

**OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE PROGRAM BOARD**

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the **OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE (SIR) PROGRAM BOARD**  
held at RDCO's Woodhaven Boardroom, Kelowna, on Friday, July 19, 2024

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**Voting Members:**

Director George Bush	Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Director Tim Lavery	Regional District Columbia Shuswap (virtual)
Director Shirley Fowler	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director Rick Webber	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Director Rick de Jong	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Grower Joginder Dhand	Grower Representative – Zone 3
Grower Walter Makepeace	Grower Representative – Zone 1, organic

**Non-Voting Members:****Guests/Delegates:****Regrets:**

Grower Tarsem Goraya	Grower Representative – Zone 2
Taras Pojasok	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (virtual)
Dr. Susanna Acheampong	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Lindsay King	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Melissa Tesche	BC Fruit Growers' Association

**Staff:**

Michelle Cook	OKSIR General Manager
Evan Esch	OKSIR Entomologist
Kellie Garcia	CCLSP Project Director
Shelby Austen	CCLSP Admin. & Comms. Manager
Lori White	RDCO Financial Manager

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the OKSIR Board meeting to order at 10:35 am and introduced the new RDCO Directors, Rick Webber, RDCO and Rick De Jong, RDCO.

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA****2.1 Adoption of Agenda**

Moved by: Grower Makepeace

Seconded by: Grower Dhand

*"THAT the July 19, 2024, meeting agenda be adopted as presented."*

**CARRIED**

**3. MINUTES****3.1 Regular Board Meeting – May 10, 2024 – for adoption**

Moved by: Grower Makepeace

Seconded by: Grower Dhand

*"THAT the OKSIR Regular Board Meeting Minutes from May 10, 2024, be adopted as presented."*

**CARRIED**

### 3.2 Business Arising from Minutes

## 4. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

## 5. CORRESPONDENCE/ INFORMATION

### 5.1 Memo from Evan Esch, Entomologist, dated July 15, 2024, RE: Summer Codling Moth Update

Mr. Esch presented his memo and provided background information on sterile insect technology (SIT) for the new Directors.

He informed the Board that the first codling moth generation is complete across most of the program area. Controlling this generation is crucial for managing the pest and minimizing fruit losses. The most infested orchards of 2023 have made significant strides in reducing their codling moth populations, and SIR staff continue to work with property owners. However, the South Okanagan and Similkameen regions are facing challenges due to the movement of infested bins and hot-spot orchards.

Mr. Esch also updated the Board on SIR's research and development activities, including his recent visit to Vienna for the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) coordinated research meeting, which was fully funded by the IAEA. Additionally, SIR recently hosted researchers from the University of California Riverside and the Tasmania Institute of Agriculture to advance the adoption of new technologies for SIT application in other regions.

The Board asked if there was a maximum daily temperature for codling moth survival. Mr. Esch explained that likely no there wasn't. Codling moths are mainly active at dusk during temperatures around 15°C and tucked away safely during the high heat of the day. He also said that the 2021 heat dome did not show a decrease in moth activity due to those high daytime temperatures.

**Moved by: Director Webber**

**Seconded by: Director Lavery**

*"THAT the staff report from the Program Entomologist be received."*

**CARRIED**

### 5.2 Staff Report from Kellie Garcia, CCLSP, dated July 5, 2024, RE: Update for SIR Board and CCLSP Progress Report

Ms. Garcia introduced herself to the Board and presented in detail about the Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project (CCLSP).

The CCLSP is a partnership of five industry associations, formed as part of the government-led Tree Fruit Industry Stabilization Plan to address common industry challenges such as leadership, extension, labour, and project management capacity. Recently, the CCLSP launched the Cross-Commodity Advisory Council, bringing together representatives from orchards, vineyards, fruit packers, industry associations, and government to share knowledge, tackle common issues, and engage in tough conversations.

The CCLSP currently has four active projects focused on domestic labour and variety access for producers. Planned projects include renewed funding of the BC Decision Aid System with potential expansion to wine grapes, research translation, and narrated bus tours for local government staff and agricultural producers.

The Board expressed excitement for the agricultural tours and emphasized the importance of building relationships with staff. Ms. Garcia mentioned that while further outreach with elected officials is planned, they decided to keep them separate for this tour.

Grower Makepeace, a member of the Cross-Commodity Advisory Council, shared his enthusiasm for the solid sense of collaboration within the Council and its future initiatives.

**Moved by: Director Webber**

**Seconded by: Grower Makepeace**

*"THAT the staff report from the CCLSP be received."*

**CARRIED**

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**7.1 Memo from Tanya Littley, Office Manager, dated July 9, RE: 2024 OKSIR Parcel Tax Values - Final**

Ms. Cook, the General Manager presented the final parcel tax values in detail, noting a 0% change in acreage from July 2023 to July 2024. This is good news, as the program has seen a loss of acres each year, over the last six years.

In response to a Board question about the cause of the stable acreage values, the General Manager explained that acres were removed, and new acreages were planted making a 0% net change. The Board was hopeful that there would be an increase in apple and pear plantings in future years.

**Moved by: Director de Jong**

**Seconded by: Director Webber**

*"THAT the 2024 Parcel Tax Memo be received."*

**CARRIED**

**7.2 Interim Financials to June 30, 2024, from Lori White, RDCO Finance Manager**

The RDCO Finance Manager presented the financials in detail.

**Moved by: Director Bush**

**Seconded by: Grower Makepeace**

*"THAT the interim financial statements be received."*

**CARRIED**

**8. ADJOURN TO IN-CAMERA**

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by: Grower Makepeace**

**Seconded by: Director Webber**

*"THAT the SIR Board meeting be adjourned at 11:34 am."*

**CARRIED**

  
Chair

  
Corporate Officer