

July  
2007

# Commission Report

BC Vegetable Marketing Commission Newsletter  
15252 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave Surrey BC V3S 0R7 Ph 604 542 9734

Commission will introduce a program to build demand for local production

BCVMC coordinates new information program for Canada

## ***Commission Sets Priorities for Coming Year***

Building demand for local production was identified by Commissioners as a high priority in the coming year. The Commission believes the industry will benefit from the establishment of a major new marketing and promotion program to build demand for BC vegetables.

Identifying the need for the program was part of the Commission's ongoing process of looking forward

to establish priority functions and initiatives that best serve producers and the BC vegetable industry. Information reporting will also continue to be enhanced including expansion of the quarterly market reports.

Commission internal operations will be improved by changing the composition of Hearing Panels.

## ***Horticultural Markets Information Project***

The BC Vegetable Marketing Commission will act as the area co-coordinator for Western Canada for the new Horticulture Markets Information system. Andre Solymosi, who heads up the BCVMC market information services, will be the lead person for the western component of the program. Coordinators are also engaged for Ontario and for Quebec and Eastern Canada. Funding is provided by the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri Food Program of Agriculture Canada.

The overall project will be managed by The Fresh Produce Alliance which is comprised of the Canadian Horticultural Council, the Canadian Produce Marketing Association and the Dispute Resolution Corporation.

The objective is to improve the current collection and dissemination of markets information to growers, marketers, shippers and buyers so that informed business decisions can be made for the sale and purchase of fresh produce. The system will be web-based and will allow industry members to input information directly onto Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's InfoHort website. Area co-ordinators will begin with a "one-on-one" dialogue with produce associations and businesses to explain the project in detail and solicit their support.

## **LMVDI Becomes “BC Fresh”**

New name supports *BC Fresh* logo

Lower Mainland Vegetable Distributors Inc has officially changed its name to BC Fresh Vegetables Inc and will do business as “BC Fresh”.

Fresh said “Our desire to operate as BC Fresh is consistent with the ongoing change to all of our marketing and packaging programs throughout the 2007 season in support of the ‘*BC fresh*’ logo”.

In announcing the name change BC

## **Sobey’s Buys Thrifty Foods**

Regional chain started in 1977 by Alex Campbell, sold

Thrifty Foods, a good supporter of BC grown fruits and vegetables, is now part of Sobey’s Inc, headquartered in Stellarton Nova Scotia. Thrifty’s operated 20 stores primarily on Vancouver Island and had annual sales of \$500 million.

Sobey’s indicated that Thrifty’s will operate as an independent and will continue under the Thrifty’s banner.

The price of the acquisition was \$260 million.

## **New Certified Organic Logo**

New logo intended to boost consumer confidence

The federal government launched a new logo to identify organic products that have been tested and certified by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Some of the qualifying standards include the use of only natural fertilizers in production, raising animals in conditions that mimic nature as much as possible and contain at least 95% natural ingredients.

The logo introduction is part of the new federal regulations announced last year. All organic products will have to be certified for domestic and international trade by the end of 2008.



## **Food Safety Producer Visits**

Program assists producers to meet food safety standards

The 2007 summer BCVMC food safety inspections are now underway. Dave Ormrod is working with all farms in District III and process vegetable crop producers in District I while Sheri Nielson is working with District II farmers and storage crop producers in District I.

A group of BC Fresh producers have been selected to be visited by SGS Group as part of the Loblaw food safety requirements.