



Okanagan Orchardist Wins Award of Excellence for Agricultural Innovation

Victoria, B.C. – January 27, 2010 The Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia (IAF) today announced the recipient of the 2010 Award of Excellence for Innovation in Agriculture and Agri-Food. Roger Bailey of Kalwood Farms in Oyama, B.C. is this year's award recipient. Bailey was recognized for his mobile work platform that creates safer and more efficient working conditions in B.C. orchards.

Using recycled Japanese rice harvesters, Bailey adapted the design for use in B.C. orchards. The resulting mobile work platform includes a platform system, safety railings and a hydraulic forklift, and runs on a small diesel engine. The platform can carry two workers at a time and is used for pruning, thinning and picking.

"Without the need for ladders, Bailey's mobile work platform helps reduce worker fatigue and injury rates. The platform also increases labour productivity and is more fuel-efficient than conventional machinery used to transport harvest bins, creating significant cost savings for farmers," said IAF chair Stuart Wilson. "IAF is pleased to recognize Bailey's innovative spirit and industriousness in creating safer and more efficient ways to farm."

Bailey is no stranger to developing farm machinery, creating a wire-spooling device in 2000. He continues to work on adapting his original mobile platform design for use in a variety of operations and most recently developed a compressor deck to run pneumatic pruning shears in cherry orchards.

Bailey is a full-time farmer and sits on the boards of the B.C. Fruit Growers Association and the Okanagan Cherry Growers Association.

"Winning the 2010 Award of Excellence for Innovation is great positive reinforcement," says Bailey. "If there is going to be a future for agriculture, being innovative will help keep us in the business. Part of what is so enjoyable about farming is the challenge of doing something efficiently, even if you can't buy it off a shelf."

The IAF Award of Excellence for Innovation in Agriculture and Agri-Food celebrates ideas, products, projects and programs generated by the agriculture and agri-food industry that deliver economic, environmental or social benefits to British Columbia. The award is open to individual B.C. residents and Canadian-based organizations and businesses operating in B.C. This year's award was announced on January 27 at the B.C. Agriculture Council's Agri-Food Industry Gala in Abbotsford.

The Investment Agriculture Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that strategically invests funds on behalf of the federal and provincial governments in support of innovative projects that 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.ca

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