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Feeling burned

Rhonda and Wayne MacDonald are thankful to be safe after a backburn meant to control the Lytton Creek wildfire forced them to evacuate their ranch this summer. Several of their animals died, a tragedy they say could have been averted if BC Wildfire Service had worked more closely with those familiar with the local area. Kate Ayers spoke to the MacDonalds and their story starts on page 8. *MURRAY MITCHELL*

Down to the crunch

Apple growers consider marketing commission for stabilization


PETER MITHAM

KELOWNA – A proposed apple marketing commission is facing tough questions from growers, some of whom fear it marks a return to the old single-desk system that prevailed in the 1980s while doing nothing to improve returns.

Responses from 21 growers surveyed earlier this year by Vancouver consulting firm Ference & Co. for the New Tree Fruit Varieties Development Council indicate 81% are in

See GROWERS on next page ↗

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Producer prices on the rise

PETER MITHAM

ABBOTSFORD – While consumers watch their grocery bills rise, the prices producers receive for a variety of products is also marching upwards.

Cattle and hogs heading to slaughter notched five-year highs in August, according to Statistics Canada, while eggs, chicken and turkey also set new records.

Turkey increased 18% versus a year earlier to \$2.79 a kilogram while chicken gained 16% to \$2.65 a kilogram. A more modest 11% increase was seen for eggs, which paid producers \$2.15 a dozen, up from \$1.95 a year earlier.

While this is good news for producers, the BC Egg Marketing Board says producer expenses have also increased.

“The cost of producing most food items has been going up throughout the pandemic,” notes Amanda Brittain, communications director with the BC Egg Marketing Board. “The main reason for the increase in producer prices is the rising cost of feed that our farmers are seeing with both organic and conventional feeds.”

Barley, for example, was fetching \$307.83 per tonne in August. This was a staggering 43% above a year earlier.

Barley and other grains have been hot commodities on the global market, driven by demand from China and elsewhere. Drought across the Prairies and western US has worsened a shortage in grains that has helped fuel a rise in prices.

The one sector to not see a

See DAIRY on next page ↗

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