

Report of the

Apple Section of the Apple and Fruit Committee

**To the 94th Annual General Meeting of the
Canadian Horticultural Council**

**The Westin Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario
March 10, 2016**

To the President and Members of the Canadian Horticultural Council

The Apple Working Group (AWG) met formally twice in 2015: at the CHC AGM in March and the Mid-Summer meeting in August. A number of conference calls have also taken place as well.

The direction and work plan of the AWG includes but is not limited to:

- Beyond the Border process
- Market Conditions and Trends
- Canadian Agri-Science Cluster for Horticulture 2
- Agri-Marketing Program
- National Apple Research Strategy Update
- Royal Agricultural Winter Fair National Apple Competition

2015-16 Apple Working Group Advocacy Initiatives

Canadian Retaliatory Tariffs Arising from US Country of Origin Labelling (COOL)

The final WTO determination that US COOL legislation was in contravention of trade rules with Canada and Mexico prompted the Canadian government to initiate a listing of potential tariffs to be applied against US products being imported into Canada of which apples would be subject to a 100% tariff. During the last year the AWG was active in this area and advised the federal government that, while not unanimous for all members, the position of the group was no opposition to the application of tariffs. Despite this position advocacy was also accomplished via US Apple to indicate our support to them for the repeal of COOL legislation at the US Senate. Ultimately COOL legislation was repealed thus avoiding the need for tariffs.

International Federation for Produce Standards (IFPS) – Application for Honeycrisp PLUs

The AWG was very active in developing opposition to an application submitted to the IFPS for the creation of two separate PLU codes for Honeycrisp apples, one for small and one for large Honeycrisp. The AWG was concerned that the creation of two PLU codes would erode the premium quality and pricing for Honeycrisp that currently exists for Canadian producers. At the time of writing this report the decision on this process is pending.

CFIA-Biosecurity Standard for the Fruit and Tree Nut Industries

Since 2014 several members of the AWG have been contributing to the production of a national voluntary biosecurity standard development as members of the Fruit and Tree Nut Biosecurity Advisory Committee (FTNBAC). The FTNBAC met several times by teleconference and also in person. While work will continue on the Producer Manual that will eventually accompany the Standard, the CFIA will be publishing the completed Standard in March 2016.

Mid-Summer Apple Meeting

The CHC Mid-Summer Apple Meeting was held August 4 & 5, 2015 in Nova Scotia. The event was hosted by the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association and sponsored by many apple industry stakeholders. The industry meeting and orchard tour were well attended by apple growers and industry representatives from across Canada.

The mid-summer meeting business included discussions on market conditions (including crop estimates) and trends, Cluster 2 research grants as well as industry strategy for research, marketing and issue management. The AWG also provided input on COOL retaliatory tariffs. The agenda also included presentations from Summerland Varieties Corporation on their activities and from Perennia regarding Nova Scotia's 2014 Fire Blight Epidemic.

This year, the 2016 mid-summer meetings will be hosted by New Brunswick at roughly the same time period as last year; the final dates will be determined at this year's annual general meeting.

Canadian Agri-Science Cluster for Horticulture 2

The following industry-driven issues, which were common throughout the collaborating provinces, are being worked on with funding from the Canadian Agri-Science Cluster for Horticulture 2 (within the Growing Forward 2 program) with total funding of \$1.5 million over 5 years (2013 to 2018). Provincial partners on the Cluster 2 projects are BC Fruit Growers' Association, Quebec Federation of Apple Producers and Ontario Apple Growers.

Optimizing Storage Technologies to Improve Efficiency, Reduce Energy Consumption, and Extend the Availability of Canadian Apples – Dr. Jennifer DeEil, OMAFRA

- 1) Methods to control CO₂ injury without the use of diphenylamine (DPA)
- 2) Determination of DPA residues throughout storage facilities
- 3) Optimizing storage regimes for 'Honeycrisp' and 'Gala'
- 4) Effects of cooling rate on apple quality after storage

Improving tree fruit storage management using weather based predictions of fruit quality at harvest – Dr. Gaetan Bourgeois, AAFC

- 1) Bioclimatic models of apple quality at harvest and in storage will be updated or developed based on the available historical data and on the new information obtained in this project. All models will be integrated in the CIPRA (Computer Centre for Agricultural Pest Forecasting) software and made freely available to the Canadian apple industry.

Performance of Honeycrisp on New Size-Controlling Rootstocks – Dr. John Cline, University of Guelph

- 1) Measure the precocity and performance of new size-controlling rootstocks and to compare these against industry standard M.9 and M.26
- 2) Determine rootstock effects on calcium disorders, whole tree physiology, and fruit storage potential
- 3) Assess the productivity of more vigorous rootstocks M.106 and M.7 against M.26 – with a close examination of graft union compatibility

New biological control agents for postharvest diseases of pome fruit – Dr. Louise Nelson, University of BC

- 1) Test several bacterial antagonists of postharvest fungal pathogens to determine their potential for development as a commercial biological control product
- 2) The proposed research is necessary to develop a comprehensive data package showing their ability to control postharvest disease under varying conditions in two major apple growing regions of Canada. This information will help us determine if their efficacy is sufficiently broad in scope to warrant further development

3) Determination of the optimal concentrations, application mode and timing are essential pieces of information for registration and commercialization

In 2014, CHC implemented a communications plan and is posting Cluster 2 reports to the CHC website on a semi-annual basis (November and May). CHC will also be developing a success' stories booklet, and conducting a series of surveys for Cluster 2 participants, including researchers, administrators and industry contributors.

As Cluster 2 is now in its third year, CHC has begun the early planning for Cluster 3, which is anticipated to be part of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's next suite of programs and will begin in April 2018. Over the next year, CHC will be working with commodity groups to update research strategy documents and review national research priorities.

The AWG has certainly been very busy over the course of the year. Two new participants joined us this year, Candy O'Conner from the NS Fruit Growers and Katherine Stirling from the Apple Growers of NB. I wish to thank all of the dedicated members of the AWG for their participation throughout 2015. Thank you as well to CHC staff who continue the work on our behalf. We greatly appreciate your efforts.

There are many issues facing our sector including import and market concerns, sustainability initiatives, bee health issues and the many advancements in technology. Together we must continue our efforts to proactively and collaboratively move our sector forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian H. Gilroy".

Brian Gilroy,
Chair, Apple and Fruit Committee
March 10, 2016