

Help and Resources

BC Ministry of Environment, Conservation Officer Service, Wildlife–Human Interactions, Bears. www.env.gov.bc.ca/cos/info/wildlife_human_interaction/docs/bears.html

Bear Smart Society

www.bearsmart.com/bearSmartCommunities/ click “Protecting Livestock & Crops”.

Call 1-877-952-7277 (RAPP) or #7277 on the TELUS Mobility Network to report wildlife that threatens public safety.

R & S Powerfence

645 Main Street, Penticton
250-492-7090 www.powerfence.ca

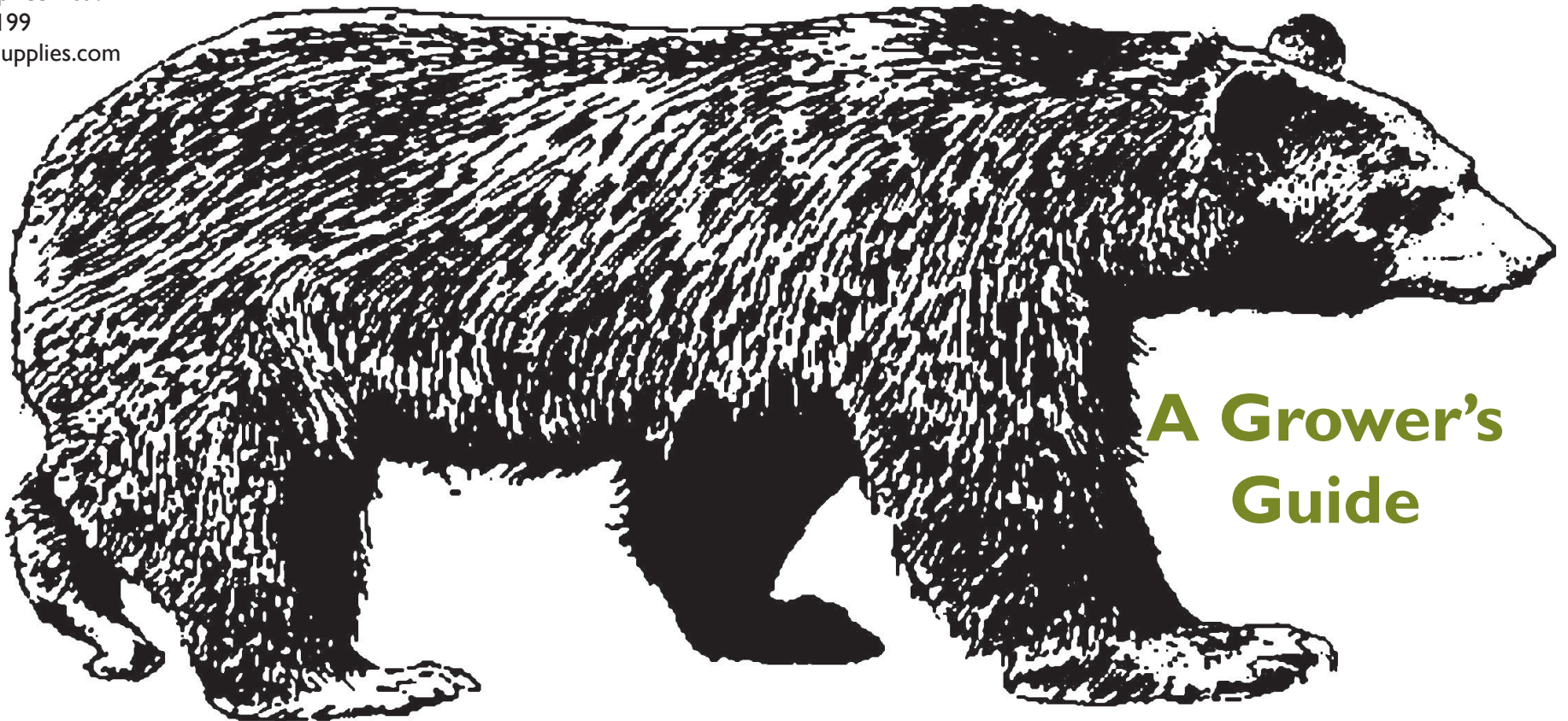
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1-888-652-1199
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BEARS On Your Property



A Grower's Guide

Bears on your Property

Most growers tolerate bears passing through their property or the occasional night visit to an orchard or vineyard. Concerns arise when bears return repeatedly and become bolder in their search for food. During bear season, Conservation Officers (COs) respond to thousands of calls about bears. Most of these problems begin when bears have easy access to non-natural food sources. Unfortunately, because there are few alternative control methods, Conservation Officers are usually forced to kill “problem” bears.

“Problem” bears cost B.C. taxpayers big money.

More than \$1 million is spent every year responding to bear complaints and relocating or destroying bears. Property damage and losses to agriculture are estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

Getting rid of bear attractants is the best way to discourage bears from becoming conditioned to agricultural food sources and becoming a problem.

Do your best to discourage bears

- Identify and reduce attractants such as garbage, animal feed, or compost heaps.
- Talk with neighboring property owners to make sure everyone is reducing bear attractants
- Keep pet or livestock feed indoors or in air-tight secure containers.
- Keep household and workplace garbage indoors until garbage pick-up.
- Locate compost heaps away from natural areas and pathways used by bears. Dig in compost and spoiled fruit and use lime to cover smells.
- Regularly remove or bury windfall and spoiled fruit
- Store picked fruit in secure areas

Safety tips if bears become regular visitors

- Watch for bear signs and alert workers and owners of a bear's presence. Encourage workers to repel bears with noise-makers and report ongoing problems to managers.
- At the start of a work day, patrol the perimeter of your property to check for bears. Use a vehicle or make noise during patrols.
- Make noise or use radios while working and do not work in area where bears are present.
- If you must work where bears are, stay near an unlocked vehicle and carry a cell phone.
- Carry bear spray and know how to use it. Keep an air horn in your vehicle or ATV

Scare Tactics

Noise, repellents and scare devices work better if used before a bear becomes a regular visitor. Making noise, barking dogs, vehicle horns, and loud radios can be very effective in scaring bears away. Air horns, “bear bangers” and propane cannons are more effective but must be used with caution. A variety of electronic scare devices are available at agricultural supply stores or online at www.margosupplies.com.

Management Options

Fencing

Conservation Officers recommend electric fencing to exclude bears from agricultural properties where they frequently occur and/or cause chronic damage. New fence designs have revolutionized electrical fencing including portable electric fences. Cost depends on the size, length and choice of materials and can be cheaper than non-electrified deer fences. Net-wire “deer fencing” at least 1.7 m or 5 ½ feet high will deter most animals. Electric fencing can often be installed along an existing fence. For more information contact R & S Powerfence, Penticton. 250-492-7090, or go to www.powerfence.ca.

Response to conflict

If a bear is persistent and continues to return and affect worker safety, or if a bear acts aggressively, call the **Conservation Officer Service RAPP line 1-877-952-RAPP (7277) or Telus mobility cell # 7277.**

Farmers can use existing hunting seasons to control predators but must comply with all federal, provincial and municipal regulations regarding hunting and discharge of firearms in their area. The Wildlife Act does not authorize owners of agricultural properties to destroy wildlife that is damaging or eating crops.

If there is a lawful hunting season at the time crop damage is taking place; there is the option of contacting local hunters to harvest problem bears.

