

Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission

2016 - ANNUAL REPORT

❖ **Background:**

The Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission (PAAC) was initially formed during 1997/98 with the completion of the **Agricultural Strategy Report for the Saanich Peninsula** and is now entering its 21st year of operation.

❖ **Mandate:**

To provide advice, information and assistance to the Districts of Saanich, Central Saanich, North Saanich, Metchosin and Sidney (the 'member municipalities') - upon request or proactively - on matters involving agriculture in the areas served by the member municipalities and the region as a whole, and to facilitate the development of programmes for implementation of *the Saanich Peninsula Agricultural Strategic Objectives (see page 7)*.

❖ **What did we accomplish during 2016?**

With the help of the member municipalities, both Council and staff, the highlights of the Commission's accomplishments during 2016 include:

- **Martindale Valley Drainage:** After months of discussions at PAAC meetings and on-site meetings with municipal staff, a joint council meeting between Saanich and Central Saanich Councils on November 29, 2017 to discuss the on-going drainage problems in the Martindale Valley. (see Land Base Report Page 9)
- **Maber Flats Drainage:** A sub-committee of PAAC members brought this issue to the attention of Central Saanich Council and staff. Public open houses have been held and discussions are underway with various stakeholders. (see Land Base Report, page 9)

- **Farm Worker Housing:** Lack of suitable and affordable housing for migrant farm workers has been an on-going problem in many areas on Vancouver Island, as well as the mainland and other parts of the province. Central Saanich explored the topic a few years ago, and in 2016 the District of Saanich agreed to include farm worker housing within the mandate of its *Agricultural and Food Security Plan*, currently underway.
- **Geese:** PAAC has been trying to get this issue addressed for the past decade. Finally a positive step was accomplished in the fall of 2016 with approval of a Resolution at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to consider changes to the *Migratory Bird Act*. We still have a long way to go – but this is a step in the right direction. (For more details see page 4)
- **Reinstatement of a Regional Agrologist for Southern Vancouver Island:** With the retirement of Rob Kline last spring, the Commission urged the Province to hire a replacement, citing the need for a “boots on the ground” person to assist farmers with agricultural issues. Derek Masselink was appointed to the position in the fall of 2016, and for this PAAC is grateful. However, two provincial agrologists had retired in these regions and only one was replaced, resulting in less agricultural assistance.
- **Farmland Cost & Access to Farmland:** PAAC recognizes that the importance of farmland access, and the strategy to create an agricultural land bank to be held in trust by the Municipalities within the CRD is worthwhile and necessary. After a presentation to PAAC at the November 2016 meeting by Keeley Nixon of Capital Region Food & Agriculture Initiative Roundtable (CR-Fair), the following statement was submitted to CR-Fair:



“PAAC unanimously supports this initiative, recognizing that farmers’ access to land is impacting the agricultural sector. With high land costs in the region (\$70-100,000 per acre), predicted population growth (30% between 2010 – 2036), increasing land use competition, and declining rates of new entrants into agriculture (5.6% under 35, average farmer age 57), we recognize a diverse suite of strategies to steward and utilize farmland is crucially needed. We recognize and sign this statement of support acknowledging that creating a land bank for existing and/or acquired lands to support farming and food production over the long term is one strategy to address land access issues. We endorse the exploration of implementing a land bank as a hallmark initiative in the larger context of agricultural land access and protection as articulated in the CRD Regional Food and Agricultural Strategy”.

■ Saanich Fair – 2016



Over twenty volunteers participated, including ten youth volunteers to help specifically with the zucchini races. A paid volunteer was on hand to help with set-up and take-down, attending all 3 days of the fair. The displays and activities this year included:

1. **The Agriculture *Then and Now* historical photo gallery display.**

This was a professional display of historical photos of farmlands, farm buildings and various farming activities obtained from the Saanich Archives. Most of the photos were from the early 1900s, with a few present-day aerial photos to illustrate the significant urban encroachment that has occurred over the past century. The intent of the display was to start gathering information about the history of agriculture on southern Vancouver Island, which would eventually be a written account, complete with photos.

