



BC FARM INDUSTRY
REVIEW BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

DECEMBER
2025

Message from the Chair

I respectfully submit the Annual Report for the BC Farm Industry Review Board (BCFIRB) for the period April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025, per section 59.2 of the *Administrative Tribunals Act*.

Fiscal year 2024–25 was a year of change for BCFIRB. On December 31, 2024, I became Chair when the previous Chair, Peter Donkers, completed his term. Peter joined BCFIRB as Chair in 2018 and was a respected leader of BCFIRB. I would like to personally thank Peter for his many years of leadership. In addition, BCFIRB saw a change in board members with Neil Turner being appointed Vice Chair in July 2024, and Board member Dennis Lapierre leaving BCFIRB in February 2025.

This fiscal year also marks the first full year following the release of BCFIRB's three-year (2024-2027) Strategic Plan. The Plan outlines strategic priorities and the actions BCFIRB is taking to achieve them under BCFIRB's overarching goals and objectives. BCFIRB reported early progress on some strategic priorities and actions in our 2023-24 Annual Report. The 2024-25 Annual Report demonstrates BCFIRB's continued progress across priorities and actions this year.

BCFIRB also continued to work with the Service BC Government Digital Experience (GDx) group to implement work started in 2023-24 to recreate our website. Ease of access to information supports procedural fairness which is foundational to the work of administrative tribunals including BCFIRB. Following receipt of a recommendations report from GDx in fall 2024, BCFIRB staff have worked closely with GDx to implement the recommendations into a new, user experience-focused BCFIRB website. We look forward to launching the new website that will better meet the needs of BCFIRB's many diverse stakeholders in early 2026.

BCFIRB has an important quasi-judicial administrative tribunal role in managing processes and making decisions on appeals and complaints under three statutes. In 2024-25, BCFIRB had 62 active appeals and complaints, with 22 of these being resolved in 2024-25 (nine of which proceeded to formal hearing and 13 of which were resolved through withdrawal or dismissal).

BCFIRB also has an important oversight role as supervisor of BC's regulated marketing boards and commissions. In 2024-25, BCFIRB continued to meet regularly with the boards and commissions, the [National Association of Agri-Supervisory Agencies](#), and the [Farm Products Council of Canada](#). BCFIRB staff support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on various matters as was the exchange of information with regulated marketing sector stakeholders to support increased awareness and understanding of challenges and opportunities across the regulated marketing sector.

In 2024-25, BCFIRB completed its [supervisory review of long-term chicken pricing](#) in BC. This multi-year review began in 2020 in response to years of pricing challenges and uncertainty in BC's chicken sector and was completed in May 2024 when BCFIRB approved the BC Chicken Marketing Board's long-term cost of production proposal. This review included a lengthy evaluation process to support

procedural fairness and inclusivity of all stakeholders. The review ultimately led to the implementation of new cost of production-based pricing models for BC's hatching egg and chicken sectors to support orderly marketing in these sectors.

In 2024-25, BCFIRB also provided oversight and gave direction to the BC Milk Marketing Board (BCMMD) on two different initiatives, the Western Milk Pool Transformation Initiative, and Dairy Innovation West. BCFIRB found that aspects of the initiatives were outside BCMMD's legislative authority. Based on the direction from BCFIRB on these initiatives, BCMMD reconsidered their proposals, ultimately moving to a Western Milk Pool Collaboration model, and working to confirm a funding model for Dairy Innovation West that would be within BCMMD's legislative authority. In 2024-25, BCFIRB staff also provided input to BCMMD staff on process pertaining to BCMMD's Powers and Duties Review. This Review is required every three years under the BC Milk Marketing Board Regulation, with a final report to be provided to BCFIRB.

This year also marked the release of BCFIRB's sixth Public Accountability and Reporting Program (PARP) summary report in December 2024. This PARP report was the first to include a summary of compliance and enforcement (C&E) reporting across the boards and commissions. This reporting is now annually required by BCFIRB and includes information from the boards and commissions on governance and enforcement policies and procedures such as mandatory biosecurity programs, and producer compliance with these policies and procedures. This reporting demonstrates that boards and commissions have structures in place to address biosecurity and ensure any infractions are resolved promptly and effectively.

On behalf of BCFIRB, I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to the boards and commissions for their hard work throughout 2024-25 and our best wishes for the year ahead.

Sincerely,



Gunta Vitins
Chair
BC Farm Industry Review Board

Tribunal Team

In 2024-25, BCFIRB had eight part-time members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council. Members supervise, adjudicate and resolve disputes in the public interest under BCFIRB's four mandates. BCFIRB staff and contractors are an integral part of BCFIRB's professional team, supporting BCFIRB to the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

STAFF

Executive Director and Registrar
Martha Anslow

Board Services Coordinator
Lisa Stride
(Retired July 2024)

Board Services Coordinator
Shauna Appleyard

Director, Governance and Deputy Registrar
Olivia Mattan

Senior Manager, Sector Policy & Planning
Justine Lafontaine

Policy Analyst
Matthew Huijsmans

Policy Analyst
Emma Strazhnik

Policy Officer (co-op)
Christopher Boston

Senior Case Manager
Sara Thiesson

Case Manager
Molly Gagne

Case Manager
Erica Day

General Legal Counsel
Christine Elsaesser
Chris Wendell, Porter Ramsay LLP

Administrative Law and Litigation Services
Mark Underhill, Arvay Finlay LLP
Kate Phipps, Arvay Finlay LLP

MEMBERS

Chair
Gunta Vitins
(Appointed Chair December 2024)

Chair
Peter Donkers
(Term Ended December 2024)

Vice-Chair
Neil Turner
(Appointed Vice Chair July 2024)

Member
Wendy Holm

Member
Pawan Joshi

Member
Dennis Lapierre
(Resigned February 2025)

Member
Jane Pritchard

Member
David Zirnhelt

Member
Abra Brynne
(Appointed May 2025)

Member
David Wells
(Appointed December 2025)

Purpose of the BC Farm Industry Review Board

The British Columbia Farm Industry Review Board (BCFIRB) is an independent administrative tribunal that operates at arm's-length from government. As the regulatory tribunal responsible for the general supervision of British Columbia's regulated marketing boards and commissions, BCFIRB provides oversight, policy direction and decisions in the public interest. As an adjudicator, BCFIRB supports access to justice, providing a less formal system for resolving disputes than the court. BCFIRB currently consists of a part-time board of eight members and nine full-time staff and is accountable to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food for its administrative operations.

