

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT -

BC DAS Operations

The BC Decision Aid System (BC DAS) is an online integrated pest management decision support program for BC tree fruit growers and horticulturalists. It was built by the Pacific Northwest's leading public institution in tree fruit research and extension – Washington State University – and adapted for the fruit growing regions of interior BC under a partnership of the Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program, BC Fruit Growers' Association, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Goal

The goal of the project is to renew funding for the continued operations of BC DAS to better support extension efforts for BC's tree fruit sector. With increasingly variable climatic conditions and the emergence of new orchard pests, the need for high-quality weather data and science-based pest management recommendations is greater than ever.

Objectives

The objectives of this project are to:

1. Continue to offer BC DAS to tree fruit growers and horticultural support staff.
2. Provide additional horticulture support for users with an emphasis on apple crisis and spray timing for increased fruit quality.
3. Develop and execute a plan for the long-term funding and operation of BC DAS.

Timeline & Funding

The project will be completed between December 2024 and December 2026. Funding is provided by the Government of British Columbia through programs and initiatives delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC.

Activity Highlights

Agreement with WSU

- Review and adopt an updated user agreement with Washington State University.

Horticulture Support

- Provide on-call horticultural advice and continued education for BC DAS users.
- Work closely with WSU staff and agricultural meteorologist to address concerns with disease models and weather station data.

Producer Engagement & Adoption

- Hold field meetings, workshops, help sessions, and other extension events with a focus on BC DAS education.
- Deliver presentations at annual Tree Fruit Production Guide meetings.
- Participant in other industry conferences, symposiums, and online workshops.
- Prepare articles and content for online BC DAS platform.
- Recruit and on-board new users.
- Gather feedback via interviews and surveys,

Committee Engagement

- Hold bi-annual meetings with a Steering Committee of researchers, industry support staff, and BC Ministry of Agriculture.
- Strike a committee of industry representatives to determine a long-term funding model for BC DAS.