A note book was on hand to gather stories of the past and find long time farming families or residents of the area to be interviewed. A number of people came forward with their stories and let us know they have family photos they could share with us.

An initiative to write a history book of the Saanich Peninsula has been funded and undertaken by the Saanich Fairgrounds (NSSAS), relieving PAAC of the task.

2. **The squash display.**

Squash recipe booklets were printed to support the expansive variety of locally grown squash on display. Both were popular with visitors to the PAAC booth. (photo from Firbank Farms squash display)



3. **Action for Good Food Contest - CR-Fair**

CR-Fair promoted the **Action for Good Food** Contest they are working on with the Black Press Media; 50 people signed up for more info. The challenge is for people to post a photo and give a brief description about what good food means to them and what they are doing to promote it.

4. **Zucchini Races**

By far the most popular event at the PAAC booth, the zucchini races were a big hit again! There were over **1000** youth participating this year and approximately 600 races down the track. Two hundred youth received zucchini seeds and 150 of them signed up to grow



their own zucchini next year. The youth volunteer team (photo below) helping out with the activities were great!

The success of the booth was due to the dedicated volunteer members of PAAC who built the gallery structure, organized the photo display, delivered and donated the hay bales and vegetables used for the display, were on hand during the Fair to work at the booth and talk to attendees as well as helping with the setup and take down.

(Further information on Outreach & Education on page 10)

The Youth Volunteer Team – September 2016



ISSUES DISCUSSED AT PAAC MEETINGS DURING 2016

❖ Regional Goose Management Strategy

We sincerely thank long-time PAAC member **Beverly Marley** for her determination and diligence as the PAAC representative on the Regional Goose Management Strategy, as well as Central Saanich Council for its continued support and leadership in trying to address the increasing goose population. This is a serious issue that PAAC believes should involve all levels of government.

The following report has been submitted on behalf of the Regional Canada Goose Management Strategy Working Group [RCGMSWG].

1. Annual permits were administered through the working group for the Agricultural Community.
2. In the spring 2016, the Damage or Danger permit was acquired from Environment Canada for egg addling and implementation of egg addling in key conflict areas.

- a) In April, the group conducted two days of addling in North and Central Saanich. They checked previous known nesting sites and searched for new ones. At each nest the crew recorded UTM coordinates, the number of eggs and the method of addling. Twenty-six nests were located. The group also made note of five sets of goslings under one week old.
 - b) Conducting an early survey of pair/lone goose locations, canvassing help from landowners for potential nesting sites and having them sign authorization forms ahead of time would make the operation far more successful.
 - c) A minimum of two addling 'sweeps' is important: one approximately in the middle of April and one at the end - though these dates will vary year to year. Increasing the number of crews would enable a larger geographical area to be covered, by pairing an experienced technician/biologist, resources would be spread further and the volunteers would gain experience for future years.
3. CFB Esquimalt is represented on the working group but also conducts their own addling program. They have been addling since 2008, but consistently for the past four years.
 4. In December 2016, members of the RCGMSWG met with agricultural community representatives to discuss 2017 strategy initiatives as follows:
 - i. Addling permit process is in place.
 - ii. If funds permit, discuss partnering with agricultural community on the addling program for 2017 and/or other strategies as outlined in the Goose Strategy Management Plan.
 - iii. Draft application for a grant from Agri-Risk Initiatives [Government of Canada] is complete. This funding, if approved, would allow for long-term planning and implementation strategies.
 - iv. Local government representatives and a volunteer from the working group met with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change to discuss the possibility of regulatory changes, and the current challenges Resident Canada Geese pose to the community - including agricultural crop damage - with serious impact to the economic viability/food security faced by farmers, and the risks caused by fecal matter on fields, playgrounds and beaches.

❖ Other issues discussed during 2016 include:

In addition to the many on-going issues that are discussed at PAAC meetings (eg: geese, drainage), below are some of the topics that were brought to our attention in 2016, either by the member municipalities, farmers, or residents.

