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Apple returns raise alarm

Growers threaten to quit

by **SARBMEET SINGH & PETER MITHAM**

KELOWNA – Okanagan apple growers say ongoing low returns and rising input costs have pushed them to the verge of quitting the industry.

“The financial returns of apple growers have been steadily declining for the past three years,” says Pinder Dhaliwal, an apple grower in Oliver and president of the BC Fruit Growers Association. “On average, apple growers are getting 12 cents per pound for their produce. However, it cost growers 30 cents per pound. Under such a scenario,


See **APPLE** on next page ↗



Snow job

A challenging year for Okanagan fruit growers came to an abrupt end on October 24 as snow blanketed their orchards and vineyards. Temperatures in Oliver dipped to -15° C, cold enough to make ice wine, but well before growers were ready to do so. While the majority of crops are in, a number of growers have filed notices of loss with Production Insurance. PHOTO / MYRNA STARK LEADER

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Ottawa urged to fulfil promises

by **PETER MITHAM**

BURNABY – BC dairy farmers are joining with producers across the country in demanding Ottawa make good on promises to compensate them for concessions made under recent trade deals.

“BC dairy farmers are calling on the government to fulfil its compensation commitment to all Canadian dairy farmers, who continue to supply milk and dairy products to communities around the country,” says

BC Dairy Association general manager Jeremy Dunn.

Concessions under CUSMA, which replaced NAFTA at the beginning of July, have cost the BC dairy industry approximately \$8.6 million to date. Together with trade deals Canada signed with Europe (CETA) and the Asia-Pacific region (CP-TPP), dairy producers will no longer have access to 18% of local markets.


Ottawa announced \$1.7 billion in compensation last year for market access granted under CETA and

CP-TPP, but it’s announced nothing regarding compensation for CUSMA concessions. An initial payment of \$345 million to dairy producers in December 2019 has yet to be followed up, though the government promised action in the throne speech in September.

“It’s been complete silence,” says David Wiens, vice-president of the Dairy Farmers of Canada, who shared industry’s concerns with media on October 20.

See **DAIRY** on next page ↗

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