The BCFIRB 2024-25 Annual Report describes achievements and results from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

BCFIRB's statutory responsibilities are established in the [Natural Products Marketing \(BC\) Act](#) (NPMA) the [Farm Practices Protection \(Right to Farm\) Act](#) (FPPA) and the [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act](#) (PCAA) and are supported by the [Administrative Tribunals Act](#).

BCFIRB's mandated responsibilities include:

- General supervision of BC's regulated marketing boards and commissions.
- Signatory to formal federal-provincial cooperation agreements in regulated marketing.
- Hearing appeals of regulated marketing board and commission orders, decisions and determinations.
- Hearing appeals related to animal seizure decisions of the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA).
- Hearing farm practices complaints from persons disturbed by odour, noise, dust or other disturbances arising from agriculture or certain aquaculture operations.
- Conducting farm practices studies.

BCFIRB decisions may be judicially reviewed by, or appealed to, the Supreme Court of British Columbia. BCFIRB is accountable to BC's Office of the Ombudsperson for its processes and procedures.

BCFIRB supervises the following agricultural commodity boards and commissions, which are BC's 'first instance' regulators for their respective commodity:

[BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission](#)

[BC Chicken Marketing Board](#)

[BC Cranberry Marketing Commission](#)

[BC Egg Marketing Board](#)

[BC Hog Marketing Commission](#)

[BC Milk Marketing Board](#)

[BC Turkey Marketing Board](#)

[BC Vegetable Marketing Commission](#)

Overview of BCFIRB 2024-25 Goals & Priorities

The 2024-25 Annual Report includes reporting for BCFIRB's [Strategic Plan 2024–2027](#). The Annual Report includes information on BCFIRB's overarching goals, objectives and performance measures to BCFIRB's three-year strategic priorities and actions by which BCFIRB will measure progress and results.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	MEASURING SUCCESS	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
<p>Goal 1:</p> <p>A regulated marketing system with effective self-governance.</p>	<p>Objective 1.1:</p> <p>BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions practice good governance in their external and internal operations.</p>	<p>Performance Measure (PM) #1</p> <p>BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions programs, policies and decisions show legislative intent, sound marketing policy and consider the public interest.</p> <p>PM #2</p> <p>Appropriate governance and fiscal procedures exercised.</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 1:</p> <p>Ensure supervisory direction supports good governance by regulated marketing boards and commissions</p>
<p>Goal 2:</p> <p>A principles-based, outcomes-oriented approach to regulation</p>	<p>Objective 2.1:</p> <p>BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions use a principles-based approach to regulating.</p>	<p>PM #3</p> <p>BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions demonstrate a sustainable principles-oriented approach to governance and regulation in their programs, policies and decisions.</p> <p>PM #4</p> <p>BCFIRB Orders, decisions & determinations are published publicly and promptly.</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 2:</p> <p>Help to future proof the agriculture sector</p>
<p>Goal 3:</p> <p>Effective, fair and independent resolution of inquiries & disputes</p>	<p>Objective 3.1:</p> <p>Ensure issues and disputes arising within BCFIRB's jurisdiction are resolved in a fair and timely manner, including use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods where appropriate</p>	<p>PM #5</p> <p>BCFIRB reports on updates, revisions and additions to practice directives, practices and procedures, and appeal and complaint cases, including on timeframes, costs, and user satisfaction.</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 3:</p> <p>Review and improve BCFIRB processes and policies that support effective dispute resolution</p>

BCFIRB 2024-25 Performance Measures and Results

Goal 1:	Objective 1.1:	Performance Measure (PM) #1	Strategic Priority 1:
A regulated marketing system with effective self-governance.	BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions practice good governance in their external and internal operations.	BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions programs, policies and decisions show legislative intent, sound marketing policy and consider the public interest. PM #2 Appropriate governance and fiscal procedures exercised.	Ensure supervisory direction supports good governance by regulated marketing boards and commissions

Actions:

- Review effectiveness of regulated marketing board and commission use of the SAFETI principles lens in decision-making.
- Require regulated marketing boards and commissions to report on compliance and enforcement of mandatory biosecurity programs.
- Continue to host bi-annual meetings with regulated marketing boards and commissions to identify best practices and support the work of BC’s Centre for Organizational Governance in Agriculture.
- Continue to provide training and other professional development for BCFIRB members.

Other Strategies for Goal 1:

- Ensuring that regulated marketing board and commission activities and decisions are administratively fair, comply with legislation/regulations, and accord with sound marketing policy.
- BCFIRB provides supervisory intervention when necessary.
- Working to achieve priorities within budget while continuing to place importance on board and staff development and training.
- Preserving its independence as a tribunal, continuing to work to ensure effective relations with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, regulatory agencies at all levels, and stakeholders.

Results for Performance Measure 1:

BCFIRB, and regulated marketing boards and commissions programs, policies and decisions reflect legislative intent, sound marketing policy and consider the public interest.

➤ **Compliance & Enforcement Reporting**

To support greater transparency and accountability around biosecurity compliance and enforcement, BCFIRB in it’s [August 2023 Administrative Monetary Penalties](#) decision directed all eight regulated marketing boards and commissions to report on publicly published criteria from compliance and enforcement policies and procedures

annually through the Public Accountability and Reporting Program (PARP). This includes information on the mandatory biosecurity programs, number and type of farms audited, auditors, number of corrective actions, number of infractions, and enforcement actions taken if any. In the summer of 2024, the regulated marketing boards and commissions provided their compliance and enforcement data to BCFIRB for inclusion in the [2023 PARP Report](#).

