

OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE PROGRAM BOARD

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the **OKANAGAN-KOOTENAY STERILE INSECT RELEASE (SIR) BOARD**
held at the RDCO Woodhaven Boardroom June 12th, 2026

Voting Members:

Director George Bush	Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen
Director Shirley Fowler	Regional District of North Okanagan
Director Kevin Kraft	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Director Rick Webber	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Director Tim Lavery	Regional District Columbia Shuswap (virtual)
Grower Joginder Dhand	Grower Representative – North
Grower Walter Makepeace	Grower Representative – South, Organic

Non-Voting Members:

Dr. Susanna Acheampong	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food Entomologist (virtual)
Andrea Kalischuk	AAFC Research, Development and Technology, Associate Director (virtual)

Guests/Delegates:

Kevin Gorman	Biocentis Chief Development Officer (virtual)
Federico Guelpa	Biocentis Co-founder & CBO (virtual)
Andrew Hammond	Biocentis Chief Scientific Officer (virtual)
Lindsay King	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food Tree Fruit Industry Specialist (virtual)
Mario Piroddi	BDO Canada Assurance Partner (virtual)

Biocentis Presentation Attendees

Paul Abram	Research Scientist Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (virtual)
Shelby Austen	CCLSP Administration and Communications Manager (Virtual)
Sukhpaul Bal	President, BC Cherry Association (virtual)
Sean Biernes	Consultant, Interstem Solutions Inc (virtual)
Juli Carrillo	Associate Professor, Applied Biology, University of British Columbia (virtual)
Beth Carvers	BC Cherry Association Executive Administrator, (virtual)
Eric Gerbrandt	BC Blueberry Council, BC Raspberry Council, BC Strawberry Grower's Association Research Director (virtual)
Gayle Krahn	Terralink Horticulture Inc, Okanagan General Manager (virtual)
Pavlo Lavreniuk	The Star Group Field Service and Quality Control Advisor (virtual)
Tharshi Nagalingam	OKSIR Facility Manager in Training (virtual)
Kris Needham	Consolidated Fruit Packers Ltd Manager of Grower Relations and Field Service (virtual)
Gail Nelson	BC Fruit Growers' Association Horticulture and Research Project Manager (virtual)
Steve Perlman	University of Victoria Professor of Biology (virtual)
Molly Thurston	Pearl Agricultural Consulting Inc Horticulture Consultant (virtual)
Matt Walz	Terralink Horticulture Inc Technical Sales Representative (virtual)

Regrets:

Grower Steve Day	Grower Representative – Central
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Staff:

Michelle Cook	OKSIR General Manager
Evan Esch	OKSIR Entomologist
Tanya Littley	OKSIR Office Manager
Shane Matheson	RDCO Financial Analyst
Cody Troutman	RDCO Financial Services Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Fowler called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

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

The agenda for the June 12, 2026, meeting of the OKSIR Board was adopted as presented.

Moved By: Grower Makepeace

"THAT the June 12, 2026, meeting agenda be adopted as presented."

Seconded by: Director Kraft

CARRIED

3. MINUTES**3.1 Regular Board Meeting – April 10, 2026 – For Adoption**

The minutes of the April 10, 2026, regular meeting were adopted as presented.

Moved By: Director Bush

"THAT the OKSIR Regular Board Meeting Minutes from April 10, 2026, be adopted as presented."

Seconded by: Director Webber

CARRIED

3.2 Business Arising from Minutes

No business arose from the minutes.

4. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

**4.1 Biocentis presentation online from Federico Guelpa, Co-founder & Chief Business Officer.
Also in attendance for questions Biocentis Chief Scientific Officer, Andrew Hammond and Biocentis
Chief Development Officer, Kevin Gorman**

Biocentis delivered a detailed presentation that generated strong interest among Board members and attendees. The company is a biotechnology startup based in Milan that has been developing a next-generation sterile insect technique (SIT) for agricultural pests since 2022. The spotted wing drosophila (SWD) was identified as a key target due to its significant impact on berry and cherry crops.

Biocentis noted that SWD remains one of the most challenging pests to manage in berry and cherry production, with current control strategies relying heavily on frequent insecticide applications. This approach is costly, can contribute to pesticide resistance, and faces increasing regulatory pressure, highlighting the need for more

sustainable integrated pest management solutions.

