

October
2005

Commission Report

BC Vegetable Marketing Commission Monthly Newsletter

Former General
Manager reflects
on 8 years with
the Commission

New
Commission GM
takes post on
Oct 1 2005

Murray Driediger Expresses Appreciation to All

Friday was my last day at the Commission and they were kind enough to give me an opportunity to pen a few words in my last Commission Report.

The last eight years were very rewarding for me both personally and professionally. I had the opportunity to hone some skills and learn many new ones while working with four dedicated Chairs, Commission Members and staff. I was fortunate to come at a time of tremendous industry growth and to watch the industry grapple with the various challenges that came with that growth. Although some of these

challenges were difficult, one thing never changed, and that was the passion that producers have for this industry. It was a passion that I shared and inevitably drew me back into the production side of the business. And yes, I can now say that I will be making an honest living once again. I will continue to cross paths with many of you in my new capacity and I know that you will give Tom the same warm welcome as you gave me.

Thank you, it was an honor and a pleasure to work with you.

Murray Driediger

Commission Appoints Tom Demma as GM

The British Columbia Vegetable Marketing Commission is pleased to announce that Tom Demma has been appointed General Manager effective October 1st, 2005.

After a rigorous search to find a successor to Murray Driediger, who is returning to the private sector, George Leroux, Commission Chair, states, "the Board is most pleased that Mr. Demma is joining the Commission." As General Manager of the Commission, Tom will be responsible for the administration of the Vegetable Scheme and the delivery of Commission services to producers and agencies.

Tom has been involved with the agriculture industry and producer organizations for much of his agriculture industry career, and he is well known throughout the B.C. agri-food industry as a result of serving in senior positions at the B.C. Milk Marketing Board and the B.C. Farm Debt Review Board.

Tom is looking forward to meeting vegetable producers, marketers, association representatives and other stakeholders as he undertakes his duties, and learns more about the B.C. vegetable industry and the needs of the participants.

Commission
decisions
upheld

Anti dumping
levy increased
by 50 cents per
ton on potatoes

Processing
Vegetable
Producers fund
at \$355,000

Hearing
convened on
mini cukes

BC Court of Appeals Decision

The long-delayed case to the BC Court of Appeals relating to the levies assessed by the Commission on greenhouse tomato growers to finance the costs of the tomato anti dumping cases has finally been completed. The court ruled that the levy assessed by the Commission was legal and correct and stands as originally assessed.

BC Vegetable Greenhouse 1 is ordered to pay the assessment. Some costs were also

awarded to the Commission.

In the absence of the full levy assessment from BC Vegetable Greenhouse 1, the other greenhouse vegetable growers paid an additional amount to cover the complete costs of the case. With the decision of the Court of Appeal, the producers who paid the additional costs will receive a refund of those assessments.

Costs of the Potato Anti Dumping Case

Costs of presenting our anti dumping case were higher than originally budgeted mainly because the government of Canada split the process into two distinct parts, the Canadian Border Services Agency determination of dumping and the Canadian International Trade Tribunal determination of material injury. Two determinations meant the Commission's legal counsel was required to present two cases.

The shortfall of about \$100,000 will be covered by an increase in the special anti dumping levy on potato producers from \$.75 per ton to \$1.25 per ton effective September 1 2005 and valid for the balance of the current crop year.

Processing Vegetable Development Fund

The Processing Vegetable Industry Development Fund was established by the Province of BC in 1995 with an initial capitalization of \$200,000. The objective is to contribute to the costs of projects that aid the development of the BC processing vegetable industry.

With accruing investment income and minimal withdrawals the fund balance currently stands at over \$355,000.

The Commission will initiate discussions with the industry to identify potential beneficial projects.

Mini Cucumber Decision

Mini cucumbers are a specialty product grown by 3 District I greenhouse producers on a total of 13,426 sq m in 2005.

With the start up of a new agency and the transfer of some producers between agencies an issue arose concerning which agencies should market the product and in what quantity. Introduction of specialty products requires a unique effort and associated risks by both a producer and an agency. If a producer moves between agencies and that producer has specialty production some special considerations may be required to ensure fairness. The ongoing policy needs to continue to encourage producers and agencies to develop new products and new markets and to be assured that downstream rewards will accrue to those taking the risks.

A commission panel was constituted to hear argument on the issue and to make a determination based on fairness and sound marketing policy and will render its decision in the next few days