



**Investment
Agriculture
Foundation**
of British Columbia

NEWS RELEASE

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BIRCH SYRUP PROJECT WINS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR INNOVATION

Abbotsford, B.C., February 15, 2008 – The Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) of British Columbia is pleased to announce the first recipient of the Award of Excellence for Innovation in Agriculture and Agri-food. Heloise Dixon-Warren, a registered professional forester and co-owner of Moose Meadows Farm, Quesnel, B.C., received the award for her role in leading the development of the birch sap industry in British Columbia, and for authoring “The Birch Syrup Production Manual” (the first manual on birch syrup production in Canada).

Until the recent development of Dixon-Warren’s manual, support literature for the birch sap industry was geared towards the sugar maple industry. Unlike sugar maple, which has a ratio of 40 litres of sap to 1 litre of syrup, the ratio for birch is 80 to 120 litres of sap for every litre of syrup. Funding from the Agri-Food Futures Fund, Agroforestry Initiative (a jointly funded federal and provincial government program delivered by the B.C. Federation of Woodlot Associations) and a partnership with the Quesnel Community and Economic Development Corporation enabled Dixon-Warren to author the manual.

“I’m honoured to receive this award from the IAF – and I am inspired to see the birch sap production industry starting to receive more and more recognition. Working on this project has allowed me to connect with some really great people – and it’s been exciting to be a part of the development of what is still really a nascent industry. The opportunities for the birch syrup industry and communities involved with it are vast, and I think there’s a bright future for it in B.C. – and for that matter throughout Canada!” commented Dixon-Warren.

The IAF Award of Excellence for Innovation in Agriculture and Agri-food recognizes an individual, organization or business that has made a unique and important contribution to B.C.’s agriculture and agri-food industry in the last three years. The award is open to individuals who reside in B.C. and Canadian-based organizations and businesses operating in B.C.; Dixon-Warren is the first ever recipient of the award. The award was announced at the B.C. Agriculture Council's 2008 AgriFood Industry Gala in Abbotsford.

“We’re pleased to recognize Heloise for her industrious and innovative spirit and the exceptional contribution she has made to her community and the birch sap producers’ industry,” said Bert Miles, Chair of IAF. “Her sustained dedication, hard work and visionary leadership are exactly what are needed to help guide and establish such a promising industry – and ensure that it flourishes.”

About the Investment Agriculture Foundation

The Investment Agriculture Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that manages and distributes funds on behalf of the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in support of innovative projects to benefit the agriculture and agri-food industries in British

Columbia. For more information about the Investment Agriculture Foundation and the funding programs it administers, please visit www.iafbc.com.

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