Biocentis presented its 2Gen technology, which differs from conventional SIT by using genetic engineering to produce sterile males that then generate a second generation of sterile males in the wild. This approach reduces the number of insects required for release and improves population control efficacy. The company distinguishes male and female SWD at the egg stage and, through the introduction and subsequent removal of an antibiotic, ensure that only sterile males survive. Biocentis aims to distribute pupae in release boxes that allow gradual emergence.

Biocentis explained that the technology remains in the pre-commercial phase and outlined a staged regulatory pathway, with Canadian field trials potentially beginning as early as 2027 and commercialization targeted for 2029–2030.

The company emphasized that the technology is intended to complement existing pest management tools and should be deployed proactively early in the season to suppress populations. Current modelling suggests the potential for substantial reductions in SWD populations.

Mr. Cody Troutman joined the meeting at 11:02 am.

Biocentis requested non-binding letters of support from industry organizations to demonstrate that SWD is a significant industry concern and that there is interest in exploring new control solutions. Representatives reiterated that the letters would not obligate organizations to adopt the technology, participate in trials, or provide funding, but would support discussions with regulators, investors, and funding agencies.

The company is actively seeking partnerships with industry and researchers to support trials and continued development. Discussion following the presentation focused on regulatory considerations, export market implications, and compatibility with existing programs and certifications, with recognition that these areas continue to evolve. Board discussion acknowledged the potential application of the technology while recognizing that it remains in the early stages of development and requires further validation.

The presentation attendees departed the meeting virtually at 11:27am with OKSIR Board members, Staff, and Lindsay King remaining for continuance of the meeting.

Moved By: Director Kraft

"THAT the presentation from Biocentis be received."

Seconded by: Grower Makepeace

CARRIED

The recommendation to amend the motion *"THAT the SIR Board send a letter of interest and support to Biocentis."* was brought before the Board for consideration by Director Webber and was amended to *"THAT the SIR Board draft a potential letter of interest and support for Biocentis to be brought before the Board."* All voted in favour of the amendment with none opposed.

Moved By: Director Webber

"THAT the SIR Board draft a potential letter of interest and support for Biocentis to be brought before the Board."

Seconded by: Director Kraft

CARRIED

4.2 Staff Presentation from Evan Esch, Program Entomologist, Codling Moth Mid-Season Update

The staff presentation from Mr. Evan Esch commenced at 11:47 am after agenda item 4.3, the audit presentation to the Board by Mr. Mario Piroddi.

Mr. Esch provided a seasonal update on codling moth activity to the Board, noting the program is currently in the critical first generation of moth emergence. He advised that the current emergence originated from last year's overwintering population and that first-generation control is important in limiting subsequent population increases.

He reported that the 2026 season was progressing significantly ahead of normal due to an unusually warm spring, with moth development is approximately 10 days earlier than in 2025 and nearly two weeks ahead of historical averages. As a result, the program adjusted operations by commencing sterile insect releases earlier than usual.

Mr. Esch highlighted that effective early-season control is key to reducing overall pest populations and protecting fruit at harvest. Mr. Esch explained that it was too early to assess overall expected program outcomes.

He addressed a recent increase in codling moth infestations in the Keremeos area, which had historically been relatively free of codling moth. It is suspected that this outbreak is linked to the movement of orchard bins from Washington that may have been contaminated, as unusually high trap counts have been observed near bin storage areas. While bins are inspected and certified by the CFIA at the border, Mr. Esch noted that the current certification process is focused on preventing the introduction of new pests, such as apple maggot, rather than controlling the spread of pests already present in Canada, such as codling moth. He indicated that he is currently seeking clarification from the CFIA regarding their regulatory stance on codling moth control.

Moved By: Director Bush

Seconded by: Grower Makepeace

"THAT the staff presentation from the Program Entomologist be received."

CARRIED

4.3 Mario Piroddi, CPA, CA, CISA, Partner through a corporation, BDO Canada LLP, Presentation of the 2025 Audit Results

- a) 2025 Final Draft SIR Financial Statements
- b) 2025 Final Report - OKSIR

Mr. Piroddi joined the meeting virtually at 11:32 am.

