



## BC MEATING NEWS

Welcome to the BCFPA's BC Meating News, providing information towards increasing livestock harvest and sales of high-quality, safe, BC-produced-and-processed meat products. This is a monthly publication of the Meat Industry Enhancement Strategy (MIES).

### **MIES web page updated: please share sources!**

The BCFPA web site has recently been updated and improved, and we have been doing the same with the MIES and MTAP web pages. When you click on [www.bcfpa.ca/programs/meat-industry-enhancement-strategy](http://www.bcfpa.ca/programs/meat-industry-enhancement-strategy) and look in the blue bar under "Programs," you find MIES and MTAP. Under MTAP you will find applications and the strategic plans that direct each phase of the program. Under MIES you will find the following sub-sections:

- "About BC's Meat Inspection Regulation:" covers how meat inspection and facility licensing is directed and managed in BC
- "Other Regulatory requirements:" provides links regarding waste and other aspects
- "MIES Resources:" provides links to this newsletter and to our brochure, Planning Tools, and livestock producers' calendar
- "About Livestock Slaughter and Meat:" contains fact sheets, research papers, studies, videos and more, from BC and from other jurisdictions. Here you will find the Salt Spring Island livestock surveys from 2006 and 2009, the North Okanagan Regional District study from 2008, the Ranching Task Force Final Report, and a video of the Kootenay Mobile Poultry Abattoir operating in the Kootenays.

We would like to include more information in that section about equipment or services relevant to

operating a slaughterhouse or meat business. So, if you have found a great source, or have a favourite company to work with and want to share, please pass the contact info along to Angie at [angie@bcfpa.ca](mailto:angie@bcfpa.ca).

### **BC Association of Farmers Markets introduces MarketSafe training**

The BC Association of Farmers Markets (BCAFM - which represents 81 farmers' markets and 3,000 vendors throughout BC) launched and piloted its new MarketSafe training at its Annual General Meeting March 12-13 in Penticton. The first course of its kind in Canada, MarketSafe is designed to increase awareness and knowledge of food safety and safe food handling procedures for farmers' market vendors, market managers, farm gate vendors, home kitchen small scale food processors, and others who may make, bake or produce food products for public consumption outside regulated food service establishments.

The program is a five-hour, interactive and participatory classroom course. Participants who successfully complete the course will receive a MarketSafe certificate from their Regional Health Authority. MarketSafe was developed through a partnership between the BCAFM and FOODSAFE BC, with financial assistance of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC. Says Mary Forstbauer, President of the BCAFM: "A little over a year ago the BCAFM partnered with the BC FOODSAFE Secretariat to develop MarketSafe. My excitement comes from the fact that MarketSafe will be recognized by Health

Authorities across the province as the standard to be set for farmers' markets and other direct marketers." For more information, see [www.bcfarmersmarket.org/](http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/) and [www.foodsafe.ca/](http://www.foodsafe.ca/)

### **"Niche" meat processing gains a profile**

Small-scale and local meat processing is gaining attention. The Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network (NMPAN) is a US-based national network created in 2007 to assist niche meat processors and the livestock producers and niche meat buyers who depend on them. Its web site [www.nichemeatprocessing.org/index.html](http://www.nichemeatprocessing.org/index.html) defines "niche meat" as "locally raised, certified organic, grass-fed, no hormones or antibiotics, certified humane—we use 'niche' very broadly to refer to many types of market differentiation. To best meet the needs of small- and mid-sized farmers and ranchers, we only work with small to mid-sized meat processors." It comments that "small and mid-sized plants—when available at all—can lack capacity, equipment, appropriate inspection status, and the human and financial capital to upgrade or expand."

With the disclaimer that "small" is relative, and that regulatory regimes differ, there is a lot of useful and interesting material on this site, including case studies and webinars, all of which can be reviewed on line. Recent webinars regarding mobile processing are worth noting: the MIES Team's Abra Brynne attended two in January hosted by the US Department of Agriculture and available directly at [www.fsis.usda.gov/news\\_&\\_events/Reg\\_Education\\_Videos/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/Reg_Education_Videos/index.asp).

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### Retailers becoming processors?

In fall 2009, Grist Magazine published an article ([www.grist.org/article/2009-11-20-Whole-Foods-chicken-farms/](http://www.grist.org/article/2009-11-20-Whole-Foods-chicken-farms/)) about food retailer Whole Foods' plans to work with the USDA and state authorities to establish a fleet of mobile poultry abattoirs, starting in the eastern United States. Whole Foods ([www.wholefoodsmarket.com](http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com)) brand is "natural and organic." It carries products from some BC abattoirs. It plans to increase the amount of locally-sourced chicken it can sell in the US by offering farmers an affordable way to process chickens.

The early thinking was that the mobile units would have a minimum "buy" of around 500 birds directed to Whole Foods but that farmers could process as many birds as they want for sale elsewhere as well. The processing cost would be included in the price Whole Food would pay the farmer; so processing of additional chickens would be free. Farmers who do not sell through Whole Foods could also have access to the service. Some agri-food critics have raised questions about the ultimate effect on small and local producers and processors from the entry into the market chain, and ownership of processing, by a large retailer. Whole Foods had intended for its first units to be operational by May 2010. It will be interesting to see how this experiment develops.

### Sofina Buys Lilydale

In a transaction valued at more than \$130 million, Sofina Foods Inc., a privately owned Ontario food company, has acquired Lilydale Inc. Lilydale was

established in 1940 as Alberta Poultry Producers Ltd. Originally a producer-owned co-operative, it moved to a corporate structure in 2005. The combination of Sofina and Lilydale will create a company with combined sales revenue exceeding \$800 million and a workforce of over 3,300 employees. The businesses are considered to be highly complementary with Lilydale's strengths in Western Canada and primary processing of poultry being combined with Sofina's strengths in Eastern Canada and further processed products of beef, pork and poultry. Sofina has also committed to invest a further \$20 million over the next two years into Lilydale to support operations and facility improvements.

### Walmart Attempts To Reduce Greenhouse Gases

Walmart Stores Inc. has announced an ambitious plan to eliminate 20 million metric tons of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from its global supply chain by the end of 2015. This represents one and a half times the company's estimated global carbon footprint growth over the next five years. Walmart will focus on its product categories with the highest embedded carbon, such as milk, bread and meat. It has no plans to absorb any costs that will go into making products more energy-efficient: that will be up to each supplier.

### 2010 Canadian Food Industry Report

The 2010 Canadian Food Industry Report is a 48-page report featuring up-to-date statistics on the Canadian food processing and manufacturing sector. It includes comprehensive sector-by-sector snapshots

of industry performance and innovation, expert analysis and commentary, plus an overview of the year's key food trends, new technologies and other Canadian industry highlights. Key industry categories covered include the meat industry. The report will be available on 22 April 2010. Orders placed before 1 April 2010 will receive a 15% discount. For more information contact Ingrid Eilbracht, publisher, Food in Canada Tel: 416 764-1503 or Email: [ingrid.eilbracht@food.rogers.com](mailto:ingrid.eilbracht@food.rogers.com)

**For further information** and access to more on-line resources, visit our Web site at <http://www.bcfpa.ca/programs/meat-industry-enhancement-strategy>

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