Key Performance Indicator: *Percentage of regulated marketing boards and commissions providing annual compliance and enforcement reporting in PARP (expectation is that 100% report annually in PARP)*

Result: *100% of regulated marketing boards and commissions provided compliance and enforcement reporting for the 2023 PARP Report*

➤ **Supervisory Role - Meetings**

In its supervisory capacity, BCFIRB's Chair, members and staff met with regulated marketing board and commission chairs, board members, and staff on key files and issues throughout 2024-25. BCFIRB provided supervisory intervention, when necessary, in various sectors (e.g., chicken, broiler hatching eggs, vegetables, and dairy). Details on all supervisory reviews, past and present, along with all BCFIRB supervisory decisions, can be found on [BCFIRB's website](#).

Key Performance Indicator: *Number of BCFIRB meetings held annually with regulated marketing boards and commissions (expectation is that a minimum of two BCFIRB meetings are held annually with regulated marketing boards/commissions (e.g., Chairs meeting; Board to Board meetings))*

Result: *BCFIRB attended nine meetings with regulated marketing commodity boards and commissions in 2024-25*

➤ **Training**

Ongoing training and professional development are essential for BCFIRB members to continue to learn and grow in knowledge and professional skills as Board members and independent adjudicators. All BCFIRB members must complete certain courses offered by the BC Council of Administrative Tribunals (BCCAT). Board members can also participate in other courses and professional development opportunities, such as workshops and knowledge transfer events, including regulated marketing board and commission annual general meetings and producer meetings. BCFIRB members also conduct annual self-assessments of their training and professional development needs and meet annually with the BCFIRB Chair to discuss how these training and professional development opportunities support their role on the Board. In 2024-25, BCFIRB members completed mandatory BCCAT courses on decision writing, hearing skills, and practice and procedures for decision makers. Board members also participated in other tribunal learning around Indigenous legal systems, economic outlook of the agriculture sector, and regulated marketing board and commission annual general meetings and producer meetings.

Key Performance Indicator: *Number of mandatory training and other training and professional development sessions completed by BCFIRB members annually (expectation is that 100% of BCFIRB members have completed the three*

mandatory BCCAT training courses by the end of their first two years and that after their first year every member has attended at least two other training and professional development sessions annually)

Result: *100% of BCFIRB members have met the requirements for both mandatory training and additional training*

➤ **BCFIRB Processes**

BCFIRB held 12 full board meetings between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. Minutes were taken and all necessary member recusals from board discussions were documented, per BCFIRB's [Code of Conduct](#). BCFIRB is mandated to supervise and provide policy direction to the commodity boards and commissions to ensure sound marketing policy and to protect the public interest.

BCFIRB receives and reviews meeting minutes, correspondence and regulated marketing board and commission submissions and decisions, to monitor how regulated marketing boards and commissions are demonstrating that their programs, policies and decisions are in accord with legislative intent and sound marketing policy in the public interest. BCFIRB communicated with regulated marketing boards and commissions regarding supervisory matters that affected them, or necessitated BCFIRB's involvement and/or approval. BCFIRB also ensured that any parties affected by a supervisory matter were involved as appropriate, usually by a regulated marketing board or commission directly.

BCFIRB supported the Ministry of Agriculture and Food as appropriate, in its capacity as an independent administrative tribunal, with meetings held between the BCFIRB Chair and Executive Director with the Minister and ministry staff.

Results for Performance Measure 2:

BCFIRB and the regulated marketing boards and commissions it supervises exercise appropriate governance and fiscal procedures in exercising their mandates.

➤ **Fiscal Procedures**

BCFIRB received a working budget of \$1.457M in 2024-25. Total spending by BCFIRB with adjustments after accruals for 2024-25 was \$2.009M, with \$0.953M spent on operating costs including tribunal member per diems and expenses, professional advisory services, travel, Board general and office expenses, and \$1.056M spent on public service staff salaries and benefits.

All regulated marketing boards and commissions reported having audited financial statements in 2024-25, with most also reporting financial accountability frameworks and approved board member remuneration and internal financial policies and controls in place.

➤ **Governance Measures**

All regulated marketing boards and commissions reported on a series of governance measures in their PARP reports. In addition to financial accountability, measures included planning and reporting, performance evaluation, accountability and

transparency around rules, operational policies and decisions, management of conflict of interest and stakeholder consultation.

Goal 1: Highlights of BCFIRB's 2024-25 Supervisory Activities

Chicken Sector Pricing Review – BC Chicken Marketing Board

BCFIRB's [supervisory review of long-term chicken pricing](#), which began in 2020 completed in 2024-25. BCFIRB received the BC Chicken Marketing Board's (BCCMB) long-term cost of production proposal in October 2023. The proposal was developed by the BC Chicken Marketing Board following a four-year process that included stakeholder engagement and issues resolution. To evaluate the BCCMB's proposal, BCFIRB held a written submission process from eligible participants which completed following a response from the BCCMB on submissions received in April 2024. The BCFIRB Panel [approved](#) BCCMB's long-term cost of production proposal in May 2024, with the condition that BCCMB follow a graduated implementation process over six pricing periods.

BC's regulated marketing system is a government-legislated system that provides for the orderly production and marketing of certain agricultural commodities. Regulated marketing commodity boards and commissions regulate each of these sectors.

BCFIRB's supervisory role enables it to review, oversee and, where deemed necessary and appropriate, give direction to regulated marketing boards and commissions. This proactive role is complementary to BCFIRB's appeal role.

Under the *Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act*, BCFIRB may exercise its general supervisory powers at any time, with or without a hearing, and in the manner it considers appropriate, in the circumstances. BCFIRB's supervisory role has been interpreted in several landmark court decisions.

Review of Western Milk Pool Transformation Initiative – BC Milk Marketing Board

In May 2024, BCFIRB gave [directions](#) to the BC Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) on the Western Milk Pool Transformation Initiative (Transformation Initiative). These supervisory directions were given by BCFIRB, following announcements made by BCMMB in 2023 on the Western Milk Pool Transformation Initiative. The announcements outlined a new governance and leadership model for the Western Milk Pool. BCMMB shared documents with BCFIRB on the Transformation Initiative in the fall and winter of 2023.

