BeeBC funding continues to create buzz within bee community

VICTORIA – Beekeepers in the Fraser Valley and the Thompson Nicola region are working to save bees and pollinators with support from the B.C. government.

“We wouldn't have an agricultural industry without bees. We need them. It's critical. And bees are facing challenges around the globe,” said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. “It’s awesome to see BeeBC funding help with those challenges and support communities as they find solutions to support bees.”

Responding to the need to support bees in the province, communities are using BeeBC funding to help generate educational initiatives and plant beneficial plants to help pollinators thrive.

In Langley, Carolyn Essaunce of the Honest to Goodness Farm Co. is working to restore an acre of land on MacInnes Farms and convert it into a pollinator conservation area. The site will include space for a nesting ground and beneficial flora focusing on bloom times that are sparse. The site will encourage education through a marked path that will include benches and informative plaques encouraging visitors to create spaces for pollinators on their own land as well. The work of converting the farm will be volunteer led with support from the Langley Environmental Partners Society.

“Initiatives like BeeBC are perfect for encouraging people to step outside their comfort zones and do something positive for pollinators,” noted Essaunce. “A pollinator conservation area creates a space where all the beneficial insects have a safe space to nest and exist, everybody wins!”

In Clearwater, a town in the Thompson Nicola region, Yellowhead Community Services is working to increase nectar and pollen sources by planting pollen-rich plants in community and municipal park spaces, school gardens and community gardens. In an effort to increase winter survival rates of local hives, Yellowhead is also using the funding to secure a bee health consultant to visit the community for an educational opportunity on hive health and overwintering colonies.

"We are so excited to be working with our community to promote healthy honeybee and pollinator populations and for the opportunity to expand the knowledge base of beekeepers in our valley,” said Joanna Hurst, Yellowhead Community Services. “The health of all pollinators is so important to our food supply!”

Both projects incorporate an educational component to strengthen community knowledge about pollinator conservation while working to provide additional resources for pollinators foraging for food. These projects are two of 10 that have received support from the Province’s BeeBC program during the second intake of applications. To date, 23 projects throughout the
province have been funded by the program.

The BeeBC program provides funding to smaller-scale community-based projects that support the health of B.C.’s bees. The fund provides support to research, explore, field-test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health. The BeeBC program is administered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture.

**Quick Facts:**

- In late 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture provided $25,000 in funding to support research work on bee health and pollination.
- In May 2018, BeeBC received $100,000 in funding to support community-based projects on bee health to research, explore, field-test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health.
- In October 2018, Popham announced an additional $50,000 in funding through BeeBC to help support even more community-based projects in B.C.
- Honeybees are an important part of B.C.’s agriculture sector as pollinators of crops, contributing an estimated $538 million to the provincial economy.
- Across Canada, honeybees have an economic contribution estimated at over $3.2 billion.
- The BC Honey Producers’ Association represents the province’s commercial, sidliner and hobbyist beekeepers and is one of Canada’s oldest agricultural associations.

**Learn More:**

For more information on BeeBC, visit: [http://iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/bee-bc/](http://iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/bee-bc/)

Learn more about BeeBC program projects funded under the first intake of the program: [https://news.gov.bc.ca/18326](https://news.gov.bc.ca/18326)

Find out more about ethical bee projects funded by BeeBC: [https://news.gov.bc.ca/18150](https://news.gov.bc.ca/18150)

For more information on the Honest to Goodness Farm Co., visit: [https://www.honestfarming.ca/](https://www.honestfarming.ca/)

For information about the Ministry of Agriculture’s apiary program, visit: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/animal-production/bees](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/animal-production/bees)

For more information on Yellowhead Community Services, visit: [https://www.yellowheadcs.ca/](https://www.yellowheadcs.ca/)

A backgrounder follows.
Contact:
Blake Bilmer
Junior Public Affairs Officer
Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Agriculture
778 698-4786

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect
BeeBC funded projects

The following B.C. projects received approximately $96,108 through the first and second intake of the BeeBC program:

**Bee Awareness Society:** $5,000 to construct hives, observation hives and to deliver education to youth in the West Kootenays.

**Brad Cooke (beekeeper):** $3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on southern Vancouver Island.

**Central Cariboo Beekeepers Association:** $5,000 to support the monitoring of members’ collective colonies for desirable attributes for breeding and the preservation of breeding eggs for future use in establishing new colonies in the Cariboo Chilcotin region.

**Curtis Robinson (beekeeper):** $3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on southern Vancouver Island.

**Environmental Youth Alliance Society:** $5,000 to enhance habitats for bees by creating strips of native wildflowers near and in urban farms and food-producing community gardens in the Lower Mainland.

**Heartford Honey:** $5,000 to research the best protein sources to support hives in the Lower Mainland.

**Heidi Schnepf (beekeeper):** $3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on central Vancouver Island.

**The Honest to Goodness Farm Co.:** $5,000 to support the restoration of one acre of land on MacInnes Farms as a pollinator conservation area and planting beneficial plant species to support pollinators in Langley.

**Honey Bee Zen Apiaries Ltd.:** $5,000 to support research on fungi that are beneficial in reducing viral loads in honey in the Kootenay region.

**Honey Bee Zen Apiaries Ltd.:** $4,500 to support beekeepers in accessing electron-based sterilization in the Kootenay region.

**Howe Sound Honey & Bees:** $3,313 to support the establishment of mass storage bank colonies of mated queens on Bowen Island.

**Iain Glass (beekeeper):** $3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on the Gulf Islands.
Mark Schilling (beekeeper): $3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on central Vancouver Island.

Michael Campbell (beekeeper): $5,000 to support research of bee dysentery treatments in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley.

Michael Campbell (beekeeper): $5,000 to support the research of yellowjacket wasp control in partnership with Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Emma’s Acres and LINC Society in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley.

Michael Campbell (beekeeper): $5,000 to support research of control measures for high humidity in hives, in partnership with Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Emma’s Acres and LINC Society in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley.

Morgan Creek Farm: $4,665 to support the enhancement of bee habitats and deliver education on bees to youth on Vancouver Island.

Oceanside Hive: A Beekeepers Collective: $3,350 to continue a queen rearing program that progresses queen cells to mated queens, to plant forage plants to support the bee population and complete hygienic testing on Vancouver Island.

Pollinator Partnership Canada Society: $5,000 to create a demonstration native plant pollinator meadow, best management practices and community engagement activities for bee awareness on Vancouver Island.

Roselyn Lambert (beekeeper): $1,180 to compare queen performance in the Central Interior region.

Elk Root Conservation Farm: $5,000 to establish carefully selected natural bee-forage plants to increase the overall health of bees, to demonstrate how other communities can implement similar practices in the Kootenay region.

Sunnyside Farm and Apiary: $4,100 to raise and improve locally adapted hygienic- and disease-resistant queens and learn to prepare antennae for examination to reduce hive diseases on Bowen Island.

Yellowhead Community Services: $5,000 to support the increase of nectar and pollen sources, and create community club learning opportunities from a bee health consultant in Clearwater.

Contact:
Blake Bilmer
Junior Public Affairs Officer
Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Agriculture
778 698-4786

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect