



**BRITISH COLUMBIA
GRAPEGROWERS'
ASSOCIATION**

News & Updates!

MARK YOUR CALENDER!



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been a busy and eventful year for the BC Grapegrowers with our first annual Celebration of Harvest held at the Vineglass Vine-

yard last September. This was a great success, and we plan to continue this tradition next September 14th. We have exciting plans for this spring, with interesting workshops and our Annual Growers' Day. On February 15th, we had an indoor pruning workshop in Oliver with sample plants and a demonstration of pruning techniques, tools, ergonomics, and winter injury.

Our AGM-Growers' Day will be at Linden Gardens in Kaleden on April 9th. Many relevant talks are planned, including an overview of the wine industry, opportunities & challenges for independent grape growers & wineries, a look at marketing and communications strategies, best practices for ripening grapes, wine markets and trends, the grower registry, and a panel on small-scale wine production.

In June, we are planning a workshop on Canopy Management, and in the fall, one on Small Vineyard Efficiencies. Our Board believes that many vineyard owners have streamlined the work in their vineyards by ingenious methods and tools, and we would all benefit from these ideas. So, if you have any suggestions of a 'better way to run a vineyard' (i.e. a clever suckering tool or a speedy pruning method, etc), please send them to us by e-mail at bcga@nethop.net or telephone Connie toll free at 1-877-762-4652.

We hope to see you at these workshops and at the AGM on April 9th!

BCGA AGM-GROWERS' DAY – 09 APRIL 2013

The BC Grapegrowers Association is holding its' Annual General Meeting and Growers' Day at Linden Gardens in Kaleden, BC on 09 April 2013. We are anticipating a large turn-out of growers to participate in all of the informative sessions we have planned. If you'd like to attend, please be sure to register early to guarantee your seat! You can register in one of three ways – online, by telephone, or by e-mail... please see the attached invitation and agenda for more details. The afternoon will culminate in a wine tasting sponsored by Okanagan Crush Pad – a fitting start to a wonderful year in the grape industry!

PST IS BACK – 01 APRIL 2013

Be sure to read the article provided by Geoff McIntyre that is posted on the BCGA website (www.grapegrowers.bc.ca) under "Grower Info". See also: http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents_library/bulletins/pst_101.pdf

WORKSHOPS OFFERED BY THE BC WINE GRAPE COUNCIL

The BCWGC Health & Safety Committee is offering the following workshops in April:

- Airblast Sprayer 101 at Red Rooster Winery in Penticton on **16 April 2013**
- Tractor Training at Inkameep Vineyards in Oliver on **23 April 2013**
- Tractor Training at Summerhill Pyramid Winery in Kelowna on **24 April 2013**

Visit www.bcwgc.org under News/Events for more details



CANOPY MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP – JUNE 2013

(date yet to be confirmed)

Beginning with a brief review of the objectives of canopy management & assessment, the workshop will focus primarily on vertical shoot positioning (VSP), training & pruning, shoot thinning, wire movement, hedging, leaf removal, and cluster thinning. It will also consider some of the techniques and tools employed, as well as the associated labour and financial costs. There will be lots of opportunity for questions and answers!

SMALL VINEYARD EFFICIENCIES WORKSHOP – AUTUMN 2013

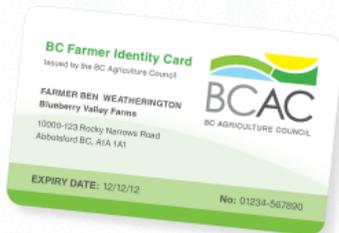
We all know that growers are inventive and come up with strategies to get three days' work into one and a half... well, here is your chance to be an expert in your field and let us know about your great ideas! Please write or call so that we can include your tips in the workshop. Be sure to watch for further details as to when and where this workshop will be scheduled – *saving time saves you money in the long run!*



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

ADVANCE PAYMENTS PROGRAM

The Advance Payments Program (APP) is a financial loan guarantee program set up by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada that gives producers easier access to credit through cash advances (<http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1290176119212&lang=eng>). The APP provides producers with a cash advance on the value of their agricultural products during a specific period. By improving their cash flow throughout the year, the APP helps crop and livestock producers meet their financial obligations and benefit from the best market conditions. This program is offered through the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) (www.agcreditcorp.ca) that administers the Advance Payments Program. The ACC is a not-for-profit farm organization founded in 1992 by a coalition of farm organizations and is now comprised of nineteen producer associations and marketing boards. Through this program, farmers can access up to \$400,000 in financing, with the first \$100,000 being interest free. **If you want to participate in this program, please contact the ACC toll free at 1-888-278-8807 for further details or fill out a loan application online at www.agcreditcorp.ca.**



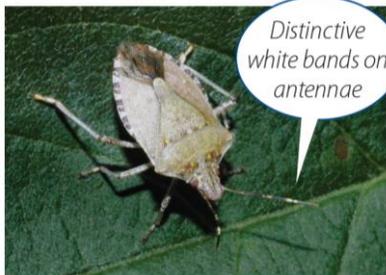
**Get your
Farmer ID Card**

FARMER IDENTITY CARD

The Farmer Identity Card issued by the BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) is referred to in the PST regulations as a legal way to obtain PST tax exemption on eligible products. All members of the BC Grapegrowers' Association can apply as a member of the BCAC, so the cost is \$100/year. It's an easy, convenient, and approved form of proving farmer status for PST tax exemptions. On the online application page (<https://www.bcac.bc.ca/bcac-farmer-id-card-registration>), you'll see the heading "Association" – scroll down and select *BC Grapegrowers' Association*.

