

# EXTENSION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the **Extension Committee** held virtually via Teams on Tuesday June 17, 2025.

## **Members Present:**

Barbara Hall  
Beth Cavers  
Chris Zabek  
Evan Esch (CO-CHAIR)  
Gail Nelson  
Kate Durisek  
Kellie Garcia (CO-CHAIR)  
Lindsay Hainstock  
Love-Ese Chile  
Naomi Delury  
Nick Ibuki  
Ruth King  
Sera Lean  
Shelby Austen

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

## **Regrets:**

Asha Wareham  
Isabella Rivero  
Jesse MacDonald  
Juliana Cao  
Matt Walz

BC Agricultural Climate Action Research Network  
BC Wine Grape Council  
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada  
BC Food Web  
Terralink Horticulture

## **1. WELCOMING REMARKS**

## **2. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS		
MEMBER	ACTION REQUIRED	STATUS
Evan/Lindsay H	Connect RE: Vivid Machines & SIR	✓
Kellie/Lindsay	Lindsay share Ministry herbicide specialist contact with Kellie	✓
Kellie/Jesse	Connect RE: Cold hardiness projects	✓

## **3. MEMBER ROUND TABLE UPDATES**

- Nick noted that cherry season is beginning, and SVC's early evaluations are underway at test sites.
- Sera reported that the season has been busier than expected, with early harvest already started. While crop load is high, some trees are still struggling. She also observed a shortage of pickers in the southern region.
  - Kellie mentioned that Shelby has launched a marketing campaign for BC Fruit Works under CCLSP, in collaboration with the BC Cherry Association. The campaign promotes

BCFW as a central hub for accessing active employment directories, where job seekers can browse opportunities and apply directly with hiring farms.

- Ruth shared that a workshop was held at the Wine Research Centre on Friday with 22 colleagues from Okanagan College and AAFC. The purpose was to re-envision the Centre and align approaches to wine and viticulture research in BC. She is also collaborating with AAFC to organize a Grape Day at UBC in November to showcase active research. Additionally, she is developing an NSERC Alliance-Society application focused on protecting Canadian wine regions from climate change to support agri-tourism and rural economies.
- Naomi noted that AAFC has appointed a new Associate Director at the research station, Andrea Kalischuk. She also highlighted AAFC's participation in the upcoming Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada Apple Working Group meeting, which will be hosted by BCFGa in July in the Okanagan.
- Love-Ese shared that she is involved in several projects with different stakeholders. ACARN has been contracted by the BCGA to work on the bird deterrents project and is also working with the Agricultural Genomics Action Centre to organize a conference on October 27–28 focused on on-farm research for climate resilience. Additionally, she is updating the ACARN website to include a categorized project library.
  - Lindsay commented that PMRA is conducting a comprehensive review of all pest control products, and she has inquired about providing feedback from industry stakeholders.
- Barbara shared that she has begun grape propagation for the development of new rootstocks and varieties. She also highlighted the upcoming joint conference at UBCO next week, focused on sustainable practices in agriculture.
- Gail reported that BCFGa is working with the Ministry on Business Risk Management and providing input on labour through the BC Agriculture Council and Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada. They have hosted pesticide applicator certification and sprayer calibration courses to help growers earn PAC points. A national Apple Working Group meeting will be hosted July 9–10 to address cross-provincial issues. BCFGa is also collaborating with the Invasive Species Council of BC to develop training materials on emerging threats to tree fruit producers.
- Beth noted that BCCA is currently focused on export programs. Staff have been actively engaging with growers to ensure they understand trapping and reporting requirements. Two field days will be held at AAFC in July and August to introduce new cherry varieties.
- Chris shared that he is working to finalize a project on irrigation case studies that demonstrate positive grower returns. The data has been collected, and content is being finalized. He will provide an update once it is ready for release.
- Lindsay reported that she is starting to plan the 2026 Southern Interior Horticulture Show and welcomes ideas. She is also partnering with Southern Irrigation to host workshops this summer, with July focused on ground crops and vegetables. She now has soil health kits available for easy in-field tests with producers, which can be used at upcoming extension events. Lastly, she told the group that an opportunity assessment for the table grape industry may be completed by the Ministry.
- Kate shared that two BC Living Labs field days focused on cover crops are planned for July. The next R&D Committee meeting is scheduled for July 17 and will include a presentation from Wesley Zandberg on his smoke taint research. The BC Wine Grape Council's Annual General Meeting will take place online on August 7. She also noted that AgSafe has launched a new initiative to support human resources in wineries. Lastly, the BC Wine Grape Council is currently

