

The BCGAP Program in British Columbia

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The Fruit Tree Industry in BC



- 11,000 acres of apples and pears, 2000 acres of cherries, 2000 acres of peaches/plums/apricots.
- 1200 growers.
- Local population less than 300,000.

The Fruit Tree Industry in BC

- Cooperative packing and marketing system.
- 2 cooperative packing houses.
- Sold under BCTree Fruits



- BC Fruit Grower's Association

Unique Growing Area

- Semi-arid – low fungicide use.
- SIT based codling moth control program.
- Strong extension service.



2001

IFP project started in 2001 as an initiative of the BCFGA



- 1) To produce apples and pears without using synthetic chemical insecticides or fungicides between blossom and harvest.
- 2) To reduce pesticide application to soft fruits.
- 3) Be Integrated Fruit Production ready by 2003 and to be using IFP by 2005.

2001 Initiatives

- A market study was conducted to determine market opportunities for reduced pesticide fruit or fruit grown under IFP guidelines.
- Operational research and demonstration plots were set up at six locations throughout the Okanagan Valley to demonstrate IFP requirements and pest control techniques.
- IFP guidelines and a checklist were developed based on EUREPGAP protocols.
- Initial work has begun on the development of a sprayer calibration and operation program.
- Funding of related research projects



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Market Study

- Heading in right direction with IFP.
- No premium price over conventional fruit, when there is already the choice between organic and conventional in the marketplace.
- The second part of the marketing research project on how to implement an IFP marketing plan was scraped.

Demonstration Plots

- 6 grower orchards set up to demonstrate IFP requirements and pest control techniques.
- Sites were visited weekly and monitored for insect, diseases and records kept.
- IFP required 10 hours per hectare (2.5 acres) for monitoring and 4 hours per hectare for record keeping.
- Spray residue testing did not find any detectable residues in samples from the demonstration orchards but residues within tolerances were found in samples from one conventional orchard.

IFP Checklist

- Growing With Care checklist developed.
- Work done on a colour code system for pesticides.
- Including grower record keeping forms.



Research Plots

- Biological control of leafrollers
- Disease control alternatives
- Peach tree borer & Peach twig borer
- Control of Cherry fruit fly
- Dual CM/LR mating disruption
- Weed control
- Irrigation scheduling



2002

1. To be Integrated Fruit Production ready by 2003. By that time a grower will be able to register in a certified IFP program.
(Short term goal)
2. To make recommendations for the production of apple, pear and soft fruits using reduced-risk control products and alternative strategies. (Long term goal)

2002 Initiatives

- Guidelines modified
- 14 Grower Pilot project
- IFP Record Keeping included in BC Tree Fruit Production Guide
- Sprayer Calibration software developed and training of extension personnel completed
- Weather network established

Sprayer Calibrations

- Sprayer calibration program software developed.
- Extention workers trained in calibration.
- Certification of sprayer calibration system in place.



Weather Network

- Weather network established.
- Air temperature, rainfall, leaf wetness, soil temperature, etc. collected every 10 minutes.
- Use of degree day modeling done by field services.



Grower Pilot Project



BCGAP & EUREPGAP

- BC Cherry growers require EUREPGAP equivalency
- Expense of ISO accreditation
- Difficulty with traceability requirement with BC apple growers

2003

- Program in place.
- Adoption by growers almost non-existent.

2004

- BCGAP guidelines published in the BC Tree Fruit Production Guide.
- Program assisted 30 growers to prepare for EUROPGAP audits.



2005 and beyond

- Focus shifts to Environmental Farm Plans
- Food Safety
 - Documentation
 - Procedures
 - Traceability
- BCGAP ready when needed

The End



(for now)