

Fruitleggers, Fruit Police, and British Columbia's Black Market in Orchard Fruit, 1935–1975

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In the late 1930s, British Columbia orchardists established an orderly marketing system that mandated all tree fruit grown in the province's southern Interior be pooled and sold under the auspices of a marketing board called the BC Fruit Board. This compulsory system helped to stabilize the industry, but its benefits were shared unevenly across the community of growers, and not all were amenable to its tenets or willing to cooperate fully with its control policies. Fruit stands were a legitimate way to circumvent the board and get paid cash for one's produce, but they had an illicit, underground counterpart: a black market in which fruit was transported for unauthorized sale in distant population centres. Drawing on interviews with former "fruitleggers" and industry officials, this article traces the emergence, expansion, and decline of this black market, as well as Fruit Board efforts to control it.

À la fin des années 1930, les propriétaires des vergers de la Colombie-Britannique ont établi un système de mise en marché qui mandait le regroupement et la vente des fruits cultivés dans l'Intérieur sud de la province sous l'égide d'un conseil de commercialisation appelé BC Fruit Board. Bien qu'il ait contribué à la stabilisation de l'industrie, ce système a donné lieu à une répartition inégale des profits dans la communauté des producteurs. Ces derniers n'étaient pas tous favorables à ses principes ou disposés à coopérer pleinement avec ses politiques de contrôle. Les kiosques de fruits constituaient un moyen légitime de contourner le conseil en vue d'obtenir un paiement en espèces pour leurs produits. Toutefois, une contrepartie illégale et clandestine les accompagnait : un marché noir dans lequel les fruits étaient transportés aux fins de ventes non autorisées dans des centres de population éloignés. S'appuyant sur des entretiens avec des anciens « trafiquants de fruits » et des responsables de l'industrie, le présent article relate l'émergence, l'expansion et le déclin de ce marché noir, ainsi que les efforts du Fruit Board pour le contrôler.

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CHERRIES, PEACHES, APPLES, PEARS, and other tree fruits have been grown commercially in British Columbia since the 1890s. Orchardists' struggle to achieve an orderly market for their produce in the face of disparate challenges is one of the best-cultivated sections in the underdeveloped field of the province's rural social history. The key development was the agreement reached between the provincial government and the BC Fruit Growers' Association (BCFGA) during the late 1930s to establish a compulsory system that mandated all tree fruits grown in the prime orcharding region of the southern BC Interior be pooled and sold under the auspices of a marketing board called the British Columbia Fruit Board. This marketing system delivered a modicum of stability, and most historical studies of the BC orchard industry focus on it in the period after its creation.¹ However, its benefits were distributed unevenly across the community of growers, not all of whom were amenable to the tenets of orderly marketing or willing to cooperate with its mechanisms. Discontent simmered in sections of the orcharding community from 1950 through to the early 1970s. When the only legal way to circumvent the board and get paid cash for one's produce, instead of waiting months for uncertain returns, was found to be selling it from a roadside stand, hundreds sprouted up along the region's thoroughfares.² Colourful, attention-grabbing fruit stands also had an underground counterpart: a black market in orchard fruit, in which growers and truckers illicitly smuggled produce to such distant population centres as Vancouver, Calgary, and Prince George in contravention of provincial marketing regulations.

This article examines the emergence and proliferation of "fruitlegging," the Fruit Board's efforts to stamp it out, and the role of the black market in eroding support for orderly marketing. It does so by drawing on archival sources, big-city and small-town newspapers, and interviews conducted with former BCFGAs officials and three former fruitleggers. Though largely forgotten today, even in orchard country, the black market was an open secret and source of tension in BC's southern Interior. Most of the industry decried it for undercutting and destabilizing the orderly market. At the same time, growers in several marginal orcharding districts turned a blind eye to neighbours fruitlegging, recognizing it as a response to dire economic circumstances plaguing many smallholders. Within western Canada, the check stations that the Fruit Board operated to combat fruitlegging were familiar to anyone who travelled BC's main highways. Newspapers in cities far from orchard country ran sensationalistic stories denouncing these enforcement methods and the

1 The history of the BCFGAs has been thoroughly examined by David Dendy and Kathleen Kyle, while Chris Garrish's policy-centred study on orchard-industry dissidents shows there were almost always a few growers arguing against single-desk marketing. Both identify the black market as a problem, but neither examines it closely. David Dendy and Kathleen M. Kyle, *A Fruitful Century: The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association, 1889–1989* (Kelowna: British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association, 1990); Chris Garrish, "Okanagan Fruit Growers and the Abandonment of Orderly Marketing: Land Use, Single Desk Selling, and the Coming of the Agricultural Land Reserve" (MA thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2002). On instability in the early industry, see David Dendy, "Cent a Pound or on the Ground: Okanagan Fruit Growers and Marketing, 1920–1935" (MA thesis, University of British Columbia, 1981); and Ian MacPherson, "Creating Stability Amid Degrees of Marginality: Divisions in the Struggle for Orderly Marketing in British Columbia, 1900–1940," in Donald Akenson, ed., *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, vol. 7 (Gananoque, ON: Langdale, 1990), pp. 309–334.

2 Jan Hadlaw and Ben Bradley, "Between Orchard and Highway: Roadside Produce Stands as Rural Artifact and Enterprise," *Material Culture Review*, vol. 82/83 (2015/2016), pp. 10–25.

control program they were part of as assaults on individual rights of free movement and freedom to sell one's own produce. Sometimes jokingly and other times in earnest, the Fruit Board's "fruit police" were held up as exemplars of intrusive (or inconvenient) socio-economic overregulation.

Fruitlegging is just one kind of uncooperative marketing that has gone overlooked in Canada's postwar rural social history. Little is known about agricultural producers whose crops or food commodities were covered by a marketing board or related regulatory agency, but who refused to comply with the illiberal rules it set down.³ While producers who debated or disputed points of principle and policy at marketing board meetings and industry conventions have been studied, those who surreptitiously contravened marketing regulations are almost completely unknown.⁴ The historical literature on Canadian marketing boards is fragmented, typically divided by province, industry, and product, with most studies following a similar trajectory: recognition of problems of capitalist competition (e.g., overproduction, parasitic middlemen) led to the spread of cooperative ideals and organization, resulting in the establishment (with state support or acquiescence) of a marketing board that helped stabilize the industry. Once the board is in place, its history tends to become synonymous with the wider industry. Dissenters who challenged the orderly marketing system—reified as the democratic, cooperative expression of producer solidarity even if it developed into a complex bureaucracy run by technical experts—are given short shrift or presented as narrowly self-interested antagonists. This is especially so if these "black hat" figures flouted board authority and contravened its regulations. As a result, agricultural and rural social historians know little about the experiences of those who operated outside or only partially within orderly marketing systems or about how marketing boards exercised their enforcement powers against them.

The motives and actions of supposed "outlier" agriculturists who broke marketing board regulations are noteworthy because they reveal, on the one hand, some of the inequities and limitations of orderly marketing systems and, on the other, the everyday politics of markets in agrarian communities. Such insights are particularly valuable to help understand the drive for market deregulation that started gaining momentum in North America in the late 1960s and the 1970s. This crucial period marked the apex of Keynesian economic regulation and was characterized by rising social and political disenchantment even prior to the first oil shock and

3 Illicit and illegal practices in multiple food industries are examined in Allison Gray and Ronald Hinch, eds., *Handbook of Food Crime: Illegal and Immoral Practices in the Food Industry* (Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, 2019). For recent and historical illicit practices in Canadian food industries covered by marketing boards, see Rich Cohen, "Inside Quebec's Great, Multi-Million Dollar Maple-Syrup Heist," *Vanity Fair*, December 5, 2016, <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/12/maple-syrup-heist/>; M. Gale Smith, "Cariboo Potatoes," *British Columbia Food History Network*, June 27, 2019, <https://www.bcfoodhistory.ca/cariboo-potatoes/>; Joanne Will, "The Potato Underground," *The Tyee*, October 29, 2009, <https://theyee.ca/Life/2009/10/29/PotatoUnderground/>; Frank White, *Milk Spills and One-Log Loads: Memories of a Pioneer Truck Driver* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 2013), chapters 7 and 10.

4 Chris Garrish's research on various dissident fruit grower groups shows this in BC's orchard industry. Chris Garrish, "Okanagan Fruit Growers"; Chris Garrish, "We Can't Dispose of Our Own Crop: Challenges to BC Tree Fruits and the Single Desk Marketing System," *British Columbia Historical News*, vol. 36, no. 2 (2003), pp. 21–25.

stagflation, with agricultural producers and products often at the forefront.⁵ Many pundits, retailers, and consumers blamed fast-rising food prices on marketing boards instead of rampant inflation.⁶ Some agriculturalists turned against established marketing systems out of desperation as they saw their living standards eroding.⁷ Many farm families felt forsaken as they faced a cost-price squeeze from buying machinery and chemicals to compete with big agribusiness. Rural communities had also endured other kinds of “rationalizations” and “efficiencies” that inspired skepticism of central authority, from school bussing to high-modern megaprojects.⁸ Invoking “individual rights,” rural free-market neo-populist movements coalesced to do battle against the red tape of complex, inflexible administrative systems, both cooperative and governmental. These vernacular, grassroots campaigns reflect how, as historians Dominic Sandbrook and Shane Hamilton argue, North Americans across the political spectrum embraced defiance, rebellion, and kicking against “the System” during the 1970s.⁹

From Cut-Throat Competition to Single-Desk Selling

An orderly marketing scheme for all tree fruit grown in BC’s southern Interior was established between 1934 and 1939. The Natural Products Marketing (B.C.) Act (1937) was passed by the provincial legislature and endorsed by more than 75% of the members of the BCFGA, which represented the province’s commercial orchardists. It was intended to stabilize agrarian living in a big part of the region by eliminating the cut-throat competition that plagued the industry through the interwar years. Growers had been price takers, and prices had frequently been very low, with fruit sometimes selling for less than it had cost to produce, let alone to pick, pack, and move to market. The result had been a precarious livelihood for many orchardists.