- **5058 West Saanich Road** (January) – Request for ALR inclusion (Saanich Planning, Neil Findlow); PAAC was asked to provide input.

- **First Nations Shellfish Harvesting** (February) – PAAC was invited to be part of the committee struck to address this matter. The Committee only met twice during 2016, in March and September. The initiative would involve identifying shellfish resources, monitoring gaps and possible restoration sites.
- **Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Strategy** (March) – Jane Evans, Saanich Planning, requested PAAC's expertise in helping to develop this strategy. A task force was established at Saanich; by year end, after gathering community input at many public open houses, the document is taking shape. We look forward to seeing its implementation in 2017.
- Proposed changes to the **Firearms Bylaw** (June) with respect to goose culls, Central Saanich put forward PAAC's suggested Resolution to the UBCM, which was passed at the September Convention.
- **Keating Corridor Business Analysis** (April) – Central Saanich requested PAAC's participation and input into this plan. PAAC indicated that agriculture should be a primary goal in the process and not an afterthought.
- **1400 Derby Road** (Cedar Hill Golf Course) (April) – Saanich requested PAAC's comments regarding the proposed rezoning of a portion of the property to allow for retail sales and health services. PAAC supported the project.
- **Dumping of Fill in the Martindale Valley/Tanner Ridge area** (April) – residents of Old East Road and surrounding areas requested PAAC's assistance in bringing this issue to the attention of the District of Saanich. PAAC wrote to Saanich, the ALC, the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as local MP's and MLA's, noting the dumping of fill on this property is detrimental to agriculture and has an impact on surrounding farms.
- **Redevelopment of Victoria Airport Lands & ALR issues (The Gateway Project)** – while it was understood this is federal land, PAAC wrote to the Victoria Airport Authority asking there be no net loss of agricultural land with this development and that a long-term vision for the continuation and expansion of agriculture on the airport lands be seriously considered.
- **Farm Worker Housing (May)** – Saanich Farmers indicated there is an urgent need for housing for farm works; PAAC's request to have this issue included in the Saanich Agriculture Food Security Strategy was endorsed.
- **Agriculture & Food Historical Book (May)** – due to a generous donation from the BC Fruit Growers Association PAAC proposed to undertake a historical review of agriculture on the Saanich Peninsula and surrounding areas, and also to help young and emerging farmers by holding workshops and seminars on agriculture-related topics.
- **Pollinators and Habitat** (October/November) – the declining bee populations is a serious issue; PAAC heard input from a local beekeeper, Lindsay Dault and Dr. Lora Morandin a pollinator researcher, and later decided to hold the first in a proposed Winter Lecture Series, on the topic of Save the Bees (this took place February 20, 2017).



Guest Speakers & Presentations at PAC meetings during 2016

- **Swatti Scott**, Community Nutritionist with Island Health – how farmers can promote health benefits of local food (February)
- **Mike Hicks**, CRD Electoral Area Director, Juan de Fuca – Geese Strategy (March)
- **Susan Tychie**, CR-Fair – Making local produce more accessible to chefs in assisted living facilities (May)
- **Jane Evans**, Saanich Planner – Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Strategy (June)
- **David Clark**, Vice-Chair, Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society – Martindale Flats (September)
- **Pam Hartling**, Saanich Planner – Farmers Markets
- **Lindsay Dault**, Urban Bee Keeper – The decline of bee populations (November)
- **Dr. Lora Morandin**, Pollinator Partners – The role of Natural Pollinators in Agriculture
- **Keeley Nixon**, CR-Fair – Farmland Access Project (November)
- **Nathalie Chambers**, Madrona Farms – non-farm use & traffic concerns, Blenkinsop Valley (November)



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (Sub-committee Reports)

Note: most of the original objectives in the 1997 report have now been met.