updating the spray schedule in the Grape Production Guide to make it more flexible and user-friendly. They are working with Washington State University and the contractor for the BCDAS expansion to ensure consistent terminology.

- Evan reported that SIR operations are in full swing, with staff currently focused on grower engagement.

***Upcoming Events Mentioned in the Roundtable Discussion:***

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

CSHS & CSA Joint Society Conference	June 23 – 26, 2025
Cherry Day at AAFC	July 8, 2025
FVGC Apple Working Group	July 9 – 10, 2025
BCWGC R&D Third Thursdays	July 17, 2025
BC Living Labs Cover Crop Field Days	July 22 – 23, 2025
BCWGC AGM	August 7, 2025
Cherry Day at AAFC	August 19, 2025
Cultivating Resilience Summit	October 27 – 28, 2025

#### **4. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **4.1 CURRENT PROJECT UPDATES**

###### **a) Research Briefs & Videos**

Love-Ese informed the group that ACARN has been contracted by CCLSP to develop a series of research briefs and accompanying videos for industry. They have connected with industry leads to finalize an initial list of 10 topics, with space reserved for two emerging research areas. A Research Brief Guide has also been created to outline expectations and development stages. Meetings with researchers from AAFC, WSU, and others are underway, with the goal of wrapping up by early July to begin the writing phase.

###### **b) Extension Conference Final Report**

Shelby walked the committee through the Final Report highlighting the 2025 summary of results. More discussion is outlined under section 5.2.

#### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **5.1 PROPOSED PROJECTS UPDATES**

###### **a) Local Government Engagement**

Kellie informed the group that CCLSP has prepared a local government education and outreach application to be submitted to the Cross-Commodity Advisory Council on June 24. The proposal includes three agriculture tours, roundtable discussions in partnership with regional districts, and the development of primers for homeowners and real estate agents on living near active agricultural land.

### **b) KTT Model for Research Projects**

Kellie informed the committee that she is working with the BC Wine Grape Council to develop a model for embedding knowledge and technology transfer (KTT) at the outset of research planning. The goal is to pilot this approach through the new Wine Grape Industry Task Force's innovation clusters.

### **5.2 Extension Action Plan**

Kellie explained that during the Extension Conference, participants did not have the opportunity to identify which groups or organizations should take the lead on the different actions outlined in the 2025 Roadmap. She suggested using this committee to help decide next steps. Her proposal is to create a smaller group that can sort the actions by association or company, so it is clear who is responsible for each item. The goal is to build a process that can be repeated each year to track progress, with a larger priority-setting exercise every three to five years. Kellie invited feedback from the committee on how to improve coordination of extension activities across the sector.

- Kate said the report was well done and shared that she had circulated it to the Wine Grape Industry Task Force. They plan to use the relevant parts of the report to guide their working groups and help them understand the potential impacts of their work from the beginning.
- Gail expressed appreciation for the work that has been completed so far. She highlighted the long-term value of the roadmaps, noting that many of the identified priorities are likely to remain the same. She also mentioned that the priorities align well with those of the BCFGA, and that they have already started looking at projects they could implement soon.

### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The next Extension Committee meeting will be held online on November 4, 2025, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.