



**BRITISH COLUMBIA
GRAPEGROWERS'
ASSOCIATION**

News & Updates!

April 2016

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BC Grapegrowers' Association Growers' Day-AGM

Friday, 08 April 2016

On Friday, April 8 we had 91 enthusiastic people gather for our annual Grower Day and Annual General Meeting. It was a wonderful opportunity for growers to learn the state of our industry, elect new directors, and network. Cheryl Wood, of RHN gave us some food for thought on the pros and cons of leasing your vineyard. Gary Falk, Business Risk Management Branch updated us on crop insurance and AgStability. In the afternoon, Graham O'Rourke walked us through the importance of Viticulture Sustainability. Dr. Pat Bowen gave us strategies for dealing with the effects of earlier and warmer growing seasons and Dr. Tom Lowery offered some vineyard floor management and cover crops strategies.

Growers had the chance to give their best wishes to Connie Bielert who was there to help out. Everyone took advantage of the beautiful day to sit outside for lunch. Linden Gardens owners Ken & Margaret Hayter and their staff outdid themselves again this year. We want to thank our sponsors BMO for the coffee break and RBC for a lunch. The day finished with a wine tasting and networking.

WE THANK OUR WONDERFUL SPONSORS!

Coffee Break Sponsored by



Luncheon Sponsored by



NEW WEBSITE COMING!

CONTACT US!

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E-mail: bcga@grapegrowers.bc.ca
Website: www.grapegrowers.bc.ca

You can learn more about your board members when our new website is launched on 01 May 2016. New to the website will be social media so we need your help. Share your news and photos with us so we can share them on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Meet Your Directors

Mason Spink – BCGA President

Growing up in Victoria BC, Mason was bitten by the wine bug early in life and decided to move to Ontario to study winemaking. He completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Oenology and Viticulture, with honors, at the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute at Brock University. During Mason's time at Brock University, he completed an undergraduate thesis on the study of Lady Bug taint in wine. After returning to BC, Mason joined the winemaking team at See Ya Later Ranch, as the assistant winemaker and was quickly promoted to winemaker where he held that position for six vintages. During this time, Mason also worked with Okanagan College as an instructor of both winemaking and viticulture classes. Just before the start of the 2013, vintage Mason joined the Dirty Laundry Vineyard team.

Valerie Tait – Vice-President

Val Tait's analytical and technical skills were developed from a B.Sc. in Plant Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics. While working with grape vine viruses, Val discovered wine and the connection between the expression of wines and viticulture, which motivated her to go on to study Oenology and Viticulture at UC Davis in California. She has considerable experience with over 1,000 acres planted and 25 vintages, working with some of the most iconic producers in the Okanagan and as an owner of Calliope Wines. Her philosophy in winemaking is to capture the personality and full expression of wines in the vineyard, with minimal intervention in the cellar.

Wilbert Borren – Treasurer

After finishing agricultural college, Wilbert immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands to work on a dairy farm. Five years later, the family purchased a small hog farm which expanded over the years until they sold it with about 7,000 hogs. They got tired of the cold winters in Alberta, so they purchased a vineyard in Penticton where they now grow 12 acres of grapes. Being a new-comer to the grape industry, Wilbert brings a new look to the BC Grapegrowers' Association board. He hopes to serve on the board, bringing his experiences from other agricultural sectors to this exciting industry.

David Kozuki

In 2008, David was working for a land developer in Vancouver when his family was faced with the decision of selling the apple orchard that had been in the Matsu family for the past hundred years. Six months later, he enrolled in a viticulture program, started Golden Retreat Vineyard Ltd, and found himself knee-deep in dirt planting two vineyards totaling 11 acres of vines in Summerland that he has managed for the past 8 years. He has since taken viticulture, winery assistant, and winemaking courses at UBCO. David continues to enjoy learning about new developments in viticulture and enology, and looks forward to taking part in the wine industry as it continues to evolve.

Ken Sapsford P.Ag.

