protected natural resource and its use is restricted or prohibited. Water use or construction of instream works may also be restricted to ensure protection of fish habitat and navigation as required by federal laws. The Water Protection Act prohibits the bulk removal of water from BC except in containers of 20 litres or less. Water bottling is subject to federal health regulation.

Drinking water protection in BC is a public health issue. The Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, along with Regional Health Authorities, protect drinking water quality through the Drinking Water Protection Act.

BC's water law framework includes the regulation of land-based activities to protect water resources. Forest and range activities must be carried out in a way that avoids impacts on water quality, particularly in community watersheds and adjacent to fish bearing streams. Mining, mineral

exploration and oil and gas development activities are also regulated to avoid adverse effects on water sources.

The development of private land may be subject to zoning and other local government bylaws. Official community plans and regional growth strategies can also take water needs into account and ensure steps are taken to avoid detrimental effects on water resources.

Protection of public safety from some of the hazards associated with water is an important part of the framework. The owners of dams are responsible for safe operation and maintenance of their dams and must regularly carry out inspections. Regional governments use by-laws to restrict development of lands that may flood. There are large areas in the province where development has already occurred on land that is subject to a flood risk. A system of dikes provides protection from floods for much of that land and provincial laws ensure the dikes are properly maintained.

While there is not much we can do about the complexity of the hydrologic cycle, we would like to hear your ideas on ways to make

the legal framework simpler to understand and easier to administer.

<http://blog.gov.bc.ca/livingwatersmart/>



2010 Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Update

The 2010 EFP program start date is April 1, 2010. Applications will be dealt with on a first-come, first serve basis. With limited funding available, it is suggested that if you are considering applying for BMP funding under the EFP program this year, contact your planning advisor soon to avoid disappointment.

Plan renewal - many cherry growers were among the first in BC to complete a plan. To qualify for BMP funding you must have a renewal plan in place. By the time you read this a review policy will be in place. Check your records to see when you expire.

New Plans - If you haven't yet completed a plan, do so. This is a free service that introduces producers to environmental planning, regulation compliance and even money to correct non-compliances.

Two planners, **Joe Lariviere** and **Pete Spencer** are available to tree fruit growers to assist in the EFP process.



Did You Know

Tas cherries on their way to Korea

11 Feb, 2010 04:00 AM

THE FIRST-ever consignment of Australian cherries left this week for Korea.

The cherries, which were grown in Tasmania, will be part of celebrations for the Korean Lunar New Year.

Minister for Trade Simon Crean,
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries

and Forestry Tony Burke and Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries and Water David Llewellyn today welcomed the decision by the Republic of Korea to accept imports of fresh sweet cherries from Tasmania.

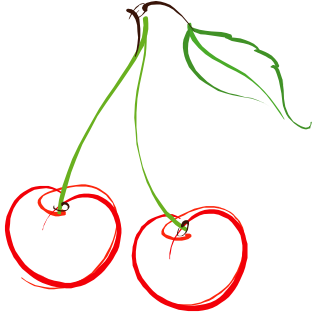
Mr Burke said Australian cherries had a reputation internationally for being among the best in the world.

It was an export break-through according to Mr Crean and a "major win for Australia and Tasmania".

The win for Tasmanian cherries was part of a collective effort from the Australian and Tasmanian governments, Fruit Growers Tasmania and the Australian horticulture industry, as well as the Republic of Korea government.

Tasmanian industry figures show a production of around 4000 tonnes of cherries in 2008-09 and a projected increase to 7000 tonnes by 2011-12.

<http://sl.farmonline.com.au/news/slate/horticulture/general/tas-cherries-on-their-way-to-korea/1747394.aspx>



Research Shorts

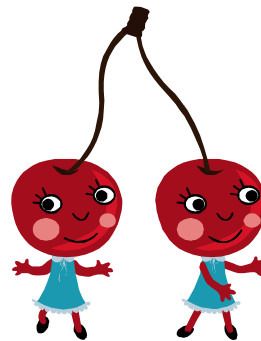
Sensory, Nutritive and Functional Properties of Sweet Cherry as Affected by Cultivar and Ripening Stage

H.M. Díaz-Mula¹, S. Castillo², D. Martínez-Romero², D. Valero², P. J. Zapata², F. Guillén², and M. Serrano^{1*}

In this article 11 commercial sweet cherry cultivars were selected to evaluate sensory, nutritive and functional properties over the maturation process on tree. Fruit quality was significantly different among cultivars and maturity stages at harvest, with the highest quality scores being found in the harvest which was 4 days beyond current commercial harvest maturity for all the cultivars tested. Taking into account all of the measured parameters (weight, firmness, color, acidity and total soluble solids), 'NY-6479', 'Prime Giant' and 'Sunburst' could be classified as having the highest quality in terms of sensory

attributes. However, 'Cristalina' and 'Sonata' had the highest functional quality, as determined by the measurement of bioactive compound content and antioxidant capacity. We conclude that a delay of a few days in harvesting of sweet cherries would lead to achieve maximal nutritional (highest sugar and organic acid contents), sensory (greatest firmness and color development) and functional (greatest phenolics content, anthocyanins and antioxidant capacity) quality to provide both eating enjoyment and health benefits to the consumer.

Food Science and Technology International 2009;15:535.



On a Lighter Note: Security targets cherry pip spit cheats

Posted Mon Nov 30, 2009 11:37am AEDT

Unprecedented security measures will be put in place at one of the

key events at Young's National Cherry Festival.

Organisers of next month's 60th annual cherry pip spit say they have been warned by German contacts about manipulated cherry stones being used in competitions.

Young tourism officer Shannon O'Connor says airport metal scanners will be borrowed to screen competitors ahead of the spit.

He says organisers are pursuing security measures to weed out would-be cheats.

"We've thought about strip searches, body searches, we've even looked into the hand-held metal scanners," he said.

"If we have to we're going to have to resort to providing the fruit for the people so they have to eat it in front of us, these beautiful delicious cherries, and they have to eat it in front of us and spit that exact stone, maybe that's what it's going to come down to."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/30/2757195.htm>

ABC News from Australia

ORCHARD LISTINGS on the WEBSITE

The website is current with orchard listings of renewed members as of March 19. Please check your listing and ensure information and links to your email and website (if applicable) are correct. If you have not renewed, or want changes, please let us know, but the next update will not be until mid April.

There will be a seminar on Scientific Research and Development Tax Credits in Kelowna on May 26. If you are making expensive innovative investments that are experimental or unproven, you may be eligible and it is worth learning more.

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/cntcts/srdbc-eng.html>

A Bit of Hope on the Trade Scene

Although we have given up the battle on gaining equal market access to Japan to what our US competitors enjoy, we have just received word that our request for negotiation of direct trade access to China may result in a preliminary inspection visit by Chinese officials this season. There is hope yet!