The act created a quasi-governmental authority called the British Columbia Fruit Board, led by a three-person executive appointed by the BCFGA. It was

5 On this transition in Canada, see Dimitry Anastakis, *Re-Creation, Fragmentation, and Resilience: A Brief History of Canada since 1945* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2018).

6 While Canadian consumers’ price awareness during the Second World War, the 1950s, and the early 1960s has been studied, the 1970s, when food prices rapidly outstripped incomes, remain unexplored. See Graham Broad, *A Small Price to Pay: Consumer Culture on the Home Front, 1939–45* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013); Julie Guard, *Radical Housewives: Price Wars and Food Politics in Mid-Twentieth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019); Bettina Liverant, *Buying Happiness: The Emergence of Consumer Consciousness in English Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018); Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada’s Home Front* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); and Joy Parr, *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral, and the Economic in the Postwar Years* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999).

7 For an example of populist protest by smallholding farmers during the early 1970s, see Ryan O’Connor, “Agrarian Protest and Provincial Politics: Prince Edward Island and the 1971 National Farmers Union Highway Demonstration,” *Acadiensis*, vol. 37, no. 1 (2008), pp. 31–55.

8 Disruption of agricultural communities by postwar megaprojects is examined in Tina Loo, *Moved by the State: Forced Relocation and Making a Good Life in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2019); Daniel Macfarlane, *Negotiating a River: Canada, the US, and the Creation of the St. Lawrence Seaway* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); and Joy Parr, *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments, and the Everyday, 1953–2003* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).

9 Shane Hamilton, *Trucking Country: The Road to America’s Wal-Mart Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Dominic Sandbrook, *Mad as Hell: The Crisis of the 1970s and the Rise of the Populist Right* (New York: Anchor, 2011).

effectively a marketing board, responsible for regulating the sale of all tree fruits (but not berries) grown in the southern Interior. It delegated exclusive selling rights to a BCFGa-affiliated agency called BC Tree Fruits, which coordinated pooling, sales, and transport with private and cooperative packinghouses and then distributed the returns to growers. The board also enacted and enforced regulations deemed necessary to maintain an orderly market. This included preventing the unauthorized movement of commercial quantities of fruit out of the officially designated growing area, and determining what constituted a commercial quantity. The growing area constituted the region stretching from Keremeos in the southwest to Kamloops and Salmon Arm in the north and Creston in the southeast.¹⁰ It was compulsory for orchardists within this area to sell their tree fruit through BC Tree Fruits, and only it and the Fruit Board could authorize the movement of commercial quantities of tree fruit out of the area. This was the principle of “control.” Notably, provincial marketing regulations did not restrict farm-gate sales, which in the 1930s represented a statistically insignificant quantity of fruit sales. As the state-supported imposition of single-desk marketing was a rather illiberal exercise, acknowledging growers’ right to barter or sell their own produce in face-to-face transactions on their own property helped placate those who perceived the new compulsory scheme as an attack on rural tradition and individual rights.¹¹

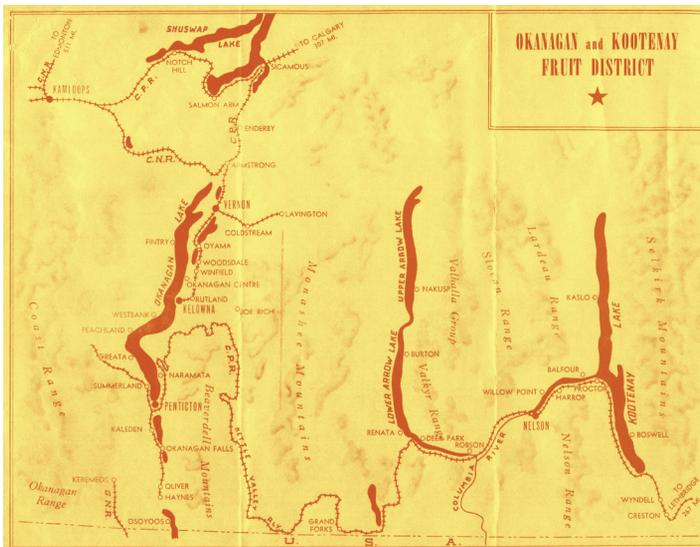


Figure 1. Map of official growing area, on verso of 1956 BC Tree Fruits letterhead. Source: Kelowna Public Archives, BC Tree Fruits fonds, 1978.008.

- 10 In the 1937 Natural Products Marketing (B.C.) Act, the “area to which the scheme relates” consisted of the province “lying east of the 121st meridian of west longitude and south of the 51st parallel of north latitude.”
- 11 As a royal commission on BC’s orchard industry later put it, “From time immemorial it has been the right of a grower to dispose of his product by cash or by barter from his place of business. The Fruit Board has not considered it wise to interfere with his traditional right.” E. D. MacPhee, *The Report of the Royal Commission on the Tree-fruit Industry of British Columbia* (Victoria: Queen’s Printer, 1958), p. 724.

Through the 1940s, high demand and limited competition from outside Canada generated good returns for most any grade and variety of fruit that BC orchardists grew. Growers voiced few complaints about the new single-desk marketing system during those profitable years, and had little reason to contemplate circumvention of its regulations.¹² However, conditions soured in the last months of the decade and would remain poor through most of the 1950s—particularly for the many small growers with less than the 7.5 acres considered the minimum size for a commercially viable operation.¹³ Critiques of the single desk blossomed in difficult times; the winter of 1949–1950 was particularly difficult. Frigid temperatures killed or injured thousands of productive fruit trees, with the damage widespread and uneven in its severity. Growers faced a failed crop for 1950, particularly for lucrative soft fruits such as peaches and apricots. Hundreds also faced the cost of planting new trees and the prospect of reduced harvests for three to five years until they began to bear fruit.¹⁴ On the heels of this disaster, the 1949 apple returns (which growers did not receive until early 1950) were poor. Apples made up about 70% of BC’s tree fruit crop by value and the 1949 harvest had been a bumper crop. But it had been a bumper crop everywhere in North America, causing prices to plummet. Furthermore, lifting of wartime trade restrictions allowed American fruit into the Canadian market for the first time in a decade. After BC Tree Fruits sold the last of the commodity and calculated the returns, growers received less than half per unit of apples than for the 1948 crop. With the 1950 harvest looking dismal, there was little prospect of much money coming in until early 1952.

Damaged orchards, impending crop failure, and single-desk marketing’s deferred payment policy left many orchardists in dire straits and contemplating the shortcomings of orderly marketing.¹⁵ For those with property fronting on an arterial road, the postwar boom in highway building and auto tourism offered an opportunity to sell fruit in a way that had not been anticipated when the industry’s marketing regulations were drawn up. The long-awaited Hope-Princeton section of the southern transprovincial highway (Highway 3) opened in November 1949, providing the first direct road link between Vancouver and the southern Interior.¹⁶ Fruit stands proliferated thereafter, from a handful (at most) in 1949 to more than 200 by 1953, 275 in 1955, and about 350 in 1957.¹⁷ Most were owned by smallholding orchardists. Roadside selling provided cash in hand, unlike BC Tree Fruits, but the fact that not every grower could participate in this new cash economy

12 On wartime black markets, see Jeff Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada’s Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), chapters 3–4.

13 By the mid-1950s, 51% of BC orchardists had less than 7.5 acres in production. MacPhee, *Report*, pp. 76–80.

14 On the killing cold’s effect on the 1950 harvest, see, for example, “Soft Fruit Crop Cut 95 Percent,” *Province* (Vancouver), May 31, 1950, p. 1.

15 That winter’s long-term effects are examined in Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 96; and Arthur Garrish, “The Story of Men Who Had to Fight,” *Twenty-Eighth Report of the Okanagan Historical Society* (1964), pp. 185–186.

16 Economic changes brought by this new section of highway are traced in Ben Bradley, *British Columbia by the Road: Car Culture and the Making of a Modern Landscape* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), chapter 3.

17 As measured by the number of licenses issued to fruit stand operators by the Fruit Board and BC Tree Fruits. “Impossible to Enforce Quality Fruit Sale,” *Province*, January 19, 1955, p. 2; “Marketing Decision ‘Highlight’ of the Year,” *Province*, January 16, 1958, p. 6; MacPhee, *Report*, p. 724.

struck many as unfair. BCFGAs conventions in the 1950s saw heated debates about how—or whether—stands fit the orderly market.¹⁸ While some members called for a crackdown, others saw a legitimate way to develop new markets: fruit stand customers might demand more BC orchard products when they got home. Roadside selling greatly complicated the Fruit Board's effort to control the movement of produce to market. In spring 1953, the Fruit Board started licensing fruit stands and limiting how much fruit motorists were allowed to take out of the growing area, thereby delineating between non-commercial and commercial quantities. The limit initially was five standard boxes per family, then raised to 10 in 1956 and 20 in 1960.¹⁹ Only two boxes of high-value cherries were permitted, until increased to four in 1964.²⁰ From 1956 onward, stands were obliged to post official notices of these limits in order to promote consumers' voluntary self-regulation.

Control on the Ground

The highways that paved the way for fruit stands to proliferate beckoned others to contemplate the illicit transport of fruit out of the growing area. Controlling the movement of produce to market had been straightforward in the late 1930s, when the two railways that hauled freight out of BC's prime growing areas loaded at a few packinghouses and terminals.²¹ Trucking was impractical for long-distance fruit transport at that time, and as late as 1951 only 2% of fruit shipments handled through the single desk went to market by truck.²² However, warnings and threats of prosecution issued by the Fruit Board in the late 1940s indicate that truckers, whose industry was characterized by intense competition between small operators, were suspected of facilitating unauthorized shipments.²³ By the early 1950s, the board was developing a more active enforcement program in response to increased truck and tourist traffic through the growing area, the proliferation of fruit stands, and the desperate circumstances of many orchardists. Roving inspectors checked trucks and cars in the Okanagan Valley and east Kootenays, and in 1951 or 1952, two check

18 Hadlaw and Bradley, "Between Orchard and Highway."

19 Ed Meade, "Farm and Ranch" column, *Province*, June 8, 1953, p. 18; "Many Angles of Fruit Industry Hotly Debated by BCFGAs," *Kelowna Courier*, January 19, 1956.

