
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

B.C. Tree Fruit Competitiveness Fund opens to support growers

VICTORIA – B.C. tree fruit growers and organizations can now apply for funding to help them become more competitive, so British Columbians can continue to enjoy fresh and local fruits.

“Our producers provide amazing apples, cherries and tree fruits, and this fund is intended to ensure that continues,” said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. “This investment shows that we are responding to the needs of tree fruit growers and are committed to helping them grow the outstanding quality and variety of fruit that B.C. is known for.”

The competitiveness fund aligns with a recently updated industry strategy aiming to help B.C.’s growers maintain their reputation for innovative practices and quality products. The fund will help growers increase efficiency, sales, and productivity levels through projects that support:

- Infrastructure: modernization, such as new or innovative equipment
- Marketing: exploring export market opportunities and market development research
- Research: cultivator, disease and pest research

“The recently completed strategy sets out important criteria for a transformation in our industry,” said Glen Lucas, general manager, BC Fruit Growers' Association. “The competitiveness fund will help industry to achieve new advantages in the marketplace for B.C. grown products.”

B.C.’s tree fruit industry is comprised of approximately 800 growers managing 6,474 hectares (16,000 acres) of tree fruit in crops in the Okanagan, Similkameen and Creston valleys. Those growers produced nearly 129,000 tonnes of fruit in 2016 worth more than \$116 million.

Quick Facts:

- Announced in February 2018, the Tree Fruit Competitiveness Fund provides up to \$5 million in funding over four years.
- Eligible recipients include primary producers, processors, retailers, wholesalers, input suppliers or distributors.
- Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis until it has been fully allocated.
- Portions of the fund can be used to address oversubscription of the Tree Fruit Replant Program over the next four years.
- The funding is being delivered through the B.C. Tree Fruit Growers Association and the Investment Agriculture Foundation.

Learn More:

For more information about applications for the Tree Fruit Competitiveness Program,

visit: iafbc.ca/tree-fruit

News release announcing the Tree Fruit Competitiveness Fund:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AGRI0012-000222>

To learn more about the B.C. Fruit Growers Association,

visit: <https://www.bcfga.com/index.php>

To learn more about the Investment Agriculture Foundation, visit: <http://iafbc.ca/>

Contact:

Ministry of Agriculture

Communications

250 356-1674

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