After completing a preliminary review of the Transformation Initiative documents, BCFIRB issued its directions to BCMMB under section 7.1 of the NPMA. The directions advised BCMMB that it could not enter into a proposed memorandum of understanding with the BC Dairy Association, and that the BCMMB shall not take further steps to implement the Transformation Initiative until providing responses to BCFIRB on several critical questions. BCMMB's responses informed BCFIRB's preliminary finding on the Transformation Initiative as being outside BCMMB's legislative authority.

Following further correspondence between BCMMB and BCFIRB on this matter in 2024, BCMMB notified BCFIRB that due to the supervisory direction and feedback, BCMMB reconsidered how to proceed with the Transformation Initiative and would refocus their proposal towards collaboration between Western Milk Pool organizations through a new Western Milk Pool Agreement. BCFIRB has a prior approval role under the BC Milk Marketing Board Regulation for agreements that include a federal board, such as the Western Milk Pool Agreement. As such, BCFIRB continues to receive updates from BCMMB on progress towards a revised Western Milk Pool Agreement that is anticipated to be shared with BCFIRB for review and prior approval in 2025-2026.

Funding of Dairy Innovation West – BC Milk Marketing Board

In Spring 2020, BCFIRB wrote to the BC Milk Marketing Board (BCMMB) following a standard staff review of BCMMB meeting minutes which revealed that BCMMB had agreed to fund pre-commencement phase operational costs for Dairy Innovation West (DIW). Based on this finding, BCFIRB wrote to BCMMB to reiterate correspondence from July 2019 to April 2020 on DIW, which culminated with BCFIRB directing the BCMMB that having an ownership role in DIW is not permitted under the current legislative framework. Following this correspondence and BCFIRB's direction in 2020, BCMMB confirmed with BCFIRB in Spring 2020 that no funds would be invested by BCMMB in DIW.

In Spring 2024, information contained in BCMMB's meeting minutes resulted in BCFIRB seeking clarity on the funds BCMMB had expended on DIW to date. BCMMB indicated that they had entered a cash flow agreement for DIW with the other Western Milk Pool partners and had made two prepayments totaling \$310,332. Given this funding was outside BCMMB's legislative authority, BCFIRB [directed](#) BCMMB to cease participating in the funding of DIW and directed BCMMB to confirm what steps it would take to ensure these funds would be returned to the producer pool. In Summer 2024, BCMMB confirmed with BCFIRB that the prepayments made to support DIW had been returned to the producer pool. BCMMB continues to seek ways to support DIW within the current legislative framework, and BCFIRB as supervisor continues to review proposals from BCMMB on ways to ensure these proposals and the funding of DIW stay within BCMMB's legislative authority.

Agency Designation Request – BC Hatching Egg Commission

In January 2025, the BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission (BCBHEC) sought BCFIRB's approval to designate four hatcheries as agencies under section 8 of the NPMA in response to the hatcheries failing to apply for their 2025 hatchery licenses. BCFIRB recognized that while the actions of the hatcheries might destabilize the industry, granting such a designation would be premature without a full supervisory process on the issue of agency designation. Given this, and to preserve the status quo and maintain stability in the hatching egg sector, BCFIRB issued an interim order under section 7.1(2) of the NPMA requiring the four hatcheries to comply with all orders, rules,

and requirements of licensed hatcheries in accordance with BCBHEC's consolidated orders. BCFIRB also directed the four hatcheries under section 7.1(3) of the NPMA to produce affidavits respecting several questions from BCFIRB, in order for BCFIRB to consider the agency designation request from BCBHEC.

Following this request for affidavits, the four hatcheries submitted their 2025 hatchery licenses to BCFIRB but raised several remaining issues that they planned to address with BCBHEC, including the marketable egg definition, the hatchery margin, and financial protection against escalating costs of US sourced eggs. Given the ongoing sector issues identified by the hatcheries, BCFIRB following subsequent correspondence, directed BCBHEC to report back to BCFIRB on progress in discussion with the Hatcheries on these important issues by April 15, 2025. Upon review of BCBHEC's progress report, BCFIRB will determine if further supervisory directions or orders are needed to ensure orderly marketing within the hatching egg sector.

Public Accountability and Reporting Program

BCFIRB's PARP, initiated in March 2018, supports and reports on the effective governance and leadership of BC's regulated agriculture sectors. PARP has a different focus from the information the regulated marketing boards and commissions provide to their sectors and stakeholders in their annual reports.

In addition to providing further New Entrant Program data for PARP, regulated marketing boards and commissions reported to BCFIRB on their key performance targets and progress in meeting their goals. Data on production volume, types of commodities being produced, region of production and sizes of producer operations provides information to the public, helps the regulated marketing boards and commissions demonstrate good governance, and helps BCFIRB demonstrate effective supervisory leadership that supports orderly marketing in the public interest.

BCFIRB 2024-25 Performance Measures and Results

Goal 2: A principles-based, outcomes-oriented approach to regulation	Objective 2.1: BCFIRB and regulated marketing boards and commissions use a principles-based approach to regulating.	PM #3 BCFIRB and regulated boards and commissions demonstrate a sustainable principles-oriented approach to governance and regulation in their programs, policies and decisions. PM #4 BCFIRB Orders, decisions & determinations are published publicly and promptly.	Strategic Priority 2: Help to future proof the agriculture sector
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Actions:

- Review regulated marketing board and commission new entrant programs and quota exchange policies to ensure they are accessible, reflect SAFETI principles, and support succession planning and future-focused quota management (i.e., established quota exchange).
- Require regulated marketing boards and commissions to build and implement Administrative Monetary Penalties (AMPs) as tools to assist and improve biosecurity.
- Continue to forge strong relationships with federal and provincial bodies and other regulated marketing partners to support proactive collaboration and responsiveness to sector challenges and new opportunities.
- Meet with the BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food to better understand economic interests of Indigenous peoples/communities across regulated agriculture commodities.
- Recommend the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food review the 2004 Regulated Marketing Economic Policy to consider new factors and challenges such as disease and biosecurity, climate change and disaster events, food security, Indigenous reconciliation, and BC's agricultural land reserve.

Other Strategies for Goal 2:

- Working with regulated marketing boards and commissions to continue to develop, adopt and employ a principles-based approach to regulation.
- Requiring all BCFIRB, regulated marketing board and commission orders, decisions and determinations to be made available to the public, except where privacy legislation and policies apply.
- Promoting policies that reflect provincial interests at federal and provincial levels, including requiring boards to consider the government policy framework and the public interest.

