

BC Blueberry Council - Board of Directors Meeting

October 18, 2022, 9am-12pm

Hybrid (in-person at 32160 S. Fraser Way Abbotsford, main floor boardroom) and ZOOM

Draft Minutes

Present: Jason Smith, Gurprit Brar, Harmeet Dhillon, Bryce Guliker, Humraj Kallu, Ripan Malhi, Carolyn Teasdale (BC gov rep), Harjot Toor, Eva Wang; Staff: Anju Gill, Clara Moran, Karen Carter

Absent: Dalbir Benipal, Charanjit Chahal, Surjit Gosal

1. **Call to order** at 9:14 a.m. J. Smith
2. **Approval of Agenda. Motion:** to “approve the agenda for October 18, 2022.” Carried.
3. **Approval of Minutes. Motion:** “approve the minutes of the post-AGM meeting of June 16, 2022” Carried.
4. **Review & Planning (ED)**
 - A. Gill presented a brief history of BCBC and outlined the three pillars of the organization:
 - In 2016, bylaw changes brought about an assigned allocation of levies:
 - **Grower Education 20%** This includes workshops; food safety; literature and fact sheets; videos; guides, field-days. For example, an education campaign is currently underway on the Scorch virus issue. For this, BCBC has received funding from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in the sum of \$130,000 (\$40,000 for 2022-2023 and \$90,000 for 2023- 2024 fiscal year).
 - This pillar also includes industry relations and advocacy. To support some of these activities, BCBC is a member of the following agriculture industry advocacy organizations:
 - [BC Agriculture Council](#) (provincial) – membership costs approx. \$10,000-\$15,000 per year.
 - [Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada](#) (federal) membership \$26,000 per year (based on farm gate value)These organizations present a unified voice on various public policy matters to respective governments/policy-makers.
 - **Market Development and Promotions 40%** – This includes activities on market Access (takes a long time to get access e.g., China – 10 years); South Korea; VietnamMarket Development – domestic and international. This includes working with in-market agencies to carry out promotional campaigns throughout the year on behalf of BCBC.
These activities are 50% cost-share under the AgriMarketing program.
Under this pillar, these memberships (and respective fees) are included: [North American Blueberry Council](#) (BCBC is one of the original founding members) - \$5,000; [International Blueberry Organization](#) -\$2,600; [Canadian Produce Marketing Association](#) \$2,000
 - **Research (30%)**: This includes crop health initiatives; crop enhancement; and the breeding program.
Research funding under the Canadian Agriculture Partnership program will end on March 31, 2023. This funding covers the majority of our research projects.

Preparation for application under the next program (2023-2028) [Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#) is underway and being led by BCBC's research director, Dr. Eric Gerbrandt. The application will likely open early next year.

A. Gill presented a brief trajectory of the industry:

- 1990's - growth started (young plants)
- 2000's – expansion (planting and volume)
- 2010's – global expansion of blueberries
- 2020's – aging plants, extreme weather events, increasing input costs, greater global competition

Under these circumstances, are these three pillars still relevant? After some discussion, the directors agreed that these pillars are still relevant and can respond to the current state of the industry.

From here on, each of these pillars will be scrutinized separately for direction-setting and planning purposes. Grower education – what should be the TOP PRIORITY? Resounding agreement on: Quality – our guiding light (in all pillars) and Corporate Social Sustainability

[Planning to be cont'd at next Board meeting. End of planning session.](#)

5. Domestic promotions team joined briefly to present a report on 2022 promotional activities and GoBlue – the full report is available at the BCBC office.

6. Board Decisions -

- How should the Council distribute \$80,000 collected by BC Agriculture Council to the flood-impacted growers? The consensus was that it would be difficult to run a verification process on flood impact. It would be best to distribute the funds equally to those growers who were registered with BCBC for flood impact information and support. There were approximately 45 to 50 growers from the Sumas and Matsqui flats areas.
- Upcoming meetings and attendance: FVEG event from November 14-16 in Ottawa –Ag Days – G. Brar and H. Toor will attend to represent the BCBC. H. Kallu and B. Guliker will attend BCAC's event -Ag Day in Victoria from October 24-25.
- Committee appointments: received a request from Sunny Brar to join one of the standing committees, Promotions and/or Finance.
Motion: “to appoint Sunny Brar as a member of the promotions and finance committee” Carried.
- H. Dhillon as a new director on the board will join the Industry Relations and Finance committees.

7. Next board meeting: Nov 10, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

8. Adjourned at 12:04 p.m.