

EXTENSION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the **Extension Committee** held virtually via Teams on Thursday November 14, 2024.

Members Present:

Asha Wareham
 Evan Esch (CO-CHAIR)
 Gail Nelson
 Isabella Rivero
 Jesse MacDonald
 Juliana Cao
 Kate Durisek
 Katelyn Hengel
 Kellie Garcia (CO-CHAIR)
 Lindsay Hainstock
 Love-Ese Chile
 Naomi Delury
 Nick Ibuki
 Ruth King
 Sera Lean
 Shamore Watson
 Shelby Austen

BC Agricultural Climate Action Research Network
 Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program
 BC Fruit Growers' Association
 BC Wine Grape Council
 Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
 BC Food Web
 BC Wine Grape Council
 BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food
 Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project
 BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food
 BC Agricultural Climate Action Research Network
 Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
 Summerland Varieties Corp
 Sustainable Winegrowing BC
 Evergro – Nutrien Ag Solutions
 BC Fruit Works
 Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project

Regrets:

Beth Cavers
 Chris Zabek

BC Cherry Association
 BC Ministry of Agriculture & Food

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

2. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEMS		
MEMBER	ACTION REQUIRED	STATUS
All members	Send thoughts and ideas to Lindsay RE: 2025 SIHS	✓
Shelby Austen	Contact BC Food Web Director RE: Committee membership	✓

3. MEMBER ROUND TABLE UPDATES

- Sera Lean shared that November 29 is the last day for staff at Growers Supply following the BCTF closure. Most horticulture advisors will stay in the industry, joining other partners.
- Shelby Austen provided an update on the CCLSP's agriculture bus tour in Lake Country from November 6, which connected local producers with government and First Nations planning staff to discuss shared challenges and collaborative solutions. An summary report will be prepared and distributed shortly.
- Gail Nelson highlighted BCFGAs recent initiatives to support growers following BCTF's closure. These include horticulture tailgates, Living Labs field days, and decision-making tools for maturity tracking. She also highlighted the approval of a pilot project to import nursery stock from the Pacific Northwest and Eastern Canada without fumigation, with the first imports expected in 2025.

- Nick Ibuki reported that Summerland Varieties is testing new varieties in their taste panel, with potential upcoming releases.
- Jesse MacDonald shared that AAFC has submitted letters of intent for 2026 project funding. He also met with the AAFC associate director to discuss increasing research station engagement and applied for hospitality funding to host interactive commodity days
- Naomi Delury announced an upcoming hybrid co-creation workshop on novel food processing. The workshop will help nine AAFC research scientists identify and prioritize key barriers to innovation in industrial food processing, using science-driven data to address gaps in implementing new technologies.
- Asha Wareham shared that BC ACARN is preparing for their event season, working with BC Living Labs on commodity group workshops, a cross-provincial virtual workshop in the new year, and a February extension training program to help graduate students improve science communication skills.
- Julianna Cao reported that BC Food Web has been publishing monthly research briefs, with a current focus on forage yield improvement, phosphorus reduction in corn, nitrogen-producing cover crops for vineyards, and more.
- Kate Hengel stated that the Ministry collaborated with Southern Irrigation to showcase unique examples of irrigation technology in vineyards through a video set for release next year. She also noted that the [Enhanced Replant Program](#) is now accepting draft applications until December 3, and IAF has been hosting commodity-specific webinars.
 - Kellie asked if IAF offers one-on-one support to growers, to which Gail and Sera confirmed, noting options to email, online chat, or book appointments.
- Kate Durisek shared that BCWGC is working on "Third Thursday" R&D meetings, cover crop projects, a new website, and research briefs with CCLSP and BC Food Web. They've developed a health and safety roadmap and are focused on hiring a project manager and creating a strategic plan for the Wine Industry Task Force. Isabella, their new Communications and Membership Coordinator, will represent BCWGC at the AgEx conference.
- Shamore Watson provided an update on BC Fruit Work's seasonal initiatives, and a Labour Research Project with Kwantlen Polytechnic University to assess domestic worker needs.
- Love-Ese Chile introduced herself as the new program manager for BC ACARN and offered support for coordinating relationships with researchers.
- Lindsay Hainstock updated the group on the Southern Interior Horticulture Show, expressing interest in expanding the platform's use to compliment other workshops and events. The agenda will be released soon. She is also creating videos to help producers train their staff on various topics, with the videos available in English, Spanish, and Punjabi. Lastly, she is revisiting a seedling identification project and seeking committee feedback on next steps
 - Asha offered ACARN's support in graphic design and coordination for the seedling project.
- Ruth King announced that Sustainable Winegrowing BC will co-host a social event with the BC Grapegrowers Association at Quails' Gate. She suggested replicating the successful CCLSP Lake Country Agriculture Tour in the South, focusing on SWBC-certified vineyards.
- Evan Esch noted that OHAG is working to revive monthly industry breakfast meetings in the North and South, aiming to rebuild networking opportunities lost during COVID.