Results for Performance Measure 3:

BCFIRB and the regulated marketing boards and commissions demonstrate a sustainable principles-oriented approach to governance and regulation in their programs, policies and decisions.

➤ ***New Entrant Programs***

BCFIRB previously [directed increased reporting for New Entrant Programs \(NEP\)](#) from the supply-managed regulated marketing boards and commissions. As part of this direction, the supply-managed regulated marketing boards and commissions were to report on their NEP goals and objectives as part of the 2023 [Public Accountability and Reporting Program \(PARP\) Report](#). In December 2024, BCFIRB published the 2023 PARP Report, which included reporting on NEP goals from all supply-managed regulated marketing boards and commissions. Two of five supply-managed regulated marketing boards and commissions included NEP goals, with the other three regulated marketing boards and commissions reporting that a review of their NEP was in progress. BCFIRB recognizes the importance of setting goals and evaluating progress through performance metrics as it enables transparent and accountable evaluation of NEP effectiveness in fulfilling sound marketing policy by the supply-managed boards and commissions. BCFIRB will continue to monitor and seek the remaining three of the five supply managed regulated marketing boards and commissions to establish NEP goals once they complete their NEP reviews.

Key Performance Indicator: *Number of supply-managed regulated marketing boards and commissions that have identified and reported to BCFIRB their New Entrant Program goals*

Result: *2 of 5 (40%) supply-managed regulated marketing boards and commissions have reported their New Entrant Program goals*

➤ ***Federal-Provincial Relationships***

In 2024-25, BCFIRB continued to forge strong relationships with federal and provincial bodies including engagement with the National Association of Agri-Supervisory Agencies (NAASA) and the Farm Products Council of Canada (FPCC). These meetings provide an important opportunity for BCFIRB to learn and share information with federal counterparts on opportunities and challenges that regulated commodities face in BC. In 2024-25, BCFIRB attended three meetings with NAASA and two meetings with FPCC.

Key Performance Indicator: *BCFIRB attends 100% of annual meetings with NAASA, FPCC, and other federal provincial partners we are invited to*

Result: *BCFIRB attended 100% of NAASA, FPCC, and other counterpart meetings BCFIRB was invited to*

➤ ***Indigenous Economic Interests***

BCFIRB also took several steps to better understand economic interests of Indigenous peoples and communities across regulated agriculture commodities in 2024-25. In September 2024, BCFIRB met with Tryone McNeil the President and Chief from the Sto: lo tribunal council and former BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food member. In March 2025, BCFIRB had an introductory meeting

with the BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food. These meetings provided an introduction for BCFIRB to learn about potential economic interests of Indigenous peoples and communities across regulated agriculture marketing sectors.

Key Performance Indicator: BCFIRB meets with the BC Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food in 2024-25

Result: BCFIRB had an introductory meeting with IACAF in 2024-25

➤ **Regulated Marketing Economic Policy Recommendations**

BCFIRB also made progress on the recommendation to the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food to review the 2004 Regulated Marketing Economic Policy (Policy). In 2024-25, BCFIRB sought input from the regulated marketing boards and commissions on specific priorities in their work resulting from the changing economic and environmental context that are not currently reflected in the 2004 Policy. These new realities and challenges will shape BCFIRB’s recommendation for an updated Policy. The input sought was consolidated in a summary report and shared with the regulated marketing boards and commissions. BCFIRB also undertook a cross-jurisdictional scan and consulted with the National Association of Agri-Supervisory Agencies members to determine if other jurisdictions across Canada have similar policies for the agricultural regulated marketing system. BCFIRB will continue work on our recommendation on the 2004 Regulated Marketing Economic Policy in 2025-26 with a goal to share the recommendation before the end of the fiscal year.

➤ **Application of SAFETI Principles**

Progress continues to be made on the application of SAFETI principles in regulated marketing board and commission operations and decision-making. [BCFIRB implemented the SAFETI principles in June 2016](#), after a five-year development and consultation process with the regulated marketing boards and commissions, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and other stakeholders.

Principle	Description
Strategic	Identifying key opportunities and systemic challenges, and planning for actions to effectively manage risks and take advantage of future opportunities.
Accountable	Maintaining legitimacy and integrity through understanding and discharging responsibilities and reporting performance.
Fair	Ensuring procedural fairness in processes and decision-making.
Effective	Ensuring clearly defined outcomes with appropriate processes and measures.
Transparent	Ensuring that processes, practices, procedures, and reporting on how the mandate is exercised are open, accessible and fully informed.
Inclusive	Ensuring that appropriate interests, including the public interest, are considered.

Regulated marketing boards and commissions included SAFETI analyses in their 2024-25 decisions and submissions to BCFIRB, demonstrating that these principles are now part of BC’s regulated marketing sectors. Regulated marketing boards and commissions have noted the value of SAFETI principles as a useful analytical policy lens and tool.

Results for Performance Measure 4:

BCFIRB orders, decisions, determinations, practices and procedures and other information are published publicly and promptly. Regulated marketing board and commission orders, decisions and determinations are published promptly after being made in order to preserve rights of appeal under the NPMA.

➤ Publication

BCFIRB 2024-25 administrative and supervisory records demonstrated that publishing expectations were met. BCFIRB posted all of its appeals and complaints decisions to its website within timelines established under BCFIRB's Rules of Practice and Procedures for each BCFIRB mandate.

Supervisory decisions, all significant correspondence and all updates to policies and procedures were also published on BCFIRB's website in a timely fashion.

BCFIRB continues to be satisfied with regulated marketing board and commission publishing of orders, determinations, decisions and other information in a timely manner. Timely publication of decisions supports orderly marketing and the right of appeal to BCFIRB.