20 Eric Ramsden, "Relaxing of Quota to Double Legal Cherry Purchase Limit," *Province*, February 3, 1964, p. 1.

21 A dramatic example of this had occurred during the 1933 "Cent a Pound or on the Ground" strike. Orchardists demanding better prices for their fruit used surveillance, intimidation, and passive resistance to block the movement of rail cars loaded with the fruit of packinghouses that refused to recognize their strike as an expression of producers' collective will. Dendy, "Cent a Pound or On the Ground"; Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, pp. 72–74. Clause 22(h) of the Natural Products Marketing (B.C.) Act (1937) authorized the board "to require the person in charge of any vehicle in which the regulated product could be transported to permit any member or employee of the Board to search the vehicle."

22 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 109.

23 "Warn Bootleggers," *Province*, August 30, 1946, p. 3. BCFGAs convention reports from the early 1950s also indicate that most vehicles checked by the Fruit Board's "highway policing and permit system" during the late 1940s had been commercial trucks. Kelowna Public Archives (hereafter KPA), British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association fonds, 2003.030 (hereafter BCFGAs fonds), box 3, file 8/32, "Record of BCFGAs 64th Annual Convention, January 13, 14, and 15, 1953." On competition in BC's trucking industry, see Daniel Francis, *Trucking in British Columbia: An Illustrated History* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 2012), pp. 114–117, 182–183.

stations were set up at pinch points in the provincial highway network.²⁴ The one at Yahk, on Highway 3, midway between Creston (BC's easternmost orcharding district) and the town of Cranbrook, guarded the gateway to the Crowsnest Pass and southern Alberta. The other at Flood, on the Trans-Canada Highway just west of Hope, guarded against the movement of fruit to the Fraser Valley and Vancouver.²⁵ In the mid-1950s, a third station was added at Cache Creek on Highway 97 to control the movement of fruit into northern BC. Initially no attempt was made to control eastward movement of fruit on the Trans-Canada because the unpaved section between Revelstoke and Golden was impassable to commercial trucks, but when a new paved route opened in 1962, a check station was added at Sicamous.

Check stations operated during the growing and shipping seasons, usually from June to December. The board's three-person executive oversaw 10–15 waged inspectors plus office staff in Kelowna. By 1955, one salaried inspector worked year-round in a supervisory and training role. Former BCFGAs Richard Bullock and David Taylor recalled that most inspectors were “retired RCMP officers or police officers ... military folks, that sort of thing.”²⁶ Outlying check stations were staffed by local men, while the inspectors who patrolled the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys were hired from big central Okanagan communities like Kelowna and Penticton, which with their large orchards were bulwarks of support for single-desk marketing.²⁷ “I don't think anyone locally would take a job like that,” a Similkameen interviewee reported.²⁸ Inspectors did not wear uniforms until 1960, when they were issued light green shirts, blue-grey jackets with shoulder badges, clip-on ties, and hats.²⁹ One interviewee recalled inspectors patrolling the east Kootenays with standard American-model sedans; others drove Volkswagen Beetles identifiable as belonging to the board.³⁰ Check stations were identified with large signs that instructed all vehicles departing the southern Interior and capable of carrying a substantial quantity of produce to pull over, including commercial trucks, pickups, vans, campers, station wagons, and cars pulling trailers. Inspectors asked drivers whether they carried any orchard fruit, informed them about the limits on what could be taken out of the growing area, and asked to look inside their vehicle. Those carrying too much fruit were asked to deposit their over-purchase with the inspectors.³¹ Inspections operated on an “honour system,” relying on motorists

24 “Inspection of Autos to Stop,” *Province*, September 2, 1953, p. 3.

25 It remains unclear precisely when these stations opened, but an inspector at Flood who passed away in 1954 was described as having worked there for several summers prior. Lorance Carscadden obituary, *Chilliwack Progress*, September 1, 1954, p. 5. Also “Outdoors with Lee Straight” column, *Vancouver Sun*, June 11, 1957, p. 14.

26 Richard Bullock and David Taylor, interview with authors, Kelowna, BC, February 21, 2016. One inspector who worked at Flood was a Great War veteran. Chelsea Thomas Demmitt obituary, *Chilliwack Progress*, September 12, 1960, p. 5.

27 Charles Bernhardt, interview with authors, Summerland, BC, February 22, 2016.

28 GM, interview with authors, Similkameen Valley, BC, February 22, 2016.

29 The board issued uniforms to its inspectors “in order to distinguish them from inspectors in government service.” KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 16, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board, January 1961.”

30 Cyril Colonel, email interview with authors, March 6, 15, and 30, 2019; GM, interview; R. Brian Hume, “Siege of Sterling Creek,” letter to the editor, *Osoyoos Times*, August 16, 1973, p. 7.

31 Whether motorists were compensated when inspectors took their over-purchase, and what happened to it afterward, remain mysteries of Fruit Board enforcement.

being honest, forthcoming, and respectful of the Fruit Board's quasi-governmental authority. Despite critics' claims, the board was not a police force, and its authority to stop and search vehicles and seize produce against a driver's will was untested in court. Inspectors could not force vehicles to pull over, although interviewees did tell us of being pursued and flagged down. Inspectors could request the RCMP to stop a suspect vehicle but more often took down its license plate number and mailed a letter warning its registered owner of the board's power to press charges under provincial marketing legislation.³²

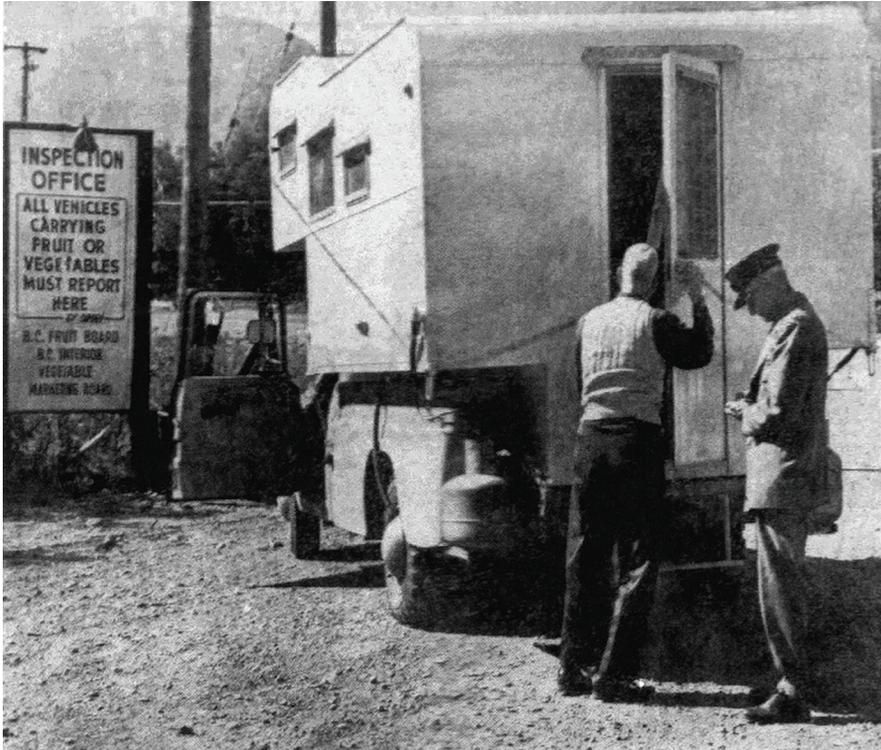


Figure 2. Fruit Board inspector at Flood check station, September 1962.

Source: Courtesy of *Vancouver Sun/Vancouver Province*, a division of Postmedia Network, Inc.

BC's black market in orchard fruit had a distinctive social geography, closely associated with the orchard industry's margins: marginal lands, districts located at the outer margins of the official growing area, and small family-run orchards with low profit margins. Former BCFGAs recalled fruitlegging as a "small grower's game" and that "big growers didn't peddle."³³ Large 20- or 30-acre operations specializing in one or two crops such as apples or pears found it efficient to deal with the packinghouse and BC Tree Fruits, whereas orchardists

³² "Fruitlegger Trap Called Menace," *Vancouver Sun*, September 17, 1962, p. 7.

³³ Bernhardt, interview; Bullock and Taylor, interview.

who grew mixed soft-fruit crops on small acreages were more inclined to seek cash-in-hand than to wait many months for an uncertain return. All interviewees identified the south Okanagan and the Similkameen as districts “where the big action was going on.” Small, family-run soft-fruit operations were prevalent around Osoyoos, Cawston, and Keremeos, which were traversed by Highway 3: the 250 kilometres from Keremeos to Chilliwack in the Fraser Valley could be driven in under four hours. In the southeastern corner of the growing area, the same highway traversed another marginal orcharding district centred around the east Kootenay town of Creston, an early hotspot for fruitlegging and grower dissent toward single-desk marketing. Small orchards were prevalent in that district: by the mid-1950s, 90% were under 10 acres and nearly 66% under five acres.³⁴ And due to its high elevation, harvest times typically arrived three to four weeks later than other BC fruit-growing districts, with the result that local produce hit glutted markets. Many Creston growers found it difficult to adapt to BC’s orderly marketing system and were in pinched circumstances by 1950.³⁵

At the 1953 BCFGAs convention, Creston’s delegation put forward a controversial resolution that provides insight into early Fruit Board control methods and also intimations of fruitlegging in that district. It called for major policy changes, including discontinuation of check stations, relinquishment of enforcement powers to the police, and “free passage of fruit directly from producer to consumer by consumer conveyance.”³⁶ W. A. Kemp, who tabled the resolution, argued the board’s control program had not kept pace with changing conditions. Modern highways carried a burgeoning tourist traffic through Creston right at harvest time, and many growers believed cash purchases made by this “new and ever expanding market” could save the district’s faltering orchard industry were it not for “outmoded” regulations and intrusive enforcement that threatened to drive them away. Control methods were described as ham-fisted impingements on basic freedoms, most notably a citizen’s “freedom of travelling the highways without inconvenience or interference.”³⁷ Kemp worried that clumsy enforcement of fruit marketing regulations was doing “untold damage to valued producer-consumer relations” and giving Creston “a very bad name” with motorists.³⁸ Citing instances of discourteous, inconsistent, and poorly informed action by check station inspectors, he warned that visitors who felt arbitrarily treated would “vow never to come back again and never to buy another BC apple.” Kemp recommended more targeted control:

34 MacPhee, *Report*, pp. 782–785.

35 Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” pp. 45–46.

