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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

### **B.C. hazelnut growers receive support to revitalize local orchards**

VICTORIA – The British Columbia hazelnut industry will have a chance to regenerate after facing challenges with eastern filbert blight (EFB).

EFB is a serious disease, commonly found in hazelnut orchards, that has affected crops throughout the province.

“Hazelnut growers in B.C. have faced major setbacks over the past decade, but this funding will help regrow and revitalize a sector that has enormous possibilities,” said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. “This funding will help bring processing opportunities that add value to farmers, and offers consumers more B.C. products. My mandate includes Grow BC, and that includes hazelnuts.”

The Ministry of Agriculture is providing the BC Hazelnut Growers Association (BCHGA) with \$300,000 in funding over the next three years. The funding will allow growers to replace hundreds of acres of dead and diseased orchards with EFB-resistant varieties, and will further expand hazelnut acreage in B.C. with new planting.

“This announcement is a very welcome and exciting step in the re-establishment and expansion of a promising industry in British Columbia,” said Walter Esau, who is on the board of directors for the BCHGA. “The BC Hazelnut Growers Association has worked hard over the past decade to keep a once thriving industry alive, and with the help of the B.C. government, this is being made possible. We are excited about the future of hazelnuts in B.C., and welcome any enquiries about our industry.”

The Ministry of Agriculture’s Grow BC was established to support the fruit and nut growers, and processors, to expand local food production and to help young farmers access land. Grow BC offers targeted programs, such as the Hazelnut Renewal Program, to make sure the people who are passionate about working in agriculture have opportunities to work within the sector.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The economic lifespan of a hazelnut tree is 50 years.
- A hazelnut tree’s lifecycle begins with three years of an establishment phase, five to six years at about 50% production, and 10 years onward to full production of hazelnuts.
- The average hazelnut tree yield is about 2,412 to 4,483 kilograms per hectare (2,000 to 4,000 pounds per acre).
- Between 2006-14, industry production averaged 388 tonnes a year.

#### **Learn More:**

For more information about the Hazelnut Renewal Program, please visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/hazelnut-renewal-program>

Find applications for the Hazelnut Renewal Program here:

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/programs/hazelnut-renewal/2018-19\\_hazelnut\\_renewal\\_project\\_application.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/programs/hazelnut-renewal/2018-19_hazelnut_renewal_project_application.pdf)

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