BCFIRB 2024-25 Performance Measures and Results

<p>Goal 3: Effective, fair and independent resolution of inquiries & disputes</p>	<p>Objective 3.1: Ensure issues and disputes arising within BCFIRB's jurisdiction are resolved in a fair and timely manner, including use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods where appropriate</p>	<p>PM #5 BCFIRB reports on updates, revisions and additions to practice directives, practices and procedures, and appeal and complaint cases, including on timeframes, costs, and user satisfaction.</p>	<p>Strategic Priority 3: Review and improve BCFIRB processes and policies that support effective dispute resolution</p>
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Actions:

- Review the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of BCFIRB’s practice directives, and policies of practice and procedure, for each adjudicative mandate, including a 10-year retrospective review of BCFIRB’s mandate under the PCAA.
- Continue to actively implement access to justice principles in how BCFIRB provides information and guidance to appellants, complainants and other affected parties.

Other Strategies for Goal 3:

- Continue using supervisory processes, and farm practice studies as necessary, to help prevent and resolve disputes.
- Continue using timely, fair and accessible processes to help resolve complaints under the FPPA and appeals under the NPMA and PCAA.

Results for Performance Measure 5:

BCFIRB reports on updates, revisions, and additions to practice directives, practices and procedures and appeal or complaint cases, including on timeframes, costs, and user satisfaction for each of its statutory mandates and associated adjudicative processes.

➤ **BCFIRB Website**

This year BCFIRB also continued ongoing work to recreate the BCFIRB website. The Service BC Government Digital Experience group began user research in 2023 that informed a recommendations report submitted to BCFIRB in October 2024, on what was working and what was not working on our website. Since October 2024, BCFIRB has continued to work with the Government Digital Experience group to implement the recommendations into a new BCFIRB website that is anticipated to be finalized and launched sometime in 2025-26. This work will ensure our website better meets user needs and will also support BCFIRB in actively implementing access to justice principles in how BCFIRB provides information and guidance to appellants, complainants and other affected parties.

➤ **Appellant Guidance Materials**

In addition, BCFIRB also created new appellant guidance materials for the PCAA mandate to better support appellants in accessing information and understanding the PCAA appeal process. These materials include a guidance document that provides a general overview of the BCFIRB hearing process and instructional guide for appellants, a terms glossary, and appeal process flowchart. These new appellant guidance materials will be integrated into the new BCFIRB website which is anticipated to be launched sometime in 2025-26. This work also further supports BCFIRB in implementing access to justice principles for PCAA appellants.

Key Performance Indicator: *Completion of new appellant guidance materials for the PCAA mandate by March 2025*

Result: *BCFIRB reviewed new appellant guidance materials in December 2024 and proceeds to finalize and integrate new appellant guidance in 2025-26*

➤ **Summary and Costs of BCFIRB’s Appeals and Complaints**

In total, BCFIRB administered 62 cases in 2024-25 (please see Appendix for a detailed case list). Of these, 22 were resolved within the fiscal year, nine were decided following a hearing, 0 were settled through BCFIRB’s alternative dispute resolution (ADR) settlement process, 10 were ultimately withdrawn, and 3 were dismissed.

Summary of BCFIRB’s Appeals and Complaints in 2024-25

2024-25 CASES	FPPA	NPMA	PCAA	TOTAL
Carried forward from 2023-24	10	25	2	37
New appeals/complaints in 2024-25	10	5	10	25
Total appeals/ complaints in 2024-25	20	30	12	62
Total appeals/complaints resolved in 2024-25	4	7	11	22
Total carried forward to 2025-26	16	23	1	40

There is considerable cost variability from case to case due to complexity and the time required for panel members, staff and legal counsel. There were 13 cases resolved in 2024-25 without a hearing ranging significantly in cost from \$230 - \$24,000. Cases resolved with a hearing also ranged in cost. The average cost-per-case for the PCAA mandate was \$13,000 in 2024-25 with 5 cases resolved, no cases were resolved by hearing under the NPMA mandate, and 4 cases under the FPPA mandate were resolved with a hearing with a total cost of \$39,000.

In 2024-25, there were three judicial reviews (JRs) of BCFIRB appeal and complaint decisions filed with the Supreme Court of British Columbia. All three JRs were of PCAA decisions, and all were continuing into 2025-26.

BCFIRB has published policy and procedure documents that set out the process, steps, and timelines associated with the filing and hearing of appeals and complaints under its different statutory mandates.

BCFIRB continues to gather feedback through a user response survey regarding the appeal and complaints process, the BCFIRB website, and staff response times. Feedback and suggestions for improvement are now routinely examined to help identify appropriate areas for service improvements.

BCFIRB Case Highlights 2024-25

Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act (FPPA): **[Fleishman et al v Frind Estate Winery](#)**

This case involved four complaints filed with BCFIRB under the FPPA between June 22, 2023, and July 24, 2023, from Complainants aggrieved by noise from a wine chiller operated by Frind Estate Winery.

There were previous complaints filed with respect to the same issue which were resolved by way of a settlement agreement on February 14, 2023. The current complaints arose due to the Complainants' belief that the Respondent did not follow through with the terms of the settlement agreement.

On August 17, 2023, a site visit was conducted at the Complainants' and Respondent properties by BCFIRB case management staff, and a Knowledgeable Person (KP). A report from the KP was produced on January 3, 2024, with respect to the site visit and presented to BCFIRB and all parties.

An FPPA complaint involves a two-step analysis. First, the BCFIRB hearing panel must be satisfied that the complainant is aggrieved by odour, dust, noise or some other disturbance emanating from a farm operation, and second, that the disturbance results from a farm practice conducted as part of a farm operation. If so, the panel must then make a determination about whether the grievance results from a "normal farm practice". BCFIRB works with parties throughout the complaint process to help resolve these disputes wherever possible.

The KP Report indicated that the Respondent installed the wine chiller in 2019, the purpose of which is to control temperature in the production of wine. The report included an assessment of the proximity of the wine chiller in relation to the Complainants' properties as well as sound measurements, and contextual information. In concluding the report, the KP provided five recommendations with respect to reducing the chiller noise to a more acceptable level. The recommendations included: providing a schedule of chiller use activities so the complainants may be aware of annual activities of wine production, a tour of the winery, that the winery work to mitigate noise of the chiller with a professional mechanical services company, work with the complainants on creating noise buffers, and update the chiller if needed or required.

A three day in person hearing was held in Kelowna on August 28 – 30, 2024, where parties had the opportunity to call witnesses and cross examine those called by the other party.

