

## AGRICULTURE

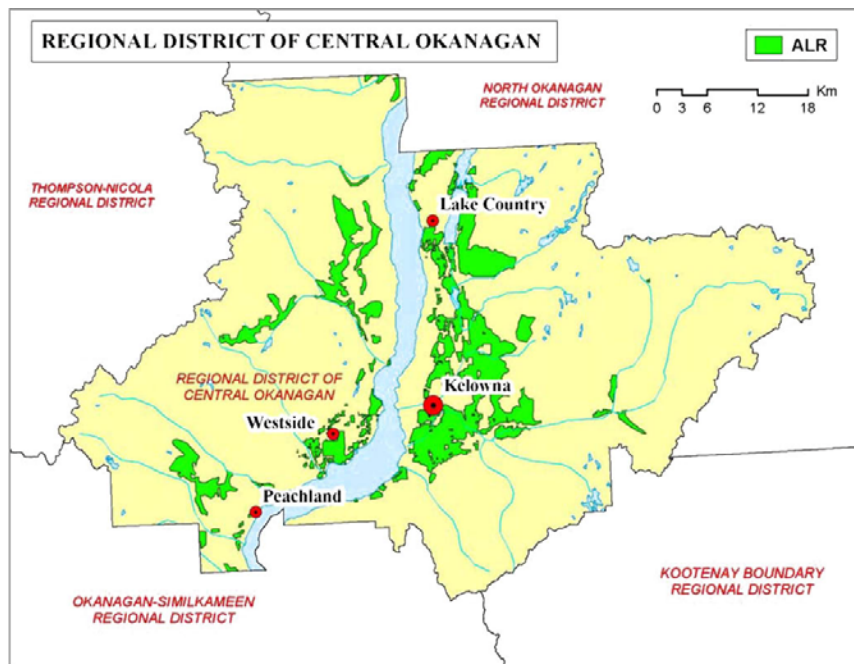
In 2006, there were 1,285 farm operators in the Central Okanagan representing \$1.2 billion in total farm capital on 1,580 square kilometres of land. Gross receipts for farm operations in 2006 were \$72.2 million. The bench lands within and surrounding the City of Kelowna and extending to Peachland yield a large portion of the apples grown in the province, as well as increasing quantities of grapes, and a significant amount of cherries, prunes, plums, peaches, apricots and vegetables.

Beef cattle range over much of the surrounding hillside and range land. Dairy farming is also important in the area, however, most dairy production has been converted to more intensive agriculture or to non-farm uses. There are a small number of newer poultry farms as well as some farms growing nursery products and producing greenhouse crops. The head office of BC Tree Fruits Ltd., which handles the marketing of most fresh tree fruits in the BC Interior is located in Kelowna, as well as the headquarters of Sun-Rype Products Ltd.

Sun-Rype Products Limited is a major Canadian fruit processor located in Kelowna. In 1946, the BC Fruit Growers Association, who had already been in the apple business for over 50 years, created BC Fruit Processing Ltd. to produce and sell a pure 100% apple juice. This company later became Sun-Rype and is now the largest juice manufacturer's marketer in Canada. Sun-Rype now employs over 365 people in the Kelowna area. By maintaining its head office in the Central Okanagan, the company draws attention to one of the area's best known industries.

### AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE<sup>1</sup>

The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the Regional District of Central Okanagan was designated on July 24, 1974 and today accounts for 9% of the Regional District's overall area.



<sup>1</sup> Regional District of the Central Okanagan, Agricultural Overview, February 2009.