36 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 8/32, “Record of BCFGAs 64th Annual Convention, January 1953.” Also “Fruitmen Hear Reports of Convention Delegates,” *Creston Review*, February 5, 1953, p. 1.

37 On automobile travel as “freedom” in Cold War North America, see Jeremy Packer, *Mobility without Mayhem: Safety Cars and Citizenship* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); and Cotten Seiler, *Republic of Drivers: A Cultural History of Automobility in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

38 No chamber of commerce wanted its district to get a reputation as unwelcoming to the motoring public. Bradley, *British Columbia by the Road*; Michael Dawson, *Selling British Columbia: Tourism and Consumer Culture, 1890–1970* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

Instead of assuming that every traveller is a potential bootlegger let us concentrate on the very small minority who insist on taking advantage of our [marketing] scheme and illegally transport fruit for resale.... People do not like to be stopped, and yet at the same time we feel there is a great deal of bootlegging going on in our area. People that should not be stopped are stopped and trucks that should be stopped are allowed to go right along.

Kemp did not elaborate on black market activity in the Creston district, but the resolution inspired extended discussion. Delegates aired rumours of trucks arriving in Calgary laden with illicit BC fruit, indicating widespread belief that fruitlegging was a real problem. The convention recommended the Fruit Board “arrange certain relaxations” around Creston; instead, the board appears to have increased enforcement.³⁹ It retained the Yahk check station, and because “certain people [had] devise[d] ways and means of avoiding [it],” added roving inspectors too.⁴⁰ BCFGA conventions would reject subsequent requests from Creston for greater autonomy within the single-desk system, which caused a split among district orchardists. Some continued to support the system for its stabilizing effect. Others agitated for the right to sell their produce whenever, wherever, and to whomever in order to secure the best possible return, denouncing the control program as a “Gestapo” imposition.⁴¹ Creston orchardists grew increasingly defiant during the 1950s, both overtly in their industry politics and clandestinely by fruitlegging. By 1957, the *Kelowna Daily Courier* branded Creston “a thorn in the side” of orderly marketing.⁴²

Control was a frequent topic of debate at BCFGA conventions during the 1950s, but due to its shadowy nature, fruitlegging received less attention than did fruit stands or purchase limits.⁴³ Fruit Board reports describe incomplete control over much of the growing area in 1954.⁴⁴ Revised control methods around Creston appeared to have reduced fruitlegging to the southern Prairies, and the Cache Creek check station proved effective thanks to cooperation from weigh scale staff and game wardens who operated at the same site. However, the Flood check station “did not prove to be 100% effective” despite being a 24-hour-a-day operation, and plans were underway to close unidentified “loopholes” there. There were also unconfirmed reports of BC fruit being taken into the United States for later re-entry into Canada. When conditions changed in 1955, so did board enforcement methods. At Cache Creek, the BC Interior Vegetable Marketing Board joined forces with the agencies already monitoring traffic, which allowed round-the-clock operation. However,

39 KPA, BCFGA fonds, box 3, file 8/32, “Record of BCFGA 64th Annual Convention, January 1953.” For Creston BCFGA members’ positive response to this outcome, see “Fruitmen Hear Reports of Convention Delegates,” *Creston Review*, February 5, 1953.

40 KPA, BCFGA fonds, box 2/5, file 3 10/32, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board, January 1954.” Also “Growers Move to Control Roadside Stands Closer,” *Vernon News*, January 20, 1955.

41 Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” p. 45; “‘Gestapo’ Methods Hit at Fruit Talks,” *Province*, January 24, 1957, p. 9. This split is discussed as a “Special Problem” in MacPhee, *Report*, pp. 782–785.

42 “Fruit Marketing Scheme Upheld,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, August 26, 1957.

43 Bootleg produce afflicted other BC agricultural marketing boards around this time, particularly in the potato industry. See, for example, “Urge Vote on Board Existence,” *Province*, January 26, 1953, p. 5.

44 KPA, BCFGA fonds, box 2/5, file 3 10/32, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board, 1954.” Also see “Growers Move to Control Roadside Stands Closer,” *Vernon News*, January 20, 1955; “Board’s Report to BCFGA: Valley Fruit Control Was ‘Not Satisfactory,’” *Vernon News*, January 20, 1955.

improved control around Creston proved short-lived when highway widening forced the closure of the Yahk check station. Its inspectors were redeployed as a roving patrol, but fruitlegging increased because the closure “misled a number of people into believing restrictions are eliminated entirely.”⁴⁵ Greater use was made of roving inspectors. One was dispatched to Kamloops after the board learned of “certain marketing irregularities” there. Another was assigned to Keremeos full-time because of its fast-growing number of fruit stands (from 21 in 1954 to 33 in 1955) and position near the southwestern corner of the growing area. A third patrolled the Fraser Valley, where the board was “plagued with complaints from wholesalers” about black-market fruit depressing prices.⁴⁶

Inspectors and patrol cars were not cheap. Enforcement costs totalling \$13,700 in 1955 were paid for by BC Tree Fruits and thus by all orchardists covered by the single-desk system, which generated several complaints.⁴⁷ The Fruit Board did not have the power to issue fines that could help offset its operating costs. Even if it had, the courts did not take fruitlegging too seriously in the mid-1950s. Both charges laid in 1954 led to convictions, but in each case the court imposed the minimum penalty of a \$25 fine.⁴⁸ Growers suspected of dabbling in the black market faced a more serious, less official threat from their local packinghouse, which might retaliate by refusing to handle their produce. Some BCFGAs members accused the Fruit Board of being too lenient.⁴⁹ Some suggested its inspectors should investigate food retailers instead of “sitting in their cars waiting” to catch tourists with three boxes of cherries.⁵⁰ Others argued for more liberal purchase limits and regulations on direct selling so as to permit greater flexibility and initiative on the part of individual orchardists.⁵¹ A few growers who advocated for market liberalization during the early and mid-1950s were reportedly involved in fruitlegging by the late 1950s.⁵²

Although Fruit Board annual reports contain little detail about who was fruitlegging during the 1950s, a few general patterns can be identified. Overwhelmingly, it was an activity undertaken by men. Among growers, fruitlegging was often a father and son operation. Interviewee GM started fruitlegging in his mid-teens, when just old enough to have a valid license. He began by assisting his father (a notably hard-drinking veteran in a community where hard-drinking veterans were common) as a kind of co-pilot. The eldest son and only one of his siblings to make these runs, GM drove on return trips home so that his father could drink or sleep. Eventually he made trips on his own, working for the success of the family farm while also being paid by his father. He recalled being up for the adventure after reading about Prohibition-era bootleggers and watching high-octane

45 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3/4, file 3 11/32, “British Columbia Fruit Board Report to the BCFGAs, January 1956.”

46 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3/4, file 3 11/32, “British Columbia Fruit Board Report to the BCFGAs, January 1956.”

47 “Many Angles of Fruit Industry Hotly Debated,” *Kelowna Courier*, January 19, 1956.

48 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 2/5, file 3 10/32, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board, January 1954.”

49 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 8/32, “Record of BCFGAs 64th Annual Convention, January 1953.”

50 “Many Angles of Fruit Industry Hotly Debated,” *Kelowna Courier*, January 19, 1956.

51 Regarding reformist and radical dissident grower groups during the 1950s, see Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” chapter 3.

52 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, pp. 103, 108; Chris Garrish, “We Can’t Dispose,” p. 24.

movies like *Thunder Road* (1958): “That got me going, I just loved it.”⁵³ Pickers sometimes accepted bulk fruit as payment for their labour (an appealing arrangement for cash-strapped orchardists) and then transported it to a distant community—as far away as Vancouver Island or Saskatchewan—where they tried to sell it to a retailer or even peddled it door-to-door.⁵⁴ Truck drivers continued playing a key role, with a great deal of fruitlegging activity reportedly begun with a trucker and a grower saying “let’s make a deal.”⁵⁵ The percentage of BC orchard fruit officially transported to market by truck grew rapidly from 2% in 1951 to 20% in 1957, but truckers (whether owner-operators or employees acting without their boss’s knowledge) hauled whatever helped pay the way, and during the summer, those departing the growing area with empty space in their freight compartment would be tempted to fill it with high-value soft fruits.⁵⁶ Occasionally, a grocery store asked a trucker to find and deliver some hard-to-supply produce. Even packinghouses in marginal areas secretively dabbled in a bit of illicit transport rather than dump fruit for which there appeared to be no profitable market.⁵⁷ But not every grower who participated in fruitlegging collaborated with a trucker: some transported produce beyond the official growing area themselves, and most who did so were cash-starved smallholders. For GM’s family, fruitlegging “started out as just a little thing to get some money to live on.... Just getting food on the table.... We couldn’t live on apples.” Although they had a fair amount of good land in a marginal district, they nevertheless lived tenuously, indebted to the local store and seeing little cash in the course of a year. He recalled the single-desk system as highly unpredictable: “If we sent [fruit] to the packinghouse we could make money but you didn’t get paid until fall [at earliest]. Who knows, you could get a bill.”⁵⁸

In the late 1950s, voices from outside the orchard industry joined the debate about how the Fruit Board maintained an orderly market. Its control policies were endorsed by the provincial 1956–1958 Royal Commission on the Tree-Fruit Industry. The commission recommended that check stations be retained because “there are always a few individuals who must be policed.” On the vexed question of how much fruit individuals should be allowed to take out of the growing area, it deemed 10 boxes (up from five just a couple years earlier) sufficient, warning that if “increased much more, the scheme of orderly marketing would be defeated.”⁵⁹ On the other hand, a few critics in the press fulminated against check stations and nosy inspectors. The *Calgary Herald’s* agricultural columnist warned motorists to “watch out for the ‘Creston Gestapo’” and claimed that “unsuspecting tourists” to

53 GM, interview.

54 David Taylor and Richard Bullock recalled that in the 1960s pickers “could make good money” peddling fruit “but not if another peddler had gotten to that district before you.” Bullock and Taylor, interview. The Fruit Board made special arrangements for Creston growers in 1954, allowing them to pay Hutterite pickers with fruit equivalent to the value of their wages. “Growers Move to Control Roadside Stands Closer,” *Vernon News*, January 20, 1955.