The **1997 Agricultural Strategy Report for the Saanich Peninsula** set forth a number of recommendations designed to promote the sustainability of agriculture on the Peninsula, and was the basis for the formation of PAAC. Consistent with the recommendations of the Strategy Report, the Commission has four working sub-committees focused on implementing strategic objectives for:

- > **Farm Economics - Terry Michell**
- > **Agricultural Land Base - Phil Christie**
- > **Education and Outreach - Linda Geggie**
- > **Water - Michael Doehnel**

Although a voting member of the Commission chairs a strategic sub-committee, membership may include other Commission members, non-voting Commission representatives and associates. From time to time, outside expert and/or professional opinions are sought. Below are reports from the sub-committee Chairs:

❖ FARM ECONOMICS – Terry Michell

▪ Crops: Successes and Challenges

- Local farmers prepared for a potentially difficult season in 2016 as a warm and dry spring had them worried about a long and hot summer ahead. Although a concern for the upcoming season, the spring weather conditions allowed for an early planting of many crops.



- The newly seeded and transplanted crops required irrigation to commence as early as April for some farmers; the agriculture community was already depending on an adequate supply of water. By mid-May, approximately two weeks earlier than usual, farmers on the Saanich Peninsula and surrounding area were starting to harvest a bumper crop of berries.
- Favorable weather during blossom time resulted in an above average yield of fruits and berries in the area. June and July brought cooler than average temperatures which was favorable for most fruit and vegetable crops, although proved to be challenging for hay crops. However, the cooler months provided an opportunity for a third hay cut later in the season on irrigated lands. By the end of July, crop yields were high and it was expected to be an above average year.
- High product yields resulted in a large selection of fresh fruits and vegetables at local markets, farm stands and grocery stores. Some farmers were exporting certain items to the Lower Mainland and Alberta.
- Consumers are more conscious about what they eat and their desire for more locally sourced food is growing. The increased demand for locally grown items is becoming more evident and the support from larger grocery chains is increasing as they offer more locally grown items on their shelves.
- Farmers in the area faced on-going challenges in 2016, some of the significant items being the recruiting local labour, deer and geese damage and drainage issues.
- Local labour has been increasingly difficult to employ making harvesting more challenging. As a result, many farms have applied to be a part of the foreign worker program. The program has proven to be beneficial to many farmers in the area and they are now requesting a Capital Region-wide foreign labour housing policy.

- **Deer and geese** continue to be detrimental to many farms in the area. The cost to local growers is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars as the wildlife effect crop production. Many acres of land are no longer planted as the losses have been very high in the areas of no wildlife control. The loss of this productive land will contribute to the long-term effect on the availability of the local product supply.
- **Drainage** issues continue to affect low lying lands on the Saanich Peninsula. Urban runoff is trapped in these areas and results in thousands of dollars of loss to the affected farmers because these lands cannot be farmed – risk free; on other sites the summer storm surges flood and ruin standing crops.

Aside from on-going challenges, 2016 was a reasonably successful year for many farms. There was higher than expected yields for numerous crops and a higher demand for local products, which places an increased value on the agriculture community.

❖ **AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE: Phil Christie**

The Agricultural Land Base sub-committee is continuing to review a number of issues and research ways to encourage and support increased farming activity.

It is encouraging to see three new farm owners in the Oldfield-Bear Hill area taking over previously active farms. Bear Hill Berry Farm has transferred to North Star Organic Farm with the construction of seven new large green houses, Oldfield Orchards has been purchased and the new owner's intend to farm it actively and other new owners on Oldfield Road are starting to actively farm a previously less developed farm property.

Drainage concerns expressed by farmers at both **Martindale Flats** and **Maber Flats** continued through 2016.

A report was sent to Central Saanich in April advising that PAAC is concerned that the current proposal for a retention pond for storm water management does not adequately reflect the **Maber Flats** agricultural potential and recommending that on the basis of the stated due diligence limitations as well as other deficiencies *“that the project definition be reoriented to have agricultural improvement of Maber Flats as its primary objective.”*

In response the Municipality made arrangements for PAAC representatives to meet with staff and the consultants hired to study the Maber Flats issue. They advised the PAAC representatives that they had requested the consultant to look at the issue with an equal weighting for agriculture, environment and First Nations perspectives. At this point, the construction of the proposed retention pond is on hold pending receipt of further studies and recommendations from their

consultant in February. It is council's intention to set out a process for dealing with the Maber Flats issues once they have adequate information on which to base their decisions.

