

Funding announced for cranberry research centre in Delta

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OCTOBER 12, 2011



Delta-Richmond East MP Kerry-Lynne Findlay announced over \$200,000 in funding from the federal government to help build a cranberry research centre in Delta Tuesday.

Photograph by: Kevin Hill, Delta Optimist

Delta-Richmond East MP Kerry-Lynne Findlay announced over \$200,000 in funding from the federal government to help build a cranberry research centre in Delta Tuesday.

She made the announcement at Cranwest Farms in Delta on behalf of MP Lynne Yelich, minister of state for Western Economic Diversification.

"This funding will aid in the construction of a cranberry research centre - the first of its kind in Canada and only the fourth in North America," said Findlay.

She noted the research centre would serve as a cranberry test facility where current and new varieties could be evaluated using various growing mediums and alternate production techniques.

Richmond cranberry grower and president of the B.C. Cranberry Research Society Todd May was at the announcement as well.

"This is extremely important to the cranberry industry and its ability to move along at a rapid pace in development of our research farm," he said, adding the industry has faced some challenges in the last few years.

Those challenges generally revolve around declining production in some established plants and some of the new plantings as well, he said.

May said he'd like to see the initial development and construction to be finished by the end of 2012 or beginning of 2013. The facility is expected to include 15 or more acres of actual planted production area. It will be located between the South Fraser Perimeter Road and the Vancouver Landfill, he noted.

The overall cost of the project, by the time there are crop results, is expected to be \$2 million.

Findlay said the cranberry industry is a significant contributor to the local economy and that B.C. cranberry growers produce approximately 80 million pounds of cranberries on an annual basis, with over 90 per cent destined for international markets.

The federal government is providing the \$203,000 investment through the Western Diversification Program.