55 “Fruitlegger Makes Deals,” *Vancouver Sun*, November 25, 1970, p. 30.

56 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 109; “Trucks Cause Railways Concern,” *Country Life in British Columbia*, March 1955, p. 13.

57 Colonel, interview.

58 GM, interview.

59 MacPhee, *Report*, pp. 726, 728–729, 784.

BC risked being “shaken down by the RCMP” for their fruit purchases.⁶⁰ In a similar vein, the *Vancouver Sun*’s station wagon–driving outdoors columnist denounced the Flood check station as an “asinine imposition ... put there by the Gestapo section of some fruit or marketing board.”⁶¹ Inconvenience, rather than principled objection to regulated agricultural markets, was the heart of the matter for these critics. Their complaints indicate how seriously the Fruit Board had to consider the motoring public’s perceptions of its control and enforcement program by the late 1950s.

Good Times for Some

Prices for BC orchard fruit rose dramatically in the early 1960s and remained high through the decade. Good times papered over many underlying problems in the industry, and BCFGA dissidents’ calls for a liberalized market lost political momentum.⁶² However, good times for most did not mean good times for all. Our fruitlegger interviewees (two growers and one trucker) did most of their illicit hauling and selling during the 1960s. GM’s father first ran orchard fruit out of the official growing area in 1959 or 1960, after bartering apples for potatoes with a farmer from Grand Forks (inside the growing area) and then selling some to neighbours.⁶³ He and GM used the family car, a 1955 Buick, to drive a load of fresh-picked apples down to the Fraser Valley, where they found a farmer-run produce market that agreed to purchase the entire load: “We didn’t take his name [but] he said, ‘If you’re coming down, bring some more.’” Soon they were making these trips on a fairly regular basis, selling to just a few markets (“mostly Chinese”). Without modification and only leaving room for the driver and a passenger, the Buick accommodated about 20 boxes of apples and rode low.⁶⁴ But the car could carry nearly twice as much fruit by removing the spare tire, back seats, and internal wall to the trunk; by installing heavy-duty springs and truck tires; and by packing the apples in paper feedbags instead of heavy, rigid boxes.⁶⁵ GM’s mechanical training and passion for cars proved invaluable, allowing them to change vehicles regularly so that inspectors would not recognize them.⁶⁶

Persistence of the black market in the 1960s is further evidenced by the number of convictions the Fruit Board obtained for violations of marketing board regulations: four in 1960, eight in 1961 (including one for a second offence), seven in 1962, and 13 in 1963. Then a bad frost in 1965 pushed more growers to try fruitlegging, and rumours continued to circulate that big industry players sometimes

60 “Agricultural Alberta” column, *Calgary Herald*, July 28, 1960, p. 56.

61 “Outdoors with Lee Straight” column, *Vancouver Sun*, June 11, 1957, p. 14; and March 17, 1959, p. 16.

62 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, pp. 114–116.

63 On black-market potatoes in 1950s BC, see, for example, “\$25 Fine for Potato Sale,” *Vancouver Sun*, June 22, 1951, p. 23. GM recalled that early on, his father traded fruit for beef from district ranchers, for salmon from “Indians” in the Fraser Valley, and for corn from Chilliwack farmers.

64 This tallies with Charles Bernhardt’s understanding of common fruitlegging practice. Bernhardt, interview with David Dendy, August 4, 1988, cited in Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, pp. 116n65, 195.

65 For another fruitlegger doing this, see “‘Gestapo’ Methods Hit at Fruit Talks,” *Province*, January 24, 1957, p. 9.

66 On rural and youth cultures of vehicle modification in North America, see Gary S. Cross, *Machines of Youth: America’s Car Obsession* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018); and Ronald Kline, *Consumers in the Country: Technology and Social Change in Rural America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

participated in the black market.⁶⁷ The rising number of convictions, even as returns improved, should have been a warning signal for BC's orchard industry, particularly since the Fruit Board had increased the non-commercial fruit limit from 10 to 20 boxes in 1960.⁶⁸ Inspectors reported that the increased limit reduced complaints at its check stations, and it also found favour with *Vancouver Sun* women's page editor Penny Wise, whose readers sought bulk fruit for home canning.⁶⁹ However, officials privately predicted that "insofar as bootleggers are concerned, [the change] made things just a little easier," and that summer a few motorists did challenge the terms of the new limit, arguing, for example, that unrelated persons travelling together should each be allowed 20 boxes.⁷⁰

Okanagan newspapers dependably supported orderly marketing and its associated control measures. However, the Vancouver dailies did not always help cultivate a positive public image of the single-desk system, especially as stories about the rising cost of (sub)urban living crowded out coverage of rural issues. The most concerted critique came in fall 1962, when the *Sun* ran a series of slanted, almost sensationalistic stories presenting the Fruit Board (conflated with BC Tree Fruits and the BCFGAs) as a menacing, undemocratic, yet slightly ridiculous institution with "police authority" over "anybody travelling for any purpose over highways leading from the fruit belts."⁷¹ It was described as having "its own uniformed police ... prowler cars ... and its own roadblocks—all within the bounds of British Columbia." Its check stations were referred to as "traps." Convicted violators of provincial marketing regulations were said to face punishment "ranging from \$25 to \$300 or three months in jail or both"—factually correct but alarmist given that only one fine over \$25 had been handed out.⁷² *Sun* cartoonist Len Norris skewered check stations as absurdly intrusive instances of petty overregulation.⁷³ The BCFGAs responded with letters and interviews explaining how board policies

67 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 18, "Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGAs, January 1965."

68 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 16, "Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGAs, January 1961"; Eric Ramsden, "Relaxing of Quota to Double Legal Cherry Purchase Limit," *Province*, February 3, 1964.

69 Penny Wise, "Change Made in Fruit Laws," *Vancouver Sun*, August 8, 1961. See also Ethel Post, "Shop with Ethel" column, "Tree Fruit Rules Improved," *Province*, June 25, 1963, p. 21. The board placed notices in Vancouver, Cariboo, and Alberta newspapers that explained its "generous" new limits in a friendly, cheerful tone. In 1961, the chairman of the board appeared on the TV program *Okanagan Farm and Garden* to explain its check stations. KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 16, "Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGAs, January 1962."

70 KPA, BCFGAs fonds, box 3, file 16, "Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGAs, January 1961." See also "Fruit 'Bootleggers' Aided by Increased Allowances," *Kelowna Daily News*, January 18, 1961.

71 Bryce Williams, "Can Search Any Vehicle: Police-Like B.C. Board Out to Trap 'Fruitleggers,'" *Vancouver Sun*, September 15, 1962, p. 14. See also "Albertans Swarm Into Okanagan to Buy Fruit," *Vancouver Sun*, September 5, 1962, p. 25; "Fruitlegger Trap Called Menace," *Vancouver Sun*, September 17, 1962, p. 7; "Freedom of Marketing Plan Blasted," *Vancouver Sun*, September 19, 1962, p. 4; and "Fruitlegger Traps Held Necessary," *Vancouver Sun*, September 28, 1962, p. 55.

72 Emphasis added.

73 Len Norris, editorial cartoon, *Vancouver Sun*, September 18, 1962. In the *Province*, an ex-orchardist denounced check stations as "Berlin walls," while the *Calgary Herald* called them devices for maintaining a "monopoly." "Wanted: Up-to-date Fruit Marketing Plan," letter to the editor, *Province*, October 4, 1962, p. 4; "Agricultural Alberta" column, *Calgary Herald*, October 4, 1962, p. 51.

and the control program were essential for maintaining an orderly market that provided producers with stable livelihoods and consumers with high quality, made-in-BC fruit.⁷⁴ In subsequent years, orchard industry officials regularly met big-city editors, journalists, and broadcasters to defend orderly marketing against charges that it contributed to rising food prices and infringed on the liberty of ordinary visitors to the southern Interior. Prompted by provincial Minister of Agriculture Frank Richter (a Keremeos rancher and orchardist), the industry also argued its case directly to the public, distributing hundreds of thousands of information pamphlets around western Canada.⁷⁵

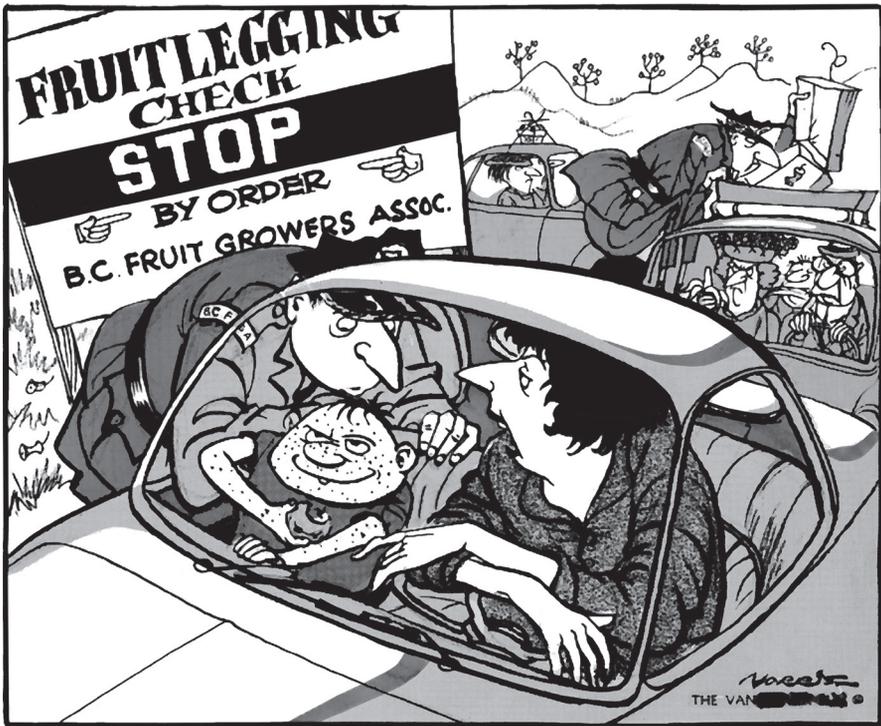


Figure 3. “No we don’t have 20 cases of fruit... just one case of chickenpox.” Len Norris cartoon, *Vancouver Sun*, September 18, 1962.