In response to requests by farmers in the **Martindale Flats** area, PAAC requested both Central Saanich and Saanich to support an initiative to help resolve the long standing flooding issues. Martindale Flats farmers feel that when the housing developments on Keating Ridge were completed the runoff water was not properly addressed and that an additional complication might occur as a result of high spots or constrictions along the southern portion of the current drainage system. In response to PAAC's request a joint council meeting was held between Central Saanich and Saanich to discuss what cooperation could be obtained to look at drainage issues in the Valley. The councils both agreed (although it should be noted that Saanich did not have a quorum) that they would work toward the establishment of an Integrated Water Management Plan for the area. *(note: photo is of Oldfield Road Peat lands & flooding)*



❖ **OUTREACH & EDUCATION: Linda Geggie**

While the PAAC enjoyed many speakers over the course of the year to increase our understanding of key issues or learn about new topics, we also worked to support broader public and farmer education and training efforts. The Education Committee worked with partner organizations to undertake a number of activities including the Farmer2Farmer Conference in March and the Saanich Fair (see page 3 for Saanich Fair)

PAAC members participated in the Farmer2Farmer (F2F) Advisory team that developed the Farmer2Farmer programme. Farmer2Farmer (F2F) 2016 was held on Tuesday, March 1 at the Saanich Fairgrounds. 175 farmers attended from throughout Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, as well as from the Mainland. 17 exhibitor organizations (~30 exhibitor reps) also attended, bringing the grand total attendance to over 200 people.

In its fifth year, F2F is getting quite the reputation and starting to appeal to farmers further afield. More mainlanders came to this year's conference than any previous year.

The theme of the 2016 conference was *"Beyond Competition: Toward Cultures of Cooperation"*. Workshops were organized into three streams: "Crop talk" "Profitability" and "Management".

A track for new farmers was also designated within the streams, highlighting workshops where the focus was for farmers just starting out.

Feedback on the evaluation forms about how the day went showed that attendees were pleased with the event, especially with the diversity of workshops, the wealth of knowledge shared by presenters providing important information and with the networking opportunities they encountered.

❖ **WATER: Michael Doehnel**

▪ **Grain Crops 2016:**

Saturated upland quickly dried out and farmers rushed to get grains seeded in what little moisture was left in the top 3 inches of soil. If tillage was not over done then there was sufficient moisture to ensure swift germination.

Lower lands were then tilled and seeded as the ground dried out and close to 300 acres on the Peninsula were eventually were seeded into barley and wheat for Phillips Brewing and Malting Co. as well as the Portofino Bakery, both of which have become vigorous supporters of locally grown grain crops.

The crops then suffered a little when the drought period lingered on and the chance for increased protein levels and reduced yields arose. Higher levels of protein are good for bread wheats and only slightly increased protein levels in malting barley making them comparable to German style brewing specs.

The rains returned and the pressure was off but some of the yields and nitrogen usage had already been set and only those who irrigated early on during the drought period realized higher to average yields. Along with the rain came increased stripe rust in the wheat plantings and as a result decreased yields strongly to around 1 tonne per acre. Canadian prairie wheat varieties do not have resistance to stripe rust and other varieties from the Northwest USA and perhaps Ontario should be trialed to ensure robust crops with high yields.

Conversely, the new Skagit 1109 winter seeded wheat, with access to luxurious levels of moisture and then great sunshine during flowering, yielded upwards of 3.5 tonnes per acre of beautiful plump kernels at 11% protein which is appropriate for artisanal-style long fermented sourdough-style breads. Very high quality loaves were made from this winter wheat by Fry's Bakery in Victoria.

Due to the solid heat during harvest, some very high falling numbers (the measure of pre-sprouting in grains and must be over 300 for making bread products) were realized and this bodes well for the future of wheat production on the Peninsula.

