COVID-19 leads to oversupply of dairy

13

<u>DAIRY</u> FRUIT

Co-op considers four-way fix at crossroads







The agricultural news source in British Columbia since 1915

MAY 2020 | Vol. 106 No. 5

# Worker health in focus

## Orchards step up

### by PETER MITHAM

OLIVER – With foreign and domestic workers starting to arrive in the Okanagan for another season, growers are grappling with provincial health guidelines designed to limit the spread of COVID-19.

"It's going to start the first week of May for grapes, doing some shoot-thinning in vineyards," says Ron Forrest, the BC Fruit Growers
Association liaison who connects domestic workers, including hundreds of Quebec youth, with local growers each summer.
"People should start coming in between the first week of May and the third week of May."

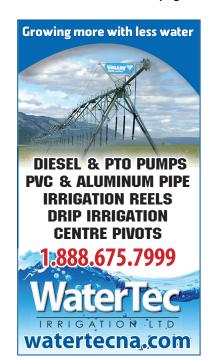
Given this year's anticipated labour shortage, he was on the ground by mid-

See COVID-19 on next page 5



# Rapid response

A new tasting room and shiny new tanks at Forbidden Spirits in Kelowna risked sitting idle last month when the province limited gatherings to fight COVID-19. Instead, co-founder and CEO Blair Wilson joined a number of alcohol producers province-wide that began producing industrial-strength alcohol for much-needed sanitizer during the pandemic. Wilson still hopes to make good on Forbidden Spirits' first overseas shipments of apple vodka when the pandemic ends. Read Myrna Stark Leader's story on page 37. PHOTO / MYRNA STARK LEADER



# Spring melt floods Cariboo

### by PETER MITHAM

WILLIAMS LAKE – High temperatures prompted the rapid melt of above-average snowpacks in the upper and middle Fraser basins in mid-April, delivering high streamflows to the Cariboo.

Several ranches were hit with water and had to relocate equipment and livestock as this issue went to press, but Cariboo Regional District spokesperson Chris Keam was unable to say more.

"It's simply too early to tell," he said. "There are definitely ranches and farms that have water on their property as a result of flooding or spring freshet, but we wouldn't have a total number of hectares impacted or anything like that yet."

City staff in Williams Lake reported flooding unseen in living memory, estimating that flows were in the 150 to 200-year range.

BC Ministry of Agriculture staff said flooding had largely impacted access to ranches and cattle, inundated fields of forage and damaged infrastructure such as fences. "The ministry has yet to receive any specific requests for assistance with relocating or caring for livestock," the ministry added, noting that a staff member was in the Cariboo, Chilcotin, and Prince George emergency operations centres to assist producers.

The province has poured a great deal of resources into mitigating flood risks since the disastrous 2017 season, which was followed by equally devastating wildfires.

See FLOODING on next page  $\circ$ 

