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# COUNTRY LIFE IN BC

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## Feeling the heat on water

Groundwater licensing extension remains unlikely

PETER MITHAM

DUNCAN – The province is facing pushback over its water management strategy following four fish protection orders this summer, a management tool that runs counter to its troubled groundwater licensing initiative.

Two years ago, agricultural irrigators in the Kokilah River watershed became the first to have water access curtailed under Section 88 of the Water Sustainability Act, which also introduced a first-in-time, first-in-right licensing regime.

This summer, farmers in


See FISH on next page ➔



## Good grapes!

Clusters of red wine grapes hang around in Naramata, continuing to develop flavour in anticipation of this fall's harvest. While growers faced many challenges this year, including labour shortages and excessive heat, the crop is on track for a picture-perfect finish. Wildfires this summer complicated tourism, but were largely over by the time veraison occurred. With warm days and cool nights characterizing much of September, growers anticipate delivering a top-quality crop to wineries. MYRNA STARK LEADER

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## Province funds hazelnuts

PETER MITHAM

CHILLIWACK – The province is renewing its commitment to the hazelnut replant program with \$100,000 in funding for the current fiscal year.

Citing the success of the program in helping the local industry recover from Eastern Filbert Blight, the province began accepting applications September 30 for the program. The deadline for applications is November 9.

"The hazelnut renewal program has been extremely

valuable in encouraging the growth and regeneration of the hazelnut industry in BC," said Steve Hope, president of the BC Hazelnut Growers Association and co-owner of Fraser Valley Hazelnuts Ltd. in Chilliwack. "The demand for local products continues to increase, and new growers will be needed to help keep up."

To date, the program has supported the planting of 38,780 trees on 182 acres and the removal of 4,795 infected trees.


While younger stock

suffered during this summer's heat wave, Nature Tech Nursery Ltd. of Courtenay said the trees are resilient and it expects all nurseries to be able to meet demand for new stock. It offers 12 varieties, and encourages growers to place orders early.

"We very much appreciate this support for BC's hazelnut farmers as a way to incentivize planting this perennial crop that offers both high-value food production and can be used

See LONG-TERM on next page ➔

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