Several trials were also done with a large range of hulled and hullless barley and wheat types from Europe, USA, and further afield in Canada. Of note was the nice crop of chick peas, small red kidney beans, brown mustard (for Dijon), tillage radish, sunhemp, Berseem clover, and annual rye grass for silage. Sunhemp was particularly interesting as it is a nitrogen fixing summer annual that germinated and grew well with very little water, producing a luscious crop that was enjoyed by the cows. Sun hemp is also from a completely different family than most of the crops grown on the Peninsula which would help in crop rotations and with breaking disease cycles.

- **Water Usage 2016:**

Due to the intense drought in early spring, watering commenced immediately to ensure that seeds germinated and transplants survived through this period. The rains returned briefly which took the pressure off but the hot and dry conditions returned and persisted throughout the rest of the summer.

Irrigation resumed at increased rates and it is assumed (data not yet available) that water consumption for 2016 will be some of the highest measured over the last 10 years.

Water usage from CRD/Municipal sources will be around 2.5% of the total water consumed by all the water users in the CRD. By comparison around 8% is lost due to leakage, water main flushing and other reasons and is typical for systems around the country.

CRD water services have established a committee to review the municipal rebate structure and they must also decide on what levels of water will be committed to agriculture and who will have access to the reduced water rates in the future.

What is clear over the past 15 years is that we are trending towards a more California-like summer weather patterns and our elected representatives will have to decide on what the priorities for water will become if the trend continues. Many are encouraging more water usage for financial reasons while others maintain that we should remain prudent in both usage and conservation.

Having to bring online the recently purchased Leach River Watershed will come at an enormous cost to citizens at a time when there are many pressing issues surrounding transportation, sewage and housing costs; the continued co-mingling of storm water and sewage in the many outdated and fragile drainage systems of Oak Bay and other older communities as indicated by the high fecal coliform levels on beaches during periods of heavy rains.

❖ Membership

Voting Membership for 2016 was as follows:

- Robert Maxwell, Co-Chair (Fieldstone Farm – berries/tree fruits)
- Jack Mar, Co-Chair (The Pumpkin Patch Farm - vegetables)
- Sam Charlton, Treasurer (Planning and Agrologist consulting)
- Terry Michell (Michell Farms – fruits, vegetables, hay, grain)
- Linda Geggie (CR-Fair)
- Dianne Williamson (Firbank Farms – poultry)
- Bev Marley (Farmer – garlic, bees (honey), poultry)
- Bernadette Greene (North Saanich Farm Market – fruits and vegetables)
- Phil Christie (Agrologist - hay and honey farmer)
- Larry Sluggett (Sluggett Farms – corn and vegetables)
- Carol Davidson (Sheep Farmer)

PAAC appreciates the input and continued support from its Council liaisons. We recognize their busy schedules and thank them for taking the time to attend our monthly meetings.

The Councillors (non-voting members) appointed to PAAC for 2016 were:

- Councillor Vic Derman – Saanich
- Councillor Murray Weisenberger – North Saanich
- Councillor Cam McClennan – Sidney
- Councillor Chris Graham – Central Saanich
- Councillor Kyara Kahakauwila – Metchosin

Rob Kline, Regional Agrologist, retired in the spring of 2016. We will miss his professionalism, expert advice, guidance and assistance and wish him well in his well-deserved retirement.

However, in the fall, after strong letters of support from PAAC urging the province to hire a replacement for Mr. Kline, **Derek Messelink** was appointed as a new Regional Agrologist. He will now support both regions in the South Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands, with an office based in Duncan.

In addition to our voting members, non-voting municipal and provincial liaisons, PAAC has an ever-growing number of “associate” members from various farm-related groups, past members, and other individuals who have expressed an interest in the sustainability of farming in our region. We welcome their attendance at meetings and input they provide.

PAAC appreciates the countless volunteer hours, hard work, commitment and dedication of all its members as we endeavour to achieve sustainable agriculture and food security for our region. In addition, some of our members sit on other working groups, such as the CRD Deer and Geese Management Committees, municipal agricultural advisory committees, and take part in agricultural-based workshops and meetings throughout the year (eg: Farmer2Farmer).