## Selected Farm and Farm Operator Statistics<sup>2</sup>

	Central Okanagan		Central Okanagan	Thompson-Okanagan
	Subdivision A	Subdivision B	(RDCO)	(DR)
<b>Farm and farm operator statistics</b>				
Total population in 2006 1	122,214	40,062	162,276	491,479
Total number of operators	1,285	205	1,480	8,555
Average age of operators	55.3	56.8	55.5	54.5
Total male operators	820	135	955	5,400
Total female operators	460	65	525	3,155
Total number of farms	876	141	1,017	5,700
<b>Land statistics</b>				
Land area (km <sup>2</sup> ) 1	1,580	1,324	2,904	94,308
Total area of farms (hectares)	23,407	3,794	27,201	713,986
Average area of farms (hectares)	27	27	27	125
<b>Farm finance statistics</b>				
Total gross farm receipts (excluding forest products sold) (\$ Millions)	\$72.2	\$14.1	\$86.2	\$450.2
Total farm capital (market value \$ Millions)	\$1,239.5	\$170.2	\$1,409.7	\$6,496.3
<b>Crop and horticulture statistics</b>				
Land in crops (hectares)	5,350	1,490	6,840	83,502
<b>Top crops (hectares)</b>				
Apples	1,683	853	2,536	x
Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures	1,313	123	1,436	x
Total area of nursery products	459	99	558	x
All other tame hay and fodder crops	371	46	417	x
Sweet cherries	295	35	330	x
<b>Livestock statistics</b>				
Total cattle and calves	4,281	135	4,416	217,269
Total pigs	x	x	204	5,984

Note that farm receipts breakouts by category have not been released by Statistics Canada at the sub-provincial level since 2005 (reporting for fiscal 2003). As such, the BC Regional Index tables have been withdrawn as they no longer meet the expectations of users for current information.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Agriculture, Selected variables, [http://www26.statcan.ca:8080/AgrProfiles/cp06/TableList.action?prov=59&geog\\_id\\_amal=590335020&tab\\_id=1&search=search&locode=52629&placename=central+okanagan&placstart=0&geog\\_id=590335020&offname=Central+Okanagan+G](http://www26.statcan.ca:8080/AgrProfiles/cp06/TableList.action?prov=59&geog_id_amal=590335020&tab_id=1&search=search&locode=52629&placename=central+okanagan&placstart=0&geog_id=590335020&offname=Central+Okanagan+G) (Accessed April 15, 2009)

### FRUIT<sup>3</sup>

Farm revenues from apple and other tree fruit crops are slowly shrinking as older orchards are being converted to more profitable uses, including grape growing, hobby farms, and non farming uses. However, revenues from tree fruit crops remains moderately high and is likely to remain so over the next several years.

The Central Okanagan is a participant in the Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program (SIR). The goal of SIR is to control the codling moth, a tree fruit pest, to the point where no control interventions are required in commercial orchards and their surrounding areas in the participating fruit growing regions of the Okanagan, Similkameen, Creston and Shuswap Valleys.

SIR is a highly successful area-wide community initiative that applies nature-friendly technology to the control of codling moth, the BC tree fruit industries most damaging and costly pest. Prior to SIR, azinphos-methyl, a highly toxic organophosphate spray was the primary method used to manage the codling moth. It has been necessary for some growers to spray up to five applications of this product per year. This is an ongoing health concern, especially to growers who work on trees directly in the sprayed areas.

#### Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program Facts and Figures for 2008<sup>4</sup>

Area	# of Traps	Wild CM for 2008	Fruit Sampled	Injured Fruit	Apples	Pears
Belgo	184	970	61,000	110	418.83	0.1
Benvoulin	54	204	16,750	16	21.78	100.75
East Kelowna	429	1,897	136,150	430	1,050.12	16.39
Ellison	155	107	54,415	47	389.94	3.34
Glenmore	135	674	46,200	39	261.55	71.48
Okanagan Mission	13	119	6,000	8	17.7	6.34
Peachland	18	16	4,500	0	40.82	0
Rutland	185	1,171	58,550	82	470	5.26
South Kelowna	207	1,672	72,500	174	462.27	17.22
West Kelowna	85	2,857	30,250	131	169.92	9.52
<b>TOTAL ZONE 2</b>	<b>1,465</b>	<b>9,687</b>	<b>486,315</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>3,302.93</b>	<b>230.40</b>

<sup>3</sup> Okanagan Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program, <http://www.oksir.org/about.htm>, (Accessed June 11, 2008)

<sup>4</sup> Okanagan Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program, by e-mail, March 19, 2009

## WINE AND GRAPE PRODUCTION

Grape production in BC occurs in the Okanagan Valley, the Similkameen Valley, the Fraser Valley, and on the coastal islands. The majority of grape acreage is planted in the Okanagan/Similkameen region. The Okanagan/Similkameen Valleys are located in the rain shadow of the Coast and Cascade Mountain Ranges; the region is an ideal site for grape production. Long, hot summers are followed by cool nights and warm days in the fall which provide perfect conditions for ripening wine grapes. Winter temperatures are usually mild with little snow cover. However, some winters can be cold and winter injury of the vines is probable from time to time.