Source: Courtesy of Simon Fraser University Library, Special Collections and Rare Books, Editorial Cartoons collection.

⁷⁴ “Fruit Men Deny Retail Controls,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 24, 1962; “Fruitlegger Traps Held Necessary,” *Vancouver Sun*, September 28, 1962, p. 55.

⁷⁵ KPA, BCFGA fonds, box 3, file 17, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGA, 1963” and “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGA, 1964”; KPA, BCFGA fonds, box 3, file 18, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGA, January 1965.”

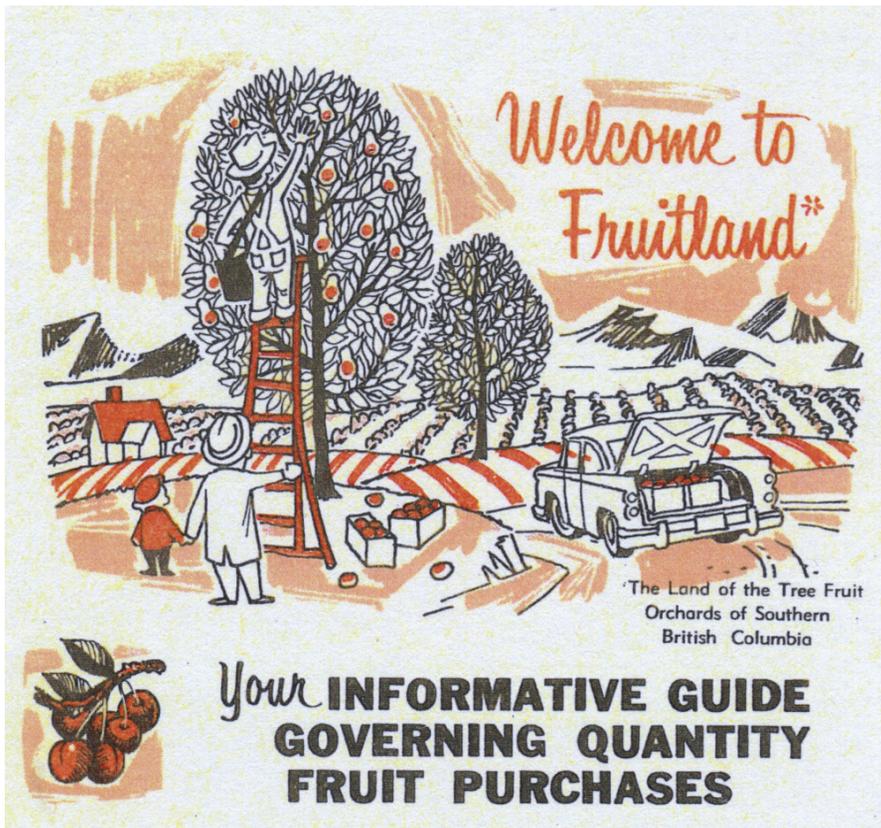


Figure 4. BC Tree Fruits brochure, early 1960s.

Source: Authors' collection.

Even as it contended with increased black-market activity, the Fruit Board revised its enforcement methods to be more targeted and less inconvenient for the motoring public.⁷⁶ In 1963, it stopped requiring station wagons to report at its check stations and solicited phone tips to identify fruitleggers.⁷⁷ It also issued fewer warnings and pursued more prosecutions.⁷⁸ In 1969, its check station on the Trans-Canada Highway west of Hope was abandoned “due to the tremendous increase in

⁷⁶ KPA, BCFGF fonds, box 3, file 17, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGF, January 1964.”

⁷⁷ “Fruitlegging Runs to Coast ‘Rob’ Okanagan Growers,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), September 11, 1962, p. 15; KPA, BCFGF fonds, box 3, file 17, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGF, January 1963” and “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGF, January 1964”; “Fruit Checkpoints Scrapped for Private Motorists in B.C.,” *Vancouver Sun*, June 19, 1963, p. 1. See also “Fruit Stations to End Check-up on Motorists,” *Province*, June 20, 1963, p. 19; and “Private Motorist Stops at B.C. Fruit Checks Not Now Required,” *Calgary Herald*, June 22, 1963, p. 6.

⁷⁸ KPA, BCFGF fonds, box 3, file 17, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGF, January 1964.” See also Eric Ramsden, “Relaxing of Quota to Double Legal Cherry Purchase Limit,” *Province*, February 3, 1964.

traffic at that point,” leaving only Cache Creek and Sicamous in operation.⁷⁹ Control now relied heavily on roving inspectors. “How effective it was, God only knew,” one senior BCFGF official recalled. “You never got everybody. It was sporadic.”⁸⁰ GM and his father knew the inspectors tended to take up position along Highway 3 between Hedley and Princeton, just outside the southwestern corner of the growing area, and tapped local sources to elude them: “Certain people would tell us, ‘Oh, we saw them sitting there last night.’” Avoiding the inspectors via back roads was one option; another was to blow right past them at high speed.⁸¹ Asked about interactions with inspectors in the 1960s, GM recalled that “Dad being a veteran, he called them the Gestapo. He just hated them.” His father would publicly insult inspectors and was once hauled before the local justice of the peace after a physical confrontation involving “yelling, screaming, pushing back and forth,” and at least one punch thrown.⁸² They took the RCMP, who sometimes assisted with Fruit Board enforcement, more seriously. However, GM thought the police were “really not that into it.” Citing an occasion when he was chased by an inspector and the RCMP around three o’clock in the morning in an El Camino loaded with cherries, he believed the RCMP activated their lights and siren while far away in order to let him escape and then focus on more important work: “Out of Princeton there’s a big long straight stretch there and I thought well the police are going to pull me over if they get close enough, but he turned his lights on way back. Anyway, I’m gone, I’m going. I got off on a side road, went up the side road a bit and I watched them go by and I thought well I’m going to sit here until I see them go back the other way. Well I had to sit there [in the heat] until 4 o’clock in the afternoon.... I had to sit there all day.” GM was never prosecuted for violating provincial marketing regulations: “I never got caught, though I got chased lots of time.” He recalled that some orchardist neighbours resented his family’s black-market activity, “but there were never any fights,” which he attributed to the fact that many were also struggling to make a living. His father’s pugnaciousness provided another reason to mind their own business.

The Fruit Board’s growing reliance on tips and roving inspectors for its enforcement program came amid a rising tide of fruitlegging. By the late 1960s, a substantial number of fruitleggers were simply “someone with a [van or pickup] looking for quick money,” including many “Alberta and Saskatchewan people.”⁸³ These new entrants to the black market had no reputation to protect in the orchard

79 KPA, BCFGF fonds, box 3, file 18, “Report of the British Columbia Fruit Board to the BCFGF, January 1969.”

80 Bullock and Taylor, interview.

81 We did not ask how they circumvented the Flood check station, but for an example of a fruitlegger attempting to bypass it via rural roads, see “Fruit Truck Turned Back,” *Chilliwack Progress*, August 9, 1960, p. 7.

82 GM’s father received no jail time. Notably, the justice of the peace was also a veteran, a drinking buddy of the accused, and boss of the local packinghouse, where GM’s mother worked. On the tight-knit, fraternal community of male Anglo-Canadian growers in BC’s marginal orcharding districts during the postwar years, see Harold Rhenisch, *Out of the Interior: The Lost Country* (Vancouver: Cacanadadada, 1993), pp. 137, 177–178; and Harold Rhenisch, *The Wolves at Evelyn: Journeys Through a Dark Century* (Vancouver: Brindle and Glass, 2006), p. 284.

83 Bullock and Taylor, interview; Arthur Garrish, “The Orderly Marketing System,” *Fiftieth Report of the Okanagan Historical Society* (1986), p. 64. Single men driving campers or pulling a camper or utility

industry or an orcharding community, and, in the case of Prairie residents, were beyond the reach of BC's marketing legislation. According to a former BCFGAs president, during the late 1960s a few fruitleggers also learned from lawyers that Fruit Board inspectors could not compel them to open a sealed cargo compartment: "And of course, you couldn't get a warrant ahead of time, and the Fruit Board had no authority to detain people on the road while somebody went to get a warrant."⁸⁴ Furthermore, fruitlegging gained a new ethnic dimension during the 1960s, reflecting the effects of postwar immigration on BC's orchard industry. Many dispirited or retirement-age smallholding growers who exited the industry during the 1950s and 1960s sold their orchards to recent immigrants, including Portuguese, Hungarians, and ethnic German refugees from eastern Europe.⁸⁵ These newcomers were unfamiliar with the problems of BC's unregulated market prior to the single-desk system, and many were fervently anti-communist. For most, orcharding in BC proved far from idyllic. Their orchards were too small, few were welcomed into the tight-knit, Anglo-Canadian-dominated community of growers, and some were outright ostracized.⁸⁶ The son of one newcomer recalled his parents and their friends as "desperate ... all of them shopping for clothing for their kids at the Sally Ann."⁸⁷ Some took up fruitlegging; social marginalization and newness to BC's orchard industry may have made them less reluctant to take the risk than established smallholders who faced similar economic challenges.⁸⁸

The Cherry War

The BC orchard industry was hit by an abrupt downturn in 1969, presaging several years of depressed conditions that would see a dissident free-marketeer movement harness grower restlessness and consumer discontent over fast-rising food prices to brazenly challenge the orderly market. The winter of 1968/1969 was the coldest since 1949/1950, killing and injuring thousands of trees and wiping out the 1969 soft-fruit crop. A long run of good prices ended around the same time: returns for 1969 and 1970 averaged less than half of what they had for 1967 and 1968, even as production costs rose due to inflation, labour scarcity, and mechanization. Some smallholders went out of business; more gave up the dream of full-time orcharding

trailer raised inspectors' suspicions most. Margaret McDonald, letter to the editor, *Penticton Herald*, August 16, 1973, p. 4.