Alternatively, the Farmer PST Exemption Form to apply for a refund of PST paid can be downloaded from the BCGA website (<http://www.grapegrowers.bc.ca/pdf/farmerpstexemption.pdf>)

Have you seen this bug?



The brown marmorated stink bug, though not yet detected in British Columbia, is a serious pest of tree fruit, vegetables, ornamentals, and other host plants. The BCGA along with other agriculture commodity groups and Ministry of Agriculture are asking for your help to report any sighting of this pest to:

Susanna Acheampong, BC Ministry of Agriculture, Kelowna
susanna.acheampong@gov.bc.ca
Phone: (250) 861-7230 Toll Free: 1-888-332-3352

BCGA SECOND ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF HARVEST

14 SEPTEMBER 2013

To know a good wine is to know a great grapegrower!

We have lots to be proud of and lots of reasons to celebrate the harvest! Last year's event was enjoyed by all who attended – let's make this year's event bigger and better – a chance to relax, network with your fellow growers and celebrate the upcoming harvest before the real work begins! We're planning a fantastic party, with barbeque, live music, dancing, prizes, wine tasting, and much more – you won't want to miss it!

Watch our newsletters and website for more details
closer to the date

ADVERTISING WITH THE BC GRAPEGROWERS' ASSOCIATION

Have you considered marketing your particular service or product to members of the BC Grapegrowers' Association? Being a member and advertising to members has its advantages, and is quite affordable too! If you'd like to advertise in this newsletter (sent out every couple of months or so), the fee is \$50 for a quarter-page sized advertisement for members (\$100 for non-members) or \$100 for a half-page sized section (\$200 for non-members). You can also advertise on the "Members Businesses" section of the BCGA website for \$50/year for a half-page sized advertisement. Please contact us by e-mail at bcga@nethop.net to book your space now!

*"Wisdom doesn't automatically come with old age. Nothing does – except wrinkles.
It's true, some wines improve with age, but only if the grapes were good in the first place."*



Okanagan-Similkameen Starling Control & Awareness Program

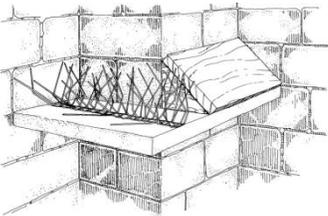
The BCGA and members of the Starling Control Program's Management Committee are very pleased to announce that funding has been received from the BC Investment Agriculture Foundation's ARDCORP Agriculture Environment Initiatives Program to carry out a two-year public outreach and starling nest disruption program. We will also be partnering with the South Okanagan Conservation Alliance and other organisations, including members of naturalist clubs in the South Okanagan in this initiative.

In addition to educating the public about the importance of our trapping program, we will also encourage all landowners in rural and urban areas to identify, reduce, and block starling nesting sites. This is something that everyone can successfully participate in to make a difference to starling populations. Kansas City was successful at reducing starling abundance by 60% in two years. The municipality adopted a policy of reducing nesting sites within the city through mandatory building repair and modification to building design aimed at reducing nesting locations.

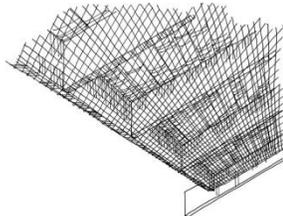
All grapegrowers can reduce their own crop damage with an aggressive program to block and destroy nesting sites on their property and by encouraging their neighbours to do the same. We have heard that the starlings have been seen already collecting material for their nests already this season! Starlings are adept at establishing sites in nooks and crannies in buildings – which can damage buildings, create fire hazards, clog gutters and drainpipes, etc. Identifying and blocking nest sites is effective in helping to control starlings, and is something everyone can participate in – we need your support and for you to encourage your neighbours to help as well.

Starlings are a non-native invasive species and are not protected by the BC Wildlife Act, and property owners are encouraged to prevent them from breeding successfully

PREVENT NESTING & ROOSTING



Install barriers on ledges by securing sheet metal, wood, plexi-glass, Styrofoam, or other materials at a 60° angle



The undersides of rafters can be covered with bird netting to prevent starlings from gaining access to roosting spots

Drawings by Jennifer Reese

INSTALL COMMERCIAL VENT GUARDS OR SCREENS



Typical vents don't prevent starlings who are cavity nesters – install a guard or use hardware cloth behind louvers to prevent them from nesting in your ducts

SEAL UP HOLES EVERYWHERE! Starlings love to nest in crevices and holes, so it's a great practice to seal any holes in your buildings that are larger than one inch (2.5cm). Use wood, ¼" hardware cloth, aluminum, or other sturdy material, as light material such as bird netting or rags will not keep determined starlings out.

MAKE NEEDED REPAIRS Replace any loose shingles or siding, fix soffits that are open, and repair broken windows

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS can help reduce damage by keeping their farms clear of food (i.e. burying unwanted fruit rather than dumping it on the ground)

BLOCK TREE CAVITIES When blocking tree cavities against starlings, it is important to do it in such a way that the native birds can still use them. Use plywood with a 1 inch (2.5cm) hole drilled into it and cover the tree cavity, or use a combination of materials such as screen and plywood.

If you see a building or area where birds are nesting, please call us to report the location so that it can be added to the inventory of sites needing attention. In addition, if you are involved in blocking nesting sites and destroying starling nests, please let us know how many sites you've blocked! You can send us an e-mail to bcga@nethop.net, or visit our website and click on the "Contact Us" button at the bottom right of the page or by typing in the following link:

<http://www.grapegrowers.bc.ca/contactform.php>