Ice wine is the product that distinguishes BC from most other wine growing areas of the world. BC is famous for its ice wine and while not a major portion of the crop is harvested as ice wine, it brings excellent publicity to the industry. Approximately 1.5% of the crop is harvested as ice wine. Temperatures must be at least -8°C for a period of several hours before harvest can begin. The berries must be frozen solidly and often the crop is picked during the night under lights and with frozen fingers. Some years, the crop is not harvested as ice wine as the winter is too mild.<sup>5</sup>

## BRITISH COLUMBIA WINE INSTITUTE<sup>6</sup>

The British Columbia Wine Institute (BCWI) was created by an act of the provincial legislature, the BC Wine Act, in 1990. It was conceived as a component of a strategic plan of industry and government to create an internationally competitive wine industry. The strategy included the removal of labrusca and hybrid grape varieties and replanting vineyards to vinifera varieties, establishing an industry based on premium wine production.

The BCWI plays a key role in the growth of BC's wine industry. Their 66 winery members and 15 grape grower partners represent 95% of BC VQA sales, 95% of the province's total wine production and produce 88% of 100% BC grape wine production.

BC VQA wines are now the second-largest category (behind only non-VQA Canadian wine) in BC sales and these sales continue to grow. BC VQA wines now dominate the quality wine market in BC – meaning British Columbians choose BC VQA wines over imported wines from any other region or country.

The BCWI works to build and market the Wines of British Columbia (BC VQA) wine brand, creates the business climate that allows members to prosper, liaises with government and stakeholders on key business and regulatory issues and promotes the industry to key wine, food and travel media.

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, *An Overview of the British Columbia Grape Industry, 2004*, [http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/grape/publications/documents/overview\\_grapes\\_dec2004.pdf](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/grape/publications/documents/overview_grapes_dec2004.pdf) (Accessed April 15, 2009)

<sup>6</sup> British Columbia Wine Institute Website, *About Us*, <http://www.winebc.com/aboutus.php> (Accessed April 15, 2009)

## WINERIES<sup>7</sup>

According to the BC Wine Institute, there are currently 144 licensed grape wineries in B.C. and 20 more proposed grape wineries with licenses pending. 66 are members of the BCWI. BCWI membership represents 95% of BC VQA sales, 95% of the total wine production in the province and produce 88% of 100% BC grape wine production. 63.1 % of wine grape acreage is winery owned or controlled. There are 710 vineyards in B.C. (both winery and independently owned), with acreage distributed as follows:

- 84.3 % in the Okanagan Valley
- 6.4 % in the Similkameen Valley
- 7.3 % in the Coastal Areas
- 2.0 % in Other areas of B.C.

## GRAPE PRODUCTION

Most of the BC grape acreage is planted to wine grapes (approximately 9,100 acres in 2008.)<sup>8</sup>

### Harvest and Estimated Production (Historical) <sup>9</sup>

Year	Harvest (short tons – 2,000 lbs)	Production (litres, est.)
2008	22,200	14,996,100
2007	19,777	13,394,757
2006	20,369	13,802,563
2005	14,084	8,450,400
2004	16,642	9,985,200
2003	16,897	10,138,200
2002	15,523	9,313,800
2001	14,137	8,482,200
2000	10,022	6,013,200
1999	10,957	6,574,200
1998	10,188	6,112,800
1997	6,603	2,961,800
1996	6,102	3,661,200
1995	8,108	4,864,800

<sup>7</sup> BC Wine Institute, B.C. GRAPE ACREAGE REPORT, August 2008,

[http://www.winebc.com/library/reports/2008\\_Grape\\_Acreage\\_Report.pdf](http://www.winebc.com/library/reports/2008_Grape_Acreage_Report.pdf) (Accessed April 15, 2009)

<sup>8</sup> British Columbia Wine Institute Website, Quick Facts, <http://www.winebc.com/quickfacts.php> (Accessed April 15, 2009)

<sup>9</sup> IBID