



2024 Industry Survey

Storage Crop and Greenhouse Perspectives

The BC Vegetable Marketing Commission (BCVMC) recently conducted its 2024 Strategic Planning Survey to better understand industry perspectives on the BCVMC and refine our approach in the best interests of producers. There was a request to break out the survey results by sector (storage crop and greenhouse) to understand similarities and differences between industry groups. Highlighted below are some of the key similarities and differences between sectors.

Participation and General Comment

The survey received input from 20 storage crop respondents and 14 greenhouse respondents, providing perspectives from both sectors. Overall, the responses from the storage crop and greenhouse industry revealed a mix of similarities and differences. Both groups share common concerns about communication and decision-making; however, a few greenhouse respondents expressed greater challenges with trust levels, while storage crop respondents focused more on market stability and transportation issues. These differences highlight the distinct priorities and experiences of each group.

Trust and Integrity

Both groups value the inclusion of independent Commission members for fostering diverse perspectives and building trust but feel more work needs to be done. The storage crop industry generally reported stable levels of trust, with a single comment expressing concern that the Commission is considering expanding the area for regulated vegetables. The greenhouse industry acknowledged some challenges, with 5 of the 23 comments identifying large growers or agencies potentially influencing Commission decisions, increased litigation, and changes to the General Order. 3 of the 23 comments questioned the Commission's relationship with the BCGGA as factors impacting their trust.

Communication

While improvements in communications were noted, both groups called for further enhancements, particularly website improvements. The greenhouse industry appreciated the timeliness and material in BCVMC communications, but 6 of the 15 comments emphasized the need for more transparency, tailored messaging, summaries of the legal

documents and more in-person meetings. While the storage crop industry is generally more satisfied, 4 of the 13 comments would like to see timelier communications, increased bulletin frequency and more information on the organic industry.

Regulatory Decisions and Impacts

Both groups stressed the importance of transparency and timeliness with regulatory decisions. Both groups reported minimal or no direct effect on their business from recent regulatory changes. The storage crop industry responses focused on preserving orderly marketing, whereas the greenhouse industry has prioritized balancing production levels to avoid over-supplying the market.

Strengthening the Industry

The greenhouse industry suggested the need to be more involved in national and international issues and take a broader market perspective. 4 of the 36 comments received talked about creating a separate Commission for the greenhouse industry. The greenhouse industry also identified the challenges of staying competitive with labor shortages and rising energy costs and sees opportunity in scaling production to meet demand and improving energy efficiency.

The storage crop industry is focused on market stability and is looking for a stronger regulatory framework as well as opportunities to enhance market potential through advancements in crop varieties, packaging, and storage solutions.

Looking Ahead

Despite some differences, both groups share optimism about production growth and the need for the BCVMC's regulatory framework to ensure market stability and expansion.

The BCVMC is committed to addressing the unique and shared needs of both storage crop and greenhouse growers. Based on this comparative analysis, in addition to the actions previously identified, the BCVMC will enhance its focus on the following priorities:

- **Enhanced Communication:** We will look to streamline and target messaging and redesign our website to improve accessibility and clarity of information for all growers.
- **Sector-Specific Support:** Tailor initiatives to address the unique and distinct challenges and opportunities in each sector, ensuring support and managed growth across both industries.

- **Transparent and Timely Decision-Making:** We will continue to prioritize transparency, improve response times, and more actively engage stakeholders in critical decisions.

Your input has been invaluable in shaping strategies and creating a supportive regulatory environment for BC's vegetable industry. A link to the comparative survey results can be found here [<link>](#). Should you have any questions or wish to discuss these findings further, we welcome you to contact the Commission.