84 Bernhardt, interview; Bernhardt, interview with Dendy, cited in Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, pp. 116n66, 195.

85 On immigrants taking up orcharding in postwar BC, see Paul M. Koroscil, "Portuguese Emigration and Settlement: Canada and the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia" in *British Columbia Settlement History* (Burnaby: Simon Fraser University Geography Department, 2000), pp. 148–168; and Christian Lieb, "Moving West: German-Speaking Immigration to British Columbia 1945–1961" (PhD dissertation, University of Victoria, 2008).

86 On discrimination against German immigrants, see Rhenisch, *Out of the Interior*, p. 138; and Rhenisch, *Wolves at Evelyn*, pp. 202, 284.

87 Rhenisch, *Wolves at Evelyn*, 202.

88 Fruit Board reports and newspapers rarely identified by name people charged with and/or convicted of fruitlegging activity, but a large proportion of the names that we have found in the 1960s indicate a central or eastern European background. Examples include "Men Fined as Verdict Reversed," *Province*, March 23, 1959; "Fraser Valley," *Province*, March 24, 1959, p. 4; "Cost by Cherries," *Province*, August 6, 1963, p. 6; and "B.C. Coast," *Province*, September 2, 1964, p. 26.

and sought off-farm employment.⁸⁹ These years saw more fruitlegging by cash-starved growers, and, as during the 1950s, many in financial difficulty directed their frustration at the single-desk system, particularly its compulsory nature and its control program.⁹⁰ Resolutions against the system and counter-resolutions to strengthen it were proposed at BCFGAs conventions.⁹¹ A few especially disenchanted growers came to view the system as not merely inflexible and unresponsive but beholden to corporate wholesalers and packinghouse unions. By 1972, new dissident groups were calling for liberalized regulations that would let growers sell their produce when, where, and to whom they wanted. The biggest and “more militant” was the United Fruit Growers of BC (UFG), based in the south Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys with a membership of marginal, smallholding growers that included many recent immigrants. Several leading dissidents had reportedly participated in the black market.⁹²

The 1973 Pacific Northwest cherry crop was unprecedentedly large. By June, Washington and Oregon cherries were being dumped in the Canadian market, causing prices for later-ripening BC-grown cherries to plummet below their cost of production.⁹³ Cherries were the first fruit crop of the year and many smallholding orchardists were heavily dependent on them. The impending financial disaster for these growers allowed the UFG and allied dissidents to mobilize a defiant, head-on challenge to orderly marketing through a large-scale, highly publicized, blockade-busting form of fruitlegging. These dissident groups announced that on July 7 their members would transport commercial quantities of cherries to Vancouver without seeking permission from the Fruit Board or BC Tree Fruits. They would sell this illicitly transported produce direct to consumers at a price that was remunerative but substantially lower than Vancouver supermarkets charged. Their main goal was to highlight the inefficiency of single-desk marketing and the profound unfairness of compelling orchardists to use it. They welcomed any court case the Fruit Board might bring, as it would let them challenge the province’s and industry’s marketing regulations as unconstitutional.⁹⁴

On the morning of July 7, a convoy of about a dozen pickups, station wagons, and vans departed Osoyoos and grew as it passed through the Similkameen Valley.⁹⁵ The participants were almost exclusively growers, including wives and teenage children, to emphasize that marketing regulations affected entire families. At Sterling Creek, 30 kilometres west of Keremeos and 25 kilometres outside the official growing area, the convoy was waved over to an impromptu Fruit Board check station, where it paused just long enough for leaders to declare that they refused to

89 Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” pp. 75–76. See also, for example, Barry Broadfoot, “Low Prices Plague B.C. Fruit Industry,” *Vancouver Sun*, November 25, 1970, p. 30.

90 Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” pp. 76–77.

91 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 115.

92 Bullock and Taylor, interview; Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” p. 86n34; “Dissident Orchardists Issued Stiff Warning,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, June 8, 1973, p. 1.

93 “Cherry Crop Faces Marketing Disaster,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, June 27 1973, p. 3.

94 “Controversial Convoy Leaving for Vancouver,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, July 3, 1973, p. 3. See also “BC Fruit Board to Halt Cherry-Running Plan,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, July 4, 1973, p. 1.

95 “Fruit Caravan’s Trek Halted Near Hedley: Rebel Growers Dispute Seizure,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, July 7, 1973, p. 1.

recognize the board's authority. A short distance later, the convoy was directed to the side of the highway by RCMP from Keremeos and Princeton. Five Fruit Board inspectors began searching the vehicles, seizing and unloading fruit from several carrying over the 20-box limit, but soon were overwhelmed by drivers' non-compliance. Most vehicles were locked. Convoy participants demanded warrants and threatened prosecution for trespass and theft. After 90 minutes beside the busy highway, the RCMP (who directed traffic but did not assist otherwise) allowed the convoy to depart for Vancouver and its Gastown neighbourhood, where the UFG had promoted a "farmer's market."⁹⁶ Boxes of fruit were hastily sold straight from the trucks and the entire shipment (reportedly 14,000 pounds) sold out in under an hour, leaving buyers lined up as the trucks pulled away.⁹⁷ Gastown was an inspired destination, being closely associated with the defiance of laws that some British Columbians perceived of as unjust or "Gestapo" ever since a headline-grabbing 1971 clash between the Vancouver police riot squad and counterculture protestors calling for relaxation of laws against marijuana possession.⁹⁸ The neighbourhood's reputation for resisting "the System" helped generate publicity for dissident growers who portrayed themselves as making a stand against an unfair monopoly.

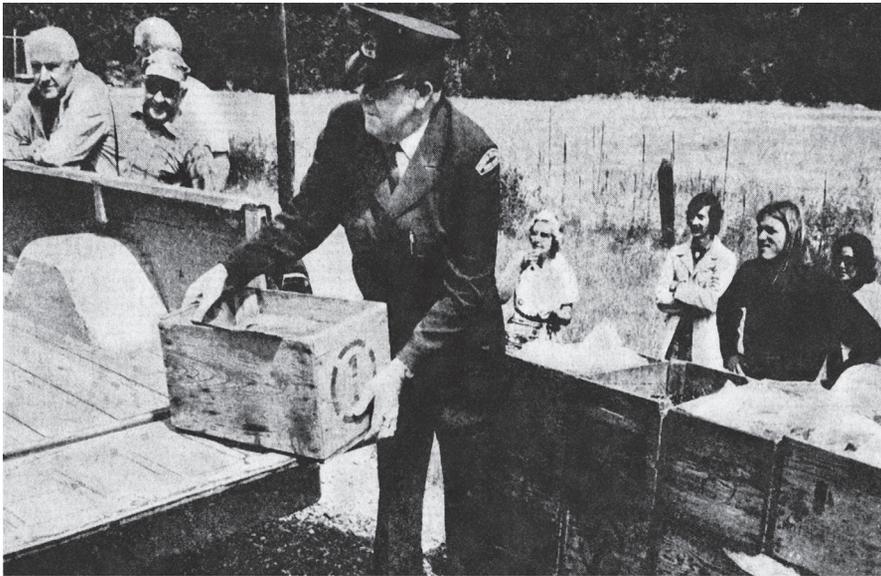


Figure 5. Inspector seizing fruit, July 7, 1973.

Source: Dave Looy photo. Courtesy of *Vancouver Sun/Vancouver Province*, a division of Postmedia Network, Inc.

- 96 The fullest accounts are "Cherries Taken to Market in Defiance of Fruit Board" and "Fruit Board Rules Fail to Halt Trek," *Penticton Herald*, July 9, 1973; and the July 1973 issue of *British Columbia Orchardist*.
- 97 "Cherry Growers Sell Fruit in Vancouver," *Osoyoos Times*, July 12, 1973, p. 1.
- 98 Michael Boudreau, "The Struggle for a Different World: The 1971 Gastown Riot," in Lara Campbell, Dominique Clement, and Gregory S. Kealy, eds., *Debating Dissent: Canada and the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), pp. 117–134. On the 1970s popularity and political symbolism of direct-from-the-grower produce, see Rebecca O'Sullivan, *American Organic: A Cultural History of Farming, Gardening, Shopping and Eating* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015).



Figure 6. Convoy beside Highway 3 at Sterling Creek between Hedley and Princeton, BC, July 7, 1973.

Source: Courtesy of *Vancouver Sun/Vancouver Province*, a division of Postmedia Network, Inc.

The July 7 convoy was the opening battle of the Cherry War or Fruit War, which ran through the scorching summer of 1973, pitting “loyalist and renegade fruit growers” against each other.⁹⁹ They skirmished on the ground and in the courts and the media, through raids, injunctions, and lawsuits, while convoys hauled fruit to Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Nanaimo, and Prince George.¹⁰⁰ Claiming to represent a “silent majority” of growers, the UFG led the publicity offensive against the single-desk system.¹⁰¹ Fruit Board and other industry officials countered with detailed economic and historical explanations in support of the system. The Cherry War was more divisive than run-of-the-mill fruitlegging, with harassment, intimidation, threats of violence, and even talk of gunplay.¹⁰² After several inspectors quit their jobs amid this fraught atmosphere, the UFG—always looking to portray the Fruit Board as imperious and unjust—likened them to American soldiers gone AWOL from Vietnam.¹⁰³ Notably, the dissident growers’ authority-defying convoys preceded the October 1973 Oil Crisis and subsequent emergence of the rebel trucker figure in North American popular culture, yet their drive for a liberalized fruit market was portrayed sympathetically by several news outlets outside of BC’s southern Interior, including both Vancouver dailies, which described convoy participants as “protestors” and presented them as the underdog in a David vs. Goliath battle.¹⁰⁴ Charles Bernhardt, then president of the BCFG, blamed this romanticized news coverage for a proliferation of fruitlegging that summer by non-growers who saw it as a thrilling, low-risk way for anyone with a pickup, RV, or boogie van to make easy cash. The province’s first NDP government, which had been in power for less than a year, was reluctant to have police assist in more searches and seizures, let alone to amend the Natural Products Marketing (B.C.) Act so that the Fruit Board had the power to do so itself.¹⁰⁵ When the October Oil Crisis caused inflation and food prices to skyrocket, the government calculated that “the political climate and public opinion were against marketing boards [and] social attitudes were against using police to enforce marketing board policy.”¹⁰⁶ Its inclination to maintain the status

99 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 127; Rhenisch, *Wolves at Evelyn*, pp. 202–203.