Ken graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree in 1979. He worked as a Research Assistant in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Saskatchewan, managing the field research program for weed control, in the major and minor crops grown in the prairies for 15 years. Prior to this, he was a Conservation Agronomist with the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association promoting direct seeding. He has extensive experience in farming being involved in a 3,000-acre family farm with his brother. In 2012, he purchased a small vineyard in Kaleden and started a consulting business. He has been involved with numerous boards in the past and believes his agriculture and research background can bring a different perspective to the issues that come before the British Columbia Grapegrowers' Association.

Skip Stothert

Skip has a degree in Sales and Marketing from UBC. He started Green Roads Recycling Ltd in 1989 and gradually semi-retired as his sons started taking over the business. Skip and Judy moved to Naramata in 2003 and started a vineyard on a 52-acre property. So far, they have 7 acres of Chardonnay and 2.5 acres of Pinot Noir, and are currently planting some test sites using a bush-style farming on more Pinot Noir plants.

Graham O'Rourke was re-elected for another term and **Ralph Suremann** and **Jarnail Gill** are both on their 2nd year of the first term. **Manfred Freese** will remain on the board as Past-President for one year.



Thank You!!!

We would like to take this time to thank Manfred for his many years of service to our Association. He has seen many changes over his tenure and will surely be a wonderful resource to the new directors as they become more confident in their new roles.

Upcoming Workshop

Mark your calendars! We are planning two Irrigation workshops June 9 in Keremeos and June 15 in Naramata. We will be sending you more information as soon as all details are in place.



MODERNIZED WATER SUSTAINABILITY ACT AND NEW REGULATIONS NOW IN EFFECT



As of February 29th, 2016 the *Water Sustainability Act* both updates and replaces the old Water Act. For a complete resource on the Act, the new regulations and how it might affect you, visit: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/watersustainabilityact/2016/02/29/blog-post-19-test/>

What Does This Mean for Farmers?

Existing groundwater users have a three-year window to apply for a license and users of groundwater will require a water license and be required to pay water fees and rentals (read below for more info). Licenses will also be required for any newly constructed wells from 2016 onward, with the exception of wells used only for domestic (household) purposes. Existing well owners that apply for a license in the first year will be exempted from application fees. Applications received from January of 2017 and onward will need to pay the additional application fee.

How to Register Your Well? / Where to Learn More?

FrontCounterBC's Well Registration Site is now up and running! For information on the Licensing Process, including the application itself, making changes to an existing license, and more visit: <http://www.frontcounterbc.ca/Start/water/>. The site is being continually updated. Government anticipates that the Front Council website will become a complete resource for Groundwater Licensing Information. The website includes a Q&A section.

The Official Application can be found here.

A TOLL FREE number (1-877-855-3222) has been set up Monday - Friday during regular business hours (8:30-4:30) to answer any questions related to the new regulations and licensing process.

Why Did Government Change the Act?

The *Water Sustainability Act* intends to provide new tools to help ensure water stays healthy and secure for future generations of British Columbians. It will enable government to manage surface water and groundwater as one resource, provide water users with greater certainty regarding their water rights, and establish clear rules about managing water during times of scarcity.

How Much Will It Cost? / How Much Water Do I Need?

To support BC's modernized water legislation, a new fee and rental schedule (<http://engage.gov.bc.ca/watersustainabilityact/files/2015/02/F-R-fees-Table-Feb-4-Final.pdf>) for users is being introduced. The new fee and rental rates will only recover the costs of implementing the new *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA), including groundwater regulation.

If you are curious about the potential cost of your well a *Water Rent Estimation Calculator* has been created and can be found here: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/water_rights/water_rental_rates/calculator/index.html

Supporting The Success of BC Farmers & Ranchers:

The *BCAC Water Sustainability Committee* continues to work closely with government to ensure the implementation of BC's new *Water Sustainability Act* is as easy as possible for BC farmers and ranchers. If you would like more information about this committee, please contact communications@bcac.bc.ca



North American Occupational Safety & Health (NAOSH) Week is an annual event resulting from the signing of an agreement by Canada, the United States and Mexico, dedicating a week each year to focus on occupational health and safety.

Date: Monday 2 May 2016
Time: 10:00 - 11:30am
Location: Vancouver International Airport

NAOSH Week Steering Committee B.C. would like to invite you to attend a launch event being held in partnership with the Vancouver Airport Authority, for the kickoff of NAOSH Week (1-7 May 2016)

Featured presentations include:

- Senior Management Representative, Vancouver Airport Authority
- Ken Flores, General Manager, Fairmont Vancouver Airport
- Julia Kaisla, Director of Community Engagement, Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division
- Christine Buttkus, Sea to Sky Innovations in Mental Health
- Jaslyn Haberl, Young Employee who will share her personal story

TO REGISTER, COMPLETE THE RSVP FORM AT <https://naoshbc.wufoo.com/forms/k1bstzpv06jk1yp/>

YOUR GRAPES JUST AREN'T THE SAME WITHOUT POWDERY MILDEW. THEY'RE BETTER.

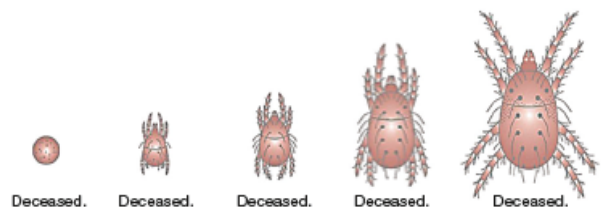
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Message from the BC Wine Task Group Chair

Dear Wine Producers of British Columbia,

The BC Wine Appellation Task Group has completed a comprehensive province-wide industry consultation. Hundreds of individuals participated through face-to-face meetings, town halls, and an online survey. Our primary goal was to find if a consensus existed to improve our appellation system and properly regulate geographic indications (GIs) on our wine labels.

We found that there is a wide agreement that GIs should be properly regulated, but that we need to update the Wines of Marked Quality Regulations so that everyone is comfortable being regulated by it. The Task Group issued an initial set of recommendations last fall that sought to accomplish what we believed the industry wanted. However, after receiving additional feedback from wineries of all sizes across the province we understood that the recommendations we had formulated did not fulfill industry's vision for the future, and would not have passed a plebiscite. We reviewed the feedback and concluded that the recommendations required revisions in order to gain broad industry support.

As a premium wine region, we create wines of place. These are not commodity wines. It is important to all of us to tell the story of where our wines come from on our labels. There is consensus that GIs should be regulated; however, not all of us want to be subject to a taste panel in order to use the GIs. Our original recommendation was that we abolish the taste panel altogether, but this is not a consensus view of the industry.

Our modified recommendations would allow GIs to be used even if wines are not submitted to the taste panel. It would build on the two tier system that already exists within the Regulations. Wines that skip the taste panel would simply not have the "BC VQA" mark of appellation next to the GI. We also recommend that further study is done on the taste panel to improve its efficacy.

We heard from a number of small wineries who are concerned about being unnecessarily burdened with costs, and those who want a phase-in period so that new, meaningful sub-GIs can be approved before the regulations are subject to enforcement. We also heard from grape growers who want to have a say in the creation of new sub-GIs.

The Appellation Task Group recently reconvened and unanimously approved an updated, final set of recommendations, which includes the following revisions:

- To maintain the use of taste panels to assess faults and send current taste panel practices for a review by the Wine Industry Advisory Committee (WIAC)
- To allow geographic indication to be shown on the labels on Wines of Distinction (British Columbia Wine) category wines
- To allow a 2-year phase-in period (to January 2019) to establish new sub-geographic indications
- To direct the BC Wine Authority to establish a small producer flat fee which covers the cost of grape tonnage, membership, audit and wine certification fees
- To ensure that independent grape growers that own land in affected regions are able to vote on the establishment of future sub-geographic indications

To view the entire list of final recommendations visit www.bcwinetaskgroup.ca, and read the accompanying Q&A page for responses to commonly asked questions and further explanation of the Task Group's decision-making.

It is hoped that British Columbia's nearly 300 licensed wine producers will take time to review the final list of recommendations, consider how the changes will affect the industry as a whole, and then vote during the forthcoming plebiscite conducted by the BC Wine Authority. I personally believe the recommendations are stronger and better than the original formulation, and will help lay the groundwork for a bright future for our industry.

On behalf of the Appellation Task Group, I would like to thank everyone who has participated in this process, and encourage everyone to "spread the word" over the coming weeks about the plebiscite vote.

Yours sincerely,
Ezra Cipes - Chair, BC Wine Appellation Task Group