The decision was released on December 30, 2024, with an order for the Respondent to meet a set of conditions including to obtain a plan for professional acoustic sound proofing and to not place any additional wine chiller or similar noise making equipment between the Complainants' properties and the Respondent winery. If the Respondent did not meet all of the conditions by a set date, the Panel would then require the Respondent to relocate the wine chiller on its property.

The FPPA gives farmers who are following ‘normal farm practices’ and not contravening land use regulations, health and environmental legislation, protections from certain bylaw enforcement, court injunctions and nuisance lawsuits. While BCFIRB supports efforts by parties to work together to mitigate impacts from farm practice complaints where possible, the FPPA also creates an expectation that farmers take reasonable steps where appropriate to mitigate the impacts of their farm practices on neighbours. The FPPA serves to protect the operational and economic viability of farm practices in BC.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCAA): **Zhang v BCSPCA**

This was an appeal of a March 15, 2024, Review Decision of the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) related to the seizure two dogs.

The BC SPCA has the authority under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCAA) to take any action it considers necessary to relieve animals in distress, including taking custody of the animals and arranging for food, water, shelter, and veterinary treatment if necessary.

The Appellant filed their appeal on March 20, 2024, with the BCFIRB panel holding a hearing via teleconference with the parties on May 2, 2024. Prior to the hearing the Appellant communicated to BCFIRB that she lacked the language skills to express herself in English. A Mandarin Chinese translator was provided by BCFIRB to the

Appellant to assist the Appellant in providing testimony in the hearing.

Per the definition in the PCAA, an animal is in distress if it is:

- (a) Deprived of adequate food, water, shelter, ventilation, light, space, exercise, care or veterinary treatment,
 - (a.1) kept in conditions that are unsanitary
 - (a.2) not protected from excessive heat or cold
- (b) injured, sick, in pain or suffering, or
- (c) abused or neglected.

In this case, the Appellant’s two dogs were seized after her inability or unwillingness to comply with the BC SPCA’s directions of providing proper shelter and bedding to the dogs. The Animals were left outdoors for an extended period of time in the rain without access to shelter, food, or bedding.

The Panel considered all the evidence and documents put before them. The Panel concluded from the evidence presented by witnesses that the two

dogs would be at serious risk of continued distress should they be returned to the Appellant. The Appellant did not show ownership of the circumstances that led to the seizure and predominantly focused her efforts at the hearing on discrediting the BC SPCA and her neighbours, rather than addressing the living conditions that may support a return of the animals.

In BCFIRB's decision, the Panel found that the animals were in distress at the time of the seizure and that it is in the best interests for the animals to remain in the care of the BC SPCA. The Panel also ordered the Appellant liable to the BC SPCA for the costs incurred with respect to caring for the animals.

Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act (NPMA):
[Homeland Farms Ltd. v BCCMB](#)

The Appellant, a commercial chicken grower, is appealing a decision made by the BC Chicken Marketing Board (BCCMB) on April 11, 2024, denying the Appellant's request to waive an overmarketing levy penalty for quota production period A-186.

On June 26, 2024, the BCCMB applied for a summary dismissal order of the appeal on the grounds that the appeal had no reasonable prospect of success. The BCCMB noted this appeal was factually indistinguishable from three previous separate appeals in which BCFIRB found the BCCMB's decisions were found to be consistent with sound marketing policy. In order for an exemption to be granted there must be exceptional circumstances present.

Under the *NPMA*, the BCCMB is established by the BC Chicken Marketing Scheme to provide for effective promotion, control and regulation of chicken production, transportation, processing, packing, storage and marketing within BC. Under the Scheme, the BCCMB has broad powers which it exercises through its General Orders. In addition to setting rules for quota, permits and licenses, the BCCMB may refuse to allot a quota, or reduce, refuse to increase, or cancel a quota allotted to a grower who fails to comply with or has contravened any provision of the *NPMA*, the Scheme, the BCCMB's General Orders, orders or direction of the BC Farm Industry Review Board, or any other order or direction of the BCCMB.

In its submissions, the Appellant acknowledged that they were in fact over their allotted quota amount during quota period A-186. However, they submitted that their overproduction arose as a result of a force majeure event, meaning an event that could not be anticipated or addressed through proper planning and diligence.

Homeland recounted that due to a clerical error made by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), which mistakenly identified Homeland's farm as being

located within an Avian Influenza quarantine area, they were delayed in receiving their chick placement for quota period A-186. The delay and rescheduling of Homeland's chick placements affected their hatchery's planning such that at the time when Homeland was able to place its allocation there were 3,200 additional chicks available from the hatchery. Homeland had space for the chicks at its farm and decided to place, raise and ultimately sell the additional chicks.

In the summary dismissal decision issued August 23, 2024, the Panel stated that they agree with the BCCMB that over production levies have repeatedly been determined by

BCFIRB to be in accordance with sound marketing, and an Appellant would need to demonstrate truly exceptional and unavoidable circumstance to have a levy waived.

The BCFIRB panel considered submissions from the parties and determined that the Appellant's overproduction in the A-186 allocation period occurred because the chicks that it produced were heavier than was contemplated under their contract and the overproduction was not a situation that arose directly due to any exceptional circumstances in the industry at the time. The appeal was dismissed.

