
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Fresh intake provides funding for B.C.'s hazelnut growers

VICTORIA – Hazelnut growers in the province are being offered help planting new trees or removing infected ones through a new intake of the Hazelnut Renewal Program.

The program is revitalizing the B.C. hazelnut sector, supporting the dedicated people working in their orchards and encouraging those looking to begin a new career in hazelnut production. Growers with planting or removal projects between April 2021 and December 2021 are eligible for this program.

“B.C.’s hazelnut industry is a hidden gem, and it’s very encouraging to see it growing steadily these past few years as a result of our hazelnut renewal program,” said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. “The program directly supports our growers while promoting local food security, and I look forward to seeing how these latest projects help regenerate our hazelnut orchards.”

For several years, the British Columbia hazelnut industry has been battling against eastern filbert blight (EFB), which had affected hazelnut crops in the province.

Since the program began in 2018, growers’ response has increased tree-planting areas throughout B.C. Previously more concentrated in the Lower Mainland region, hazelnut acreage has since spread to the Okanagan, Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast and the Gulf Islands. Renewal programs have resulted in 38,780 new trees planted on 73.7 hectares (182 acres) and the removal of approximately 4,795 infected trees from 17.2 hectares (42.5 acres).

Applications for funding will be available between Sept. 30 and Nov. 9, 2021.

Quotes:

Steve Hope, president of the BCHGA, hazelnut grower and co-owner, Fraser Valley Hazelnuts Ltd. –

“The Hazelnut Renewal Program has been extremely valuable in encouraging the growth and regeneration of the hazelnut industry in B.C. The demand for local products continues to increase, and new growers will be needed to help keep up.”

Cornel Van Maren, secretary-treasurer, BCHGA, and hazelnut grower –

“Hazelnuts can be a good industry long term, but you need to put in the work to get them established. Start with good trees, nurture them and they will be into production before you know it.”

Quick Facts:

- The Hazelnut Renewal Program has \$100,000 for removing EFB-affected trees, planting new orchards or completing strategic sector projects aimed at increasing the sector's competitiveness.
- The BC Hazelnut Growers Association (BCHGA) is comprised of approximately 40 growers from throughout the province. These growers collectively represent 40.5 hectares of new and established orchards.
- B.C. farmers grew nearly 16 tonnes (35,066 pounds) of hazelnuts in 2020.
- Hazelnuts are a plant-based source of protein and are water-efficient crops, which support climate adaptation strategies and overall agricultural diversification in the province.

Learn More:

Apply to the latest Hazelnut Renewal Program:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/hazelnut-renewal-program>

May 2020 news release regarding the previous round of the Hazelnut Renewal Program:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020AGRI0019-000955>

Contact:

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Communications
250 356-1674

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