



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Investment Agriculture Foundation Holds Annual General Meeting

April 19, 2016 – Victoria, B.C. The B.C. Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) held its Annual General Meeting in Abbotsford on April 14, 2016 to present its contributions for 2015 to the British Columbia agriculture and agri-food industry.

IAF chair Ken Bates highlighted the growing opportunities available to industry through funding programs like the B.C. Government's Buy Local Program, the B.C. Agrifood and Seafood Export Program, and the Canada-B.C. Agri-Innovation Program. Bates also thanked Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture for their ongoing support.

"The agri-food industry clearly understands the impact that IAF and the programs that we deliver have had," said Bates, noting that many clients have reported significant sales increases since receiving funding.

Executive Director Peter Donkers provided an overview of project impacts across B.C.'s crop, livestock and pan-agricultural sectors, also crediting the Innovation, Export and Buy Local programs for increasing opportunities for industry and helping B.C. companies like Jealous Fruits, BC Tree Fruit Cooperative, SunSelect Ltd, BC Blueberry Council and Flowers Canada Growers Inc. to become more competitive on both domestic and international levels.

"The investments made through these programs mean that more B.C. producers and processors are accessing new markets, developing new products, and implementing innovative practices and technologies that will set new industry standards," Donkers explained, adding that funding for commercialization and adoption projects is still available through the Innovation program.

On the financial side, Peter Donkers presented IAF's financial report on behalf of treasurer Bert Miles. He revealed IAF board committed more than \$9.1 Million during 2015, and paid out more than \$6.5 Million towards new and continuing projects and initiatives.

Continuing IAF Directors:

- Ken Bates, Chair (Lower Mainland/field vegetables, berries and mushrooms)
 - Len Bouwman (Fraser Valley/dairy)
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- Jack DeWit, Secretary (Fraser Valley/other livestock)
- Walter Fritsche (Peace/grains, oilseeds and forage)
- Arzeena Hamir (Vancouver Island/emerging sectors)
- Bar Hayre, Vice Chair (Fraser Valley/farm supply)
- Alistair Johnston (Fraser Valley/post farm gate)
- Dale Krahn (Fraser Valley/poultry)
- Bert Miles, Treasurer (North Okanagan/greenhouse, floriculture and nursery)
- Ed Salle (Thompson-Okanagan/cattle)
- Kalpna Solanki (Lower Mainland/post farm gate).

IAF is an industry-led, not-for-profit organization representing the agriculture, food processing, farm supply and post farm gate sectors across British Columbia. Celebrating our 20th Anniversary this year, IAF works with our industry partners and funders to invest in projects that enhance the competitiveness, profitability and sustainability of BC's agriculture and agri-food industry. IAF helps transform ideas into solutions. www.iafbc.ca

Funding for the B.C. Agrifoods Export Program and the Canada-B.C. Agri-Innovation Program is provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture under *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Funding for the B.C. Government's Buy Local Program is provided by the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture.

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