

April
2007

Commission Report

BC Vegetable Marketing Commission Newsletter
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Phase out of
current
restrictions
begins

Potato producers
lead food safety
national
standards

Commissioners
review market
signals and
underlying
factors

District Policy

As a consequence of a FIRB directive, the Commission has now completed its review and released its decision on District Policy. The review included regional producer meetings held in all Districts. Except for election purposes, the Commission has determined that the current policies including limiting producer's movement of regulated product between Districts and the movement of Delivery Allocation, will be phased out over a two-year period. Beginning in 2009 all other

current restrictions relating to Districts will be eliminated. In the interim period to 2009, some restrictions on Delivery Allocation transfers and marketing options will continue to apply.

Producers and Agencies have until May 16 2007 to forward written comments to the FIRB (copy to the Commission) on the new policy.

A copy of FIRB's response to the Commission is available on the website (www.bcveg.com).

Food Safety – Potato Producers

With the official CFIA sanction of the Potato Food Safety manual, the Commission is accelerating its grower services. This spring in preparation for the 2007 crop all licensed potato growers are receiving a personal briefing along with the manual and instructions on using and maintaining the checklists. Later in the year growers will again be visited by the food safety personnel to assist with achieving compliance with the established standards. Work is continuing at the Canadian Horticultural Council to complete food safety manuals for all other sectors of the horticultural industry.

Market Information Services

As part of its regular business, all Commission meetings now receive and review reports, prepared by the Commission's Market Information Services, on current market conditions and trends for all regulated commodities. The reports review

current production conditions in various areas of North America, storage positions if appropriate, and current and forecast pricing.

This information is available to producers by contacting Andre Solymosi at the Commission office.

Potato Producers Anti Dumping Fund

Deficit now retired. SCAG will assess future requirements

Due to changes in the regulatory requirements, the 2005 potato anti dumping case, launched by BC producers against low price imports from Washington State, had a higher cost than originally anticipated. This higher cost resulted in a deficit in that account and was offset by an increase in a levy paid by all potato producers.

The deficit has now been completely retired.

The Commission is now looking to the Storage Crop Advisory Group for a recommendation on the levy rate going forward. Changes, if any, will likely be made before this year's main crop sales are underway.

Emergency Preparedness

Snow pack and cool spring could be a problem

The BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has distributed some "Emergency Preparedness Tips" given the heavy snow pack and the potential for flooding. The advice is aimed primarily at cattle farmers with some notes for crop producers. They suggest:

- remove all chemicals and store away from any potential flood levels,
- secure copies of insurance policies and other essential documents
- purchase extra fuel in case of prolonged power disruptions

For more information about emergency preparedness online visit www.pep.bc.ca

Our Spring Weather

Long range forecast suggests continuation of cooler temperatures

April weather in the Lower Fraser Valley appears to be cooler and wetter than normal. Officially, Environment Canada reports the mean temperature in Vancouver for April 2007 was 8.8 C compared to last year's 9.3 C with precipitation ahead of the average for April.

Looking forward, Environment Canada predicts precipitation and temperatures for the months of May and June to be below average. Total hours of bright sunshine for April was 190 with March coming in at 134, both below long term averages.

Processing Crops

Processing strawberry growers ready for 2007 negotiations

Crop negotiations on 2007 strawberries are scheduled for early May which will complete the 2007 processing crops. 2007 producer prices were unchanged from 2006 on

Brussels sprouts and cauliflower, increased marginally for broccoli and corn and rose \$25 / ton for peas on all tenderometer readings.