



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

**VICTORIA, BC - April 15, 2019:** The B.C. Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) held its Annual General Meeting in Abbotsford last week to present its 2018 Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements to IAF Members and Stakeholders.

The IAF chair, Jack DeWit, summarized the Board and Leadership Team's progress on membership engagement and strategic planning, highlighting IAF's six-month strategic planning process to-date.

DeWit emphasized that "Members welcomed the Strategic Planning Process and were looking forward to the finalized plan being issued". He explained that the "next step will be for IAF to study and integrate feedback from the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Member and Stakeholder Engagement Sessions into the final strategic plan." It is anticipated that the final plan will be completed by June 2019 and it will be communicated to the Members and wider community once finalized.

DeWit also thanked members for their active participation in the strategic planning process, as well as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture for their ongoing support.

The Executive Director, Michelle Koski, presented the six new Government funded programs and acknowledged the Board and Leadership Team's focus on improving service delivery. Koski explained that IAF has "begun working with the Province to explore options for streamlining the application and reporting processes ... we have also laid the foundations for the transitioning to an online application and reporting portal". Going forward the ambition is to simplify the processes, better communicate the stages of the project lifecycle and expediate client applications and reports.

In summarizing the key achievements for 2018, Koski noted the successful completion of three programs under the former federal-provincial-territorial *Growing Forward 2* Framework which resulted in \$21.2 million of funding delivered via 618 projects over five years.

The vice chair, Arzeena Hamir, reported on the 2018 Audited Financial Statements, Hamir provided an overview and the financial auditor, Kent Fullerton of Grant Thornton, outlined the steps taken during the auditing process, indicating that the financial statement fairly represented the financial position of the B.C. Investment Agriculture Foundation.

DeWit concluded the AGM with the appointment and re-appointment of Directors for 2019. Four new directors were appointed to the IAF board - Ralph Van-Dalfsen (dairy), Jim Pratt (post-farm gate), Mike

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Soth (other livestock) and Jos Moerman (greenhouse, floriculture & nursery) - and four current directors were re-appointed to the IAF board – Don Low (tree fruits and grapes), Dennis Lapierre (community agriculture), David Zehnder (cattle) and Glenda Gesy (pre-farm gate). Appreciation was shown to the retiring directors – Len Bouwman (dairy), Alistair Johnston (post-farm gate), Bert Miles (greenhouse, floriculture and nursery and Jack DeWit (other livestock).

Additional information, including program and project highlights, can be found in the 2018 Annual Report: <http://iafbc.ca/annual-reports/>

## **About the B.C. Investment Agriculture Foundation**

The B.C. Investment Agriculture Foundation is an industry-led not-for-profit that strategically invests federal and provincial funds in support of projects that benefit the agriculture and agri-food industry in B.C. For more information on IAF and the programs it delivers, visit [www.iafbc.ca](http://www.iafbc.ca)

For more information contact:

Abbie Morris  
Manager of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement  
250.213.8325  
[amorris@iafbc.ca](mailto:amorris@iafbc.ca)

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