Mr. Piroddi presented the 2025 SIR financial statements and audit results to the Board. He reported the audit found no deficiencies or concerns related to fraud, internal controls, or compliance. The organization remained in a strong financial position, with increased assets, reduced liabilities, and a modest operating surplus in 2025.

Ms. Lindsay King and Ms. Andrea Kalischuk departed the meeting at 11:40 am and 11:42 am respectively. Mr. Piroddi departed the meeting at 11:47 am, after the Board accepted BDO's report.

Moved By: Director Bush

Seconded by: Director Webber

"THAT the OKSIR Board accept the 2025 Final Report and accept and approve the 2025 Audited Financial Statements as presented."

CARRIED

5. CORRESPONDENCE/INFORMATION

5.1 Staff Report from Michelle Cook, General Manager, dated June 4, 2026, re: Program Update

Ms. Michelle Cook provided an update on facility operations, research initiatives, compliance activities, and business development efforts to the Board. The facility is working on rearing a new wild diapause colony to improve genetic diversity and support future production levels, with results not expected until the following

season. Additional operational efforts, including increased diet purchases have been undertaken to support production needs this year.

Ms. Cook highlighted research and innovation projects currently underway. These include field trials using cooler moth rearing temperatures to improve competitiveness in the field during Spring and the field testing of automated camera traps through a grant-funded partnership with CropView Technologies. The project is evaluating whether camera traps can distinguish between wild and sterile moths and reduce the need for manual trap inspections.

She also reported on compliance activities, including the successful removal of an abandoned orchard in Summerland. Staff continue to focus on neglected orchards and unmanaged host trees in several areas, including Bella Vista, Glenmore, and Keremeos.

Ms. Cook reported continued strong demand for moths by customer M3 who currently services over 5,000 acres of apples orchards, owned primarily by organic growers in the USA. Ms. Cook also reported successful egg-shipping trials with AgBiTech that may create a future revenue opportunity for the program.

Ms. Cook provided an update on the Stabilization Funding Grant SIR received for program support in 2025 and 2026. She discussed the high-level report that is being prepared and presented to the CCLSP Advisory Council by SIR Staff that will assess the opportunities, challenges, and suitability of SIT across a broader range of crops and pests beyond codling moth.

Moved By: Director Kraft

"THAT the staff report from the General Manager be received."

Seconded By: Director Bush

CARRIED

5.2 SIR in the News

- a) Kelowna Daily Courier, May 14, 2026 - Big cross-border bug business for Okanagan moth-breeder
- b) Vernon Matters, January 21, 2026 – Sterile insect program helped protect Okanagan orchards, but more can be done

Recent media coverage of the SIR Program was based primarily on Board minutes and other publicly available information.

5.3 CCLSP (Cross Commodity Leadership Support Project) Agriculture in Action Summary

CCLSP continues to support outreach and collaboration with commodity groups, growers, researchers, and local agricultural organizations.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was noted.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Interim Financials to April 30, 2026

The Board reviewed the interim financial statements as of April 30, 2026. RDCO staff noted that revenues included approximately \$8,000 recovered through a compliance-related reimbursement. Operating supply expenses were temporarily overstated due to a duplicate invoice payment, which was corrected in the subsequent financial reporting period. Increased wages reflect the commencement of field operations and seasonal hiring.

Capital expenditures may come in higher than initially budgeted for 2026 due to deferred projects from 2025, including the condenser unit replacements and tray washing room floor installation.

Moved By: Director Bush

Seconded By: Grower Dhand

"THAT the interim financial statements be received."

CARRIED

8. ADJOURN TO IN CAMERA

9. OTHER BUSINESS

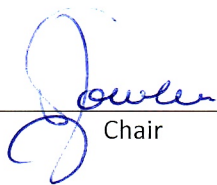
No other business was presented.

10. ADJOURNMENT

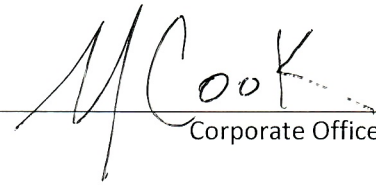
The Board voted unanimously that regular meeting be adjourned at 12:44 pm.

"THAT the SIR Board meeting be adjourned at 12:44 pm."

CARRIED



Chair



Corporate Officer