***Further information about BCFIRB may be
found at:***

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/bcfarministryreviewboard>

Telephone: 250 356-8945

Facsimile: 250 356-5131

Email: firb@gov.bc.ca

Appendix – BCFIRB Cases in 2024-25

<i>Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act: Cases 2024-25</i>	
Case Name	Decision
Fleishman v Frind Estate Winery – filed June 22, 2023 Hoffman v Frind Estate Winery – filed July 19, 2023 Hrebicek v Frind Estate Winery – filed July 18, 2023 Lawrie v Frind Estate Winery – filed July 24, 2023 Issue: Noise from a chiller unit	Decision: December 30, 2024
McMillan v Bonnett – filed September 5, 2023 Champagne v Bonnett – filed September 19, 2023 Schreiber v Bonnett – filed October 5, 2023 Issue: Noise from a propane cannon	In process
Neveaux v Twoten Resources Ltd – filed November 7, 2023 Stevens v Twoten Resources Ltd – filed November 8, 2023 Issue: Flooding	In process
Phipps v Majestic View Farm – filed February 28, 2024 Issue: Noise from a propane cannon	In process
Richards v Garnett Valley Farms – filed July 11, 2024 Issue: Odour and pests	In process
Kornelsen v West Heritage Poultry – filed October 17, 2024 Issue: Noise from ventilation fans	In process
Braun v Fraser Valley Agri-Waste Solutions – filed October 24, 2024 Issue: Odour from compost	Dismissed: April 25, 2025
Zimmerman v Fraser Valley Agri-Waste Solutions – filed October 25, 2024 Issue: Odour from compost	Dismissed: April 25, 2025
Braun J v Fraser Valley Agri-Waste Solutions – filed October 28, 2024 Issue: Odour from compost	Dismissed: April 25, 2025
Sztuhar v Fraser Valley Agri-Waste Solutions – filed November 14, 2024 Issue: Odour from compost	Dismissed: April 25, 2025
Plank v Pacific Pride Chicks Ltd. - filed January 28, 2025 Issue: Noise	In process
Borden v Boucher – filed February 18, 2025 Issue: Noise and odour	In process
District of Central Saanich v Farm to Garden Organics – filed March 25, 2025 Issue: Noise and odour	Dismissed: July 31, 2025
Jaeckel v Gobind Farms – filed March 26, 2025 Issue: Noise and runoff water	Adjourned: March 29, 2025

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act: Cases 2024-25

Case Name	Decision
Zhang v BCSPCA – filed March 20, 2024 Seizure: 2 dogs	Decision: May 2, 2024
St. Pierre v BCSPCA – filed March 28, 2024 Seizure: 1 dog	Decision: May 9, 2024
Jasminez v BCSPCA – filed April 8, 2024 Seizure: 1 dog	Withdrawn: April 22, 2024
Jones & Ashbee v BCSPCA – filed April 15, 2024 Seizure: 1 dog	Withdrawn: April 25, 2024
Lepper v BCSPCA – filed August 9, 2024 Seizure: 1 dog	Decision: September 20, 2024
Marcu v BCSPCA – filed September 3, 2024 Seizure: 43 dogs, 1 puppy	Decision: October 18, 2024
Westaway v BCSPCA – filed on October 7, 2024 Seizure: 3 dogs	Withdrawn: October 30, 2024
McCrea BCSPCA – filed on October 22, 2024 Seizure: 1 dog	Withdrawn: November 7, 2024
Ivens v BCSPCA – filed on November 14, 2024 Seizure: 3 dogs	Decision: December 23, 2024
Arnold v BCSPCA – filed on January 6, 2025 Seizure: 59 dogs, 14 exotic birds	Withdrawn: January 14, 2025
Medel v BCSPCA – filed January 3, 2025 Seizure: 1 dog	Withdrawn: February 21, 2025
Gerigk v BCSPCA – March 3, 2025 Seizure: 1 dog, 10 cats	Decision: April 11, 2025

Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act: Cases 2024-25

Case Name	Decision
Prokam Enterprises v BCVMC – filed November 26, 2019 Issue: Unfair process for reconsideration decision	Supervisory: November 2, 2021
PPPABC v BCBHEC – filed December 24, 2019 BCCGA v BCHEC – filed December 31, 2019 Issue: Adjustment to price linkage formula	Supervisory: February 25, 2020
PPPABC v BCBHEC – filed May 10, 2021 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: May 18, 2021
PPPABC v BCCMB – filed June 24, 2021 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: July 6, 2021

PPPABC v BCCMB – filed August 25, 2021 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: August 31, 2021
PPPABC v BCCMB – filed October 25, 2021 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: November 2, 2021
BCCGA v BCCMB – filed December 15, 2021 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: January 21, 2022
PPPABC v BCCMB – filed December 17, 2021 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: January 21, 2022
GGFI and Windset Farms v BCVMC – filed February 9, 2022 Aljane Farms v BCVMC – filed February 8, 2022 Sunnyside Produce Ltd. v BCVMC – filed February 8, 2022 VF Operations Canada Inc. v BCVMC – filed February 3, 2022 Westcoast Vegetables Ltd. v BCVMC – filed February 11, 2022 Peppertree Farms Ltd. v BCVMC – filed February 8, 2022 Greenhouse Delight Foods Inc. v BCVMC – filed February 8, 2022 Canadian Valley Growers Veg Products Ltd. v BCVMC – filed February 11, 2022 Cheam View Greenhouse v BCVMC – filed February 11, 2022 Mt. Lehman Greenhouses v BCVMC – filed February 18, 2022 MB Greenhouse v BCVMC – filed February 11, 2022 Uppal Farms and Greenhouses v BCVMC – filed February 11, 2022 Issue: Decision to designate MPL BC as an Agency	Supervisory: March 21, 2022
PPPABC v BCCMB – filed February 16, 2022 Issue: Chicken pricing order	Supervisory: February 25, 2022
CFP Marketing Corporation v BCVMC – May 16, 2022 Issue: Decision to not designate CFP as an agency	In process
K & M Farms v BCCMB – filed August 8, 2023 Issue: Decision to deny a request to grow pasture production on leased land	Dismissed: August 6, 2024
Island Milk Producers Organization v BCMMB – filed November 16, 2023 Issue: No appealable issue	Dismissed: May 16, 2024
Homeland Farms Ltd v BCCMB – filed May 12, 2024 Issue: Request to waive over-marketing levy denied	Dismissed: August 23, 2024
Mucci International Marketing – filed September 17, 2024 Issue: Decision to summarily dismiss agency application	Withdrawn: November 25, 2024
BC Greenhouse Growers Association v BCVMC – filed October 22, 2024 Issue: Decision to suspend payments and funding to the BCGGA	Withdrawn: December 23, 2024
GGFI and Windset Farms v BCVMC – filed February 7, 2025 Issue: Probationary Agency Designation and Certain Agency Applications	Supervisory: February 21, 2025
Mucci International Marketing – filed February 25, 2025 Issue: Conditional Agency Designation	Supervisory: March 17, 2025