Upcoming Events Mentioned in the Roundtable Discussion:

For more information on upcoming events, please visit the [CCLSP Events Calendar](#).

Agricultural Excellence Conference	Nov 19-21, 2024
BCWGC Third Thursday R&D Meeting	Nov 21, 2024
Lab to Land (Virtual Workshop)	Jan 15-16, 2025
Southern Interior Horticulture Show	Feb 12-13, 2025

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1 UPDATE: APPROVED PROJECTS FOR STABILIZATION FUND

- Kellie Garcia informed the committee of five projects approved for stabilization funding by the Cross-Commodity Advisory Council in September. The funded projects include the 2025 Extension Conference, ongoing operations of BC DAS, potential expansion of BC DAS to winegrapes, local government bus tours, and the development of research briefs for producers. Approximately \$600K remains available in the fund, and Kellie encouraged the committee to continue proposing project ideas.
 - Evan asked if the remaining funds are designated solely for extension. Kellie clarified that it represents the total remaining in the fund but noted that CCLSP can help secure additional funding sources if needed.
 - Lindsay offered her support to the consultant and inquired about models required for expanding to winegrapes. Kellie explained that the project would be phased: phase one will assess available models and conduct a needs assessment, while phase two will involve the work plan and implementation.
 - Kate H asked about including potato models in DAS. Kellie responded that this is not part of the current project but is on their radar.

ACTION ITEMS	
MEMBER NAME	ACTION REQUIRED
Kellie Garcia	Contact committee consultant suggestions for DAS expansion to wine grapes (Galen Barnhardt, Christine Bruneau, Ken Sapsford)

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 2025 EXTENSION PRACTITIONERS CONFERENCE

- Shelby Austen presented suggestions for the 2025 Extension Practitioners Conference based on feedback from the 2024 conference and asked for planning ideas. Proposed topics included hands-on practical workshops, science communication, conflict resolution, and more.
 - Gail suggested focusing on supports that enable growers to organize themselves, such as Farmers Institutes and their structures. Evan noted that colleagues at WSU are rolling out a pear IPM program starting with a small working group.
 - Kate D emphasized the value of a grower panel and suggested showcasing early-stage research updates. Ruth highlighted the importance of farm economics and business planning.
 - Asha recommended Hannah Wittman from UBC as an expert in peer-to-peer learning to build grower-to-grower engagement. She also proposed Matt Trebel from AgSafe for a session on mental health in agriculture.

- Kellie Garcia sought input on improving the roadmaps workshop.
 - Sera suggested starting with a broader focus rather than concentrating on single commodities. Ruth proposed breaking into commodity-specific groups after a cross-commodity session to work on finer details.
 - Gail asked about reviewing progress on previous years' roadmaps. Kellie confirmed that this will be incorporated to make the roadmaps living documents updated annually.
 - Shelby noted that the format will shift to focus on identifying issues, defining tangible tasks to address them, and determining which groups are best equipped to execute those tasks.

ACTION ITEMS	
MEMBER NAME	ACTION REQUIRED
Evan Esch	Connect RE: WSU IPM Working Group
Shelby Austen/Asha Wareham	Connect RE: Hannah Wittman (UBC)

5.2 PROPOSED 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

- Evan Esch presented the proposed 2025 meeting schedule. The meetings are planned for January 21, April 8, June 17, and November 4.

ACTION ITEMS	
MEMBER NAME	ACTION REQUIRED
Shelby Austen	Send out calendar invites to members for 2025 meeting dates.

6. ADJOURNMENT

- The next Extension Committee meeting will be held on Jan 21, 2025 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.