In particular, past member, **Michael Doehnel**, continues to competently represent PAAC and our local farmers on the Saanich Peninsula Water Commission and the Saanich Peninsula Waste Water Commission. He attends PAAC meetings from time to time to provide updates on the water issues as they pertain to agriculture, and his annual report is included in this document (see pages 10 and 11). His volunteer time and valuable insight are very much appreciated.

❖ **Administrative and Technical Support Services**

The Commission is very grateful for the continued funding support it receives from the sponsoring municipalities as well as the ongoing administrative support provided by **Isobel Hoffmann**, who retired from the District of Saanich in 2012 and has been the recording secretary for PAAC since 1998.

The official Provincial government liaison is Agricultural Land Commission; it is our hope a representative will be able to attend meetings once in a while. We are pleased that Gary Holman, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, has been able to attend a few meetings throughout the year.

Professional assistance and information is provided when requested from senior planning staff of the member municipalities and the CRD, and this is greatly appreciated.

In particular, we would like to thank Planning staff members:

- Bruce Greig (Central Saanich)
- Neil Findlow and Jane Evans (Saanich)
- Jeff Weightman – CRD

Community, technical and professional advisers who are always ready to assist PAC in its research include CR-Fair, the Direct Farm Marketing Association, as well as individual experts who have attended PAAC meetings throughout the year.

Finally, PAC would like to again thank the many community groups in Greater Victoria who continue to do excellent work in helping local agriculture:

- Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable (CR-FAIR)
- CRD Roundtable on the Environment, Healthy Communities Subcommittees
- Environment – Farmland/farming Strategic Group

- LifeCycles; BC Assoc. of Farmers Markets; local farm pocket markets.
- South Island Direct Farm Marketing Association
- Wine and Grape Growers' Associations
- North Saanich Agricultural Advisory Commission
- Central Saanich Agricultural Advisory Commission
- North and South Saanich Agricultural Society

Without this community of dedication and support, PAAC would not function and agriculture would not have the support it deserves.

❖ Finance

The Commission is funded by the five participating Municipalities based on a formula established in 1998, and modified on two occasions to accommodate the inclusion of the District of Metchosin and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area. With the withdrawal of JDF in July 2013, the funding formula reverted back to the one used in 2012.

Each municipality contributes to the general administration (including postage, photocopying and stationery) carried out by a recording secretary. Monthly meetings are held at the Saanich Municipal Hall.

The costs vary depending on the workload for that particular year, although it seems that the Commission's workload continues to expand each year. Nine regular meetings were held (no meetings in July, August or December). The total **administrative costs for 2016 are \$9,730.67**, (an increase of \$948.08 or about 9%) apportioned as follows:

	\$ 2016	\$ 2015
District of Saanich (40%)	3,892.72	3,513.04
District of Central Saanich (30%)	2,919.20	2,634.78
District of North Saanich (16%)	1,556.91	1,405.21
District of Metchosin (11%)	1,070.37	966.08
Town of Sidney (3%)	291.92	263.48

Comparison budgets for previous years:

2015	\$8,782.59
2014	\$8,621.13
2013	\$8,267.67
2012	\$7,618.82
2011	\$6,567.10

❖ Summary:

PAAC would like to continue to work with the member municipalities to provide input on agricultural issues such as Agricultural Area Plans, Official Community Plans, and other land use and bylaw issues related to agriculture, such as Edge Planning. Hopefully, we will also continue to work with the CRD to implement the Goose and Deer Management Strategies if the programmes and the funding is extended. We would encourage the municipalities to utilize the expertise available on the Commission.

Most importantly, we hope to continue to work both for the farmers and with the farmers. Where appropriate, consult with experts, professionals, municipal staff, regional and community agricultural interest groups to continue to promote the sustainability of farming, pollinator initiatives, improve food security and farm economics on southern Vancouver Island.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Maxwell & Jack Mar, Co-Chairs
Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission

