



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Investment Agriculture Foundation Holds Annual General Meeting**

**April 19, 2017 – Victoria, B.C.** The Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. held its annual general meeting in Abbotsford to present its contributions for 2016 to the British Columbia agriculture and agri-food industry.

IAF chair Ken Bates praised the collaboration between industry and government, citing results shared by project partners such as increased market opportunities and sales, enhanced production management and more.

“More than 50 percent of clients reported an increase in sales as a result of their project, while more than 37 percent were able to generate new value-added products,” reported Bates, adding that project funding has also been credited by clients for helping to improve food safety and quality, increase productivity, create jobs, and more.

Executive Director Peter Donkers provided an overview of project impacts across B.C.’s crop, livestock and pan-agricultural sectors, highlighting some of the many industry visionaries who are helping to advance their sectors.

Donkers also confirmed that the independent impact study commissioned by IAF was completed last year, detailing the economic, environmental and social impacts of government investments delivered by IAF over the past 20 years. Included in the report are just a few of many project successes and industry milestones.

“From revolutionizing pest control, to developing the first cranberry research farm in Canada, to helping a budding family business build an iconic B.C. brand within the international marketplace, these stories illustrate the very tangible impacts that these investments have made over the years,” said Donkers.

On the financial side, the report by treasurer Bert Miles revealed IAF approved nearly 300 projects in 2016, with contributions totaling more than \$8.3 million toward new and continuing projects and initiatives.

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Following the AGM, new directors Glenda Gesy (Kamloops/pre-farm gate) and Dave Zehnder (East Kootenay/beef cattle) were welcomed onto the IAF board, while a fond farewell was bid to departing directors Ed Salle and vice chair Bar Hayre.

Continuing IAF directors are chair Ken Bates (Lower Mainland/Field Vegetables, Berries and Mushrooms), Len Bouwman (Fraser Valley/Dairy), vice chair Jack DeWit (Fraser Valley/Other Livestock), Walter Fritsche (Peace/Grains & Oilseeds), Arzeena Hamir (Vancouver Island/Emerging Sectors), Alistair Johnston (Fraser Valley/Post Farm Gate), Dale Krahn (Fraser Valley/Poultry), Dennis Lapierre (Okanagan-Shuswap/Community Agriculture), secretary Don Low (Kootenays/Tree Fruits & Grapes), treasurer Bert Miles (North Okanagan/Greenhouse, Floriculture & Nursery), and Kalpna Solanki (Lower Mainland/Post Farm Gate).

The Investment Agriculture Foundation is an industry-led not-for-profit organization that works with the agrifood industry to strategically invest federal and provincial funds toward projects that have the potential to transform ideas into solutions. [www.iafbc.ca](http://www.iafbc.ca)

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