

APIARISTS	Beekeepers stung about import issues	9
DAIRY	COVID-19 leads to oversupply of dairy	13
FRUIT	Co-op considers four-way fix at crossroads	17



QS
Quality Seeds West

**SPRING TIME
IS PLANTING TIME!**

1-888-770-7333

Quality Seeds ... where quality counts!

COUNTRY LIFE IN BC

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 ↗



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

Growing more with less water

**DIESEL & PTO PUMPS
PVC & ALUMINUM PIPE
IRRIGATION REELS
DRIP IRRIGATION
CENTRE PIVOTS**

1.888.675.7999

WaterTec
IRRIGATION LTD
watertecna.com

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 Kearn 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 ↗

POSTES
CANADA
Port payé
Post-Publications
40012122

CANADA
POST
Postage paid
Publications Mail
40012122

Vol. 106 No. 5

Postmaster, Please return
undeliverable labels to:
Country Life in BC
36 Dale Road
Enderby, BC V0E 1V4