100 “Dissidents Sell Again in Gastown,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, August 20, 1973, p. 3; “Fruit War Resumes,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, September 24, 1973, p. 3; Rhenisch, *Wolves at Evelyn*, p. 203.

101 “Rebel Growers Face Charges from Board,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, July 9, 1973, p. 3; “Rebel Orchardists Defy Fruit Board,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, July 23, 1973, p. 3.

102 Bernhardt, interview; “Threats Made on Lives of Rebel Fruit Growers,” *Penticton Herald*, June 18, 1973, p. 12; “Dissident Growers Plotting Extraordinary Action,” *Kelowna Daily Courier*, July 27, 1973, p. 3; “Just Between Us,” *Osoyoos Times*, August 2, 1972, p. 16; Rhenisch, *Wolves at Evelyn*, p. 203; GM, interview.

103 “Fruit Board Increases Staff to Deal with Rule Breakers,” *Penticton Herald*, August 13, 1973, p. 3.

104 Arthur Garrish, BCFG president from 1951 to 1965, recalled rebel grower groups receiving “excellent TV coverage” in 1973. Arthur Garrish, “Orderly Marketing System,” p. 62. On the ubiquity and variety of protest movements in 1970s Vancouver, see Kate Bird, *Vancouver in the Seventies* (Vancouver: Greystone, 2016). On the right-wing, individualistic “rebel trucker” pop culture phenomenon and its deregulatory impulse, see Hamilton, *Trucking Country*; and Packer, *Mobility without Mayhem*, chapter 4.

105 Bernhardt, interview; Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” p. 97; Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 133.

106 Dendy and Kyle, *Fruitful Century*, p. 132. Chris Garrish, “Okanagan Fruit Growers,” chapter 5, identifies a host of factors contributing to this decision, including the government’s plan to introduce several new agricultural support programs and then skyrocketing inflation in winter 1973/1974. He overlooks one socio-legal and one political factor. First, many Canadians were concerned about police invasions of privacy in the mid-1970s, making the idea of a marketing board stopping and searching private vehicles on

quo was reinforced when it became evident that orchardists' support for orderly marketing was faltering. A government-sponsored plebiscite held in December 1973 found that 62% of BCFGAs favoured retaining compulsory single-desk selling, significantly less than the 75% support that had been required to implement it back in the 1930s.¹⁰⁷ Without a strong mandate, single-desk supporters had little prospect of convincing the province to reinforce the most illiberal, intrusive, and unpopular mechanisms of the industry's control program in time for summer 1974.

Conclusion: End of the (Patrolled) Road

Many in BC's orchard industry celebrated the news in April 1974 that a handful of convoy-organizing, injunction-defying dissident growers would soon be behind bars, having dramatically opted to serve a couple days in jail rather than pay fines incurred in the Cherry War.¹⁰⁸ For single-desk supporters, it must have seemed like a case of just desserts. However, less than two months later the BCFGAs executive abruptly called a special convention, where on its recommendation delegates voted to have the Fruit Board relinquish regulatory power over intra- and interprovincial selling.¹⁰⁹ Industry leaders had concluded it would be futile to continue battling dissidents and fruitleggers without government backing for its control program and enforcement methods. As of July 1, 1974, it was no longer compulsory for commercial orchard fruit to be marketed through BC Tree Fruits, except for international export. British Columbia's black market in orchard fruit ceased to exist. In key ways, so did the orderly market.

Fruitleggers, now referred to as peddlers, kept on trucking. Some scaled up their own operations. Others hired professional drivers to haul for them. Whether the abandonment of control enticed many growers to experiment with transporting their own produce to market is unclear. It removed the main disincentive to trying, but the industry offered incentives to stick with BC Tree Fruits. Hauling fruit out of the southern Interior did become more popular among non-growers, though: peddlers became a common sight around western Canada during the summer months. Their vans and light cargo trucks could be found at viewpoints and picnic sites along major highways, and suburban parking lots and service stations, with hand-painted signs advertising Okanagan fruit for sale. They were particularly numerous in cities like Vancouver, Calgary, and Prince George—markets in close proximity to the

public highways unthinkable for a government that championed human rights and legal reform. Second, in early 1974, Premier Dave Barrett was embroiled in a scandal about egg and chicken marketing boards, and therefore unlikely to give special new privileges to any similar authority. Dominique Clement, *Canada's Rights Revolution: Social Movements and Social Change, 1937–1982* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), chapter 5; Geoff Meggs and Rod Mickleburgh, *The Art of the Impossible: Dave Barrett and the NDP in Power, 1972–1975* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 2012), chapter 5; and Sarah A. Seo, *Policing the Open Road: How Cars Transformed American Freedom* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), chapter 5.

107 The plebiscite result also dashed the UFG's claims of popular support: it had predicted the plebiscite would show its position to be backed by 60% of growers. Chris Garrish, "Okanagan Fruit Growers," p. 95n61.

108 "30 Rebel Fruit Growers Pick Jail Rather Than Fines," *Vancouver Sun*, March 19, 1974, p. 8; "Growers Finally Have Their Day in Jail," *Kelowna Daily Courier*, April 4, 1974, p. 1.

109 "Better Control on Fruit Sought," *Vancouver Sun*, June 5, 1974, p. 100; "Agricultural Alberta" column, *Calgary Herald*, June 6, 1974, p. 70; "B.C. Firm to Sell Own Fruit Here," *Calgary Herald*, June 21, 1974, p. 74; "Fruitmen Approve 2-Way Option Plan," *Province*, June 24, 1974, p. 38.

growing area that represented low-hanging fruit for BC's orchard industry and had traditionally been especially remunerative. Peddling and direct delivery of bulk produce to retailers gradually depressed prices and undermined relationships that BC Tree Fruits had cultivated with wholesalers. By 1978, even fruit stand operators complained about how peddlers undercut them.¹¹⁰ However, there was no way to control or curtail this activity; elements of unrestrained competition had returned to BC's orchard industry. As former BCFGA president Richard Bullock put it, there was money to be made from peddling, but "usually only if you were willing to do things like sleep in the van or whatever.... Some people are willing to work for a hell of a lot less than other people are."¹¹¹

Examining "uncooperative" producers puts twentieth-century agricultural and food markets in a very different light than focusing on the establishment of marketing boards or their subsequent development. In the case of BC orcharding, doing so reveals an industry and agrarian communities fraught with inequity and division, even though all growers were nominally united by the single-desk system. From early on, the black market had been a shadow of the orderly market for orchard fruit. Blame was initially pinned on industry outsiders: truckers, the harbingers of a new, flexible, difficult-to-regulate mode of transport. Then during the prolonged 1950s downturn, truckers were joined by cash-starved growers. How many turned to the black market during the 1950s is unknown, for they can only be glimpsed indirectly, through rumours circulated at BCFGA conventions and the Fruit Board's ground-level efforts to exercise control. But the fact that more than 300 growers set up roadside fruit stands during that decade is evidence of a widespread impulse to bypass the orderly market.

That fruitlegging not only persisted but increased as returns improved during the 1960s illustrates how the single-desk system was orderly but inequitable. It helped most growers, but not to the same extent. Smallholders had different concerns than big operations. Growers of soft fruits had different worries than those specializing in apples. And growers on the margins of the official growing area faced different circumstances than those in the central Okanagan. These differences did not evaporate as soon as there were good returns for fruit delivered to the packinghouse. Indeed, during the 1960s, fruitlegging appears to have become entrenched as a business strategy among marginal growers (such as GM's family) for whom the vagaries and limitations of the compulsory single desk made cash earned on the black market vital for keeping their orchard operation afloat. They had little to fear, aside from possible seizure of illicitly transported produce. The courts imposed minimum fines, and community opprobrium was muted in districts where fruitlegging was rife. Responses to black-market activity from the larger community of growers also reveal divisions: some called for crackdowns, others for liberalized marketing policies, and many watched from the sidelines. But perhaps the greatest influence over the Fruit Board's control program came from outside

¹¹⁰ British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, *The Sale of Fruit and Vegetables Directly from Farms or Roadside Stands in British Columbia: An Overview*, Phase 3 Research Report (Victoria: The Committee, 1978), pp. 21, 27–28, 52.

¹¹¹ Bullock and Taylor, interview.

the orchard industry. By the early 1960s, its check stations were out of step with social attitudes about privacy, convenience, and the freedom of the road. After this enforcement method was denounced in several big-city newspapers, industry leaders countered with public relations campaigns and increased purchase limits, then gradually dialled back check stations in favour of roving inspectors. They did so even as the Fruit Board was securing more convictions for violating marketing regulations. Ironically, the spread of fruitlegging during the late 1960s and early 1970s, which materially undermined the orderly market, was both overshadowed and encouraged by the 1973 Cherry War, when free marketeers used fruitlegger tactics *en masse* to challenge the single desk.

Car chases, fistfights, souped-up El Caminos, and rebel convoys are absent from most rural social histories and histories of agricultural markets in Canada, which might make the BC orchard industry's orderly marketing system and the black market which shadowed it for three decades appear an anomalous outlier. Yet other Canadian agricultural sectors had rule breakers of their own during the late twentieth century.¹¹² The history of fruitlegging and the control program charged with stopping it demonstrate the value of decentring marketing boards as the focus of inquiry and paying closer attention to the motives and ground-level activities of those producers who would not—or perhaps could not—fully cooperate with their illiberal mechanisms, whether out of political sentiments, engrained individualism, desperate socio-economic circumstances, or simple expedience. Doing so provides a fuller picture of agricultural industries and agrarian communities, with tensions, divisions, and differences previously only hazily surmised or discerned in outline brought (at least partly) to light.

112 See note 3 above, as well as Laura Larsen, "Economics and Emotion: The Ideological Debate Over Prairie Grain Marketing, 1973–1996" in this special issue of *Histoire sociale/Social History*, vol. 54, no 111 (Septembre/September 2021), pp. 407–432.