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Agriculture and food celebration  
 Fête de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation

### Issue 25, Jan 1/07

Welcome to the twenty-fifth issue of **BC Meating News**, providing information toward increasing the livestock harvest capacity and sales of high quality safe BC produced and processed meat products.

#### MTAP Funding Program Update

The Meat Transition Assistance Program Steering Committee approved 24 of the 58 applications submitted for Individual Plant Assistance. The BCFPA is working to process applications as fast as possible so processors can resume plans for upgrading and building in the new year once the busy season has passed. In addition, Help Desk staff is assisting plants with plans and documentation to prepare successful license applications. A number of Letters of Interest have been submitted for Community Solutions Funding. BCFPA is working to coordinate stakeholders within regions to be sure that projects are inclusive and do not duplicate efforts. For more information on the MTAP, see the website: <http://www.bcfpa.ca/mtap.html>.

#### Meat Industry Image Enhancement Project

A group of Alberta organizations is working on a project to improve the image of the meat industry in the effort to promote meat cutting as a career choice. The group received \$180,000 from the National Beef Industry Development Fund to develop an advertising campaign targeted at youth aged 17-24. Results from a series of focus groups indicated that there is a lack of awareness about opportunities in the meat industry, and those factors like long term potential and opportunities for advancement have an impact on career choices. The advertising campaign is planned for next spring using the slogan, "Join the Meat Force." For more information, see the website: <http://www.meatspecialists.ca/>.

#### Recognizing Industry Mentors

In its efforts to support meat plants through the various challenges associated with obtaining a provincial license, the MIES team has gained a lot from experienced operators. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the plants who have generously opened their facilities to us, offered their knowledge and insight and helped us to better understand the industry. A few processors deserve particular mention. Bill Meikle from Riverside Natural Meats in Salmon Arm has devoted hours to share information on issues related to land, waste disposal and licensing. Richard Bell from Farmcrest Foods in Salmon Arm has been a trusty resource on

poultry production and processing, and the operation of a successful farm business. In addition, Bernie Nikkels from Maplewood Farm in Metchosin has provided a long-running service to the community and numerous tours of his facility. Sincere thanks to all.

#### Islands Farm Seminar – January 11, Howard Johnson Harbourside, Nanaimo

The Islands Forage Committee presents this event with a series of workshops, agri-business displays and the opportunity to speak with industry specialists. The cost is \$30 if you register by January 3, or \$40 to register at the door. For more information, contact Sue at 250-746-1210 or [sue.gordon@gov.bc.ca](mailto:sue.gordon@gov.bc.ca).

#### Island Farmers Alliance AGM and Conference – January 18, Nanoose Bay

This meeting was rescheduled from November 30, 2006. For details contact Peter Versteeg at [pversteeg@shaw.ca](mailto:pversteeg@shaw.ca) or 250-743-2243.

#### Vancouver Island Chicken Quota Draw

The BC Chicken Marketing Board is holding a draw to form waiting lists for growing chicken. The deadline to apply is January 31, 2007. For info, contact the BCCMB at 604-859-2869 or see the website: <http://www.bcchicken.ca/>.

#### Canada Explores Future Agriculture Policy

On November 14, federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture met to discuss the Next Generation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Policy, an initiative to enhance the profitability and competitiveness of the agriculture sector. A discussion paper, series of thematic and economic background papers and a paper on the principles of policy development have been released for public comment. A series of regional consultations are planned for 2007. BCFPA CEO Tony Toth attended a preliminary meeting on December 14, and the Association intends to play an active role in the consultation process. For more information on the initiative, see: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/nextgen>.

**Want to get involved or know anyone who should be?** If you are interested in joining any of the MIES groups, contact the BCFPA at 1-877-356-1660 or [info@bcfpa.ca](mailto:info@bcfpa.ca). The views expressed in this document are those of the BC Food Processors Association.

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