



## **Fortify conference goes virtual**

*Third annual conference for those in the business of fermenting and distilling goes online with sessions and trade show*

*Penticton, BC: For immediate release, Thursday June 18: Fermenter, brewer, or distiller, the third annual Fortify Conference is aimed at those in the business of creating products, by-products, and business products related to brewing, fermenting, and distilling, is going virtual for 2020.*

“The beverage sector continues to navigate through the challenges of re-opening and getting back to business, and with many questions and uncertainty, this is the time to move forward with planning and preparing,” says Sandra Oldfield of Elysian Project, co-founder of the conference.

“We are working on three pillars of content focussed on collaboration, innovation, and resiliency,” she continues. Conference sessions will be announced at a later date, but will cover topics such as financial planning, HR strategies, and marketing.

While Fortify is scheduled for November 24, an extra day may be added along with pre-conference webinars on specific topics this summer, such as sessions on best practices for COVID-19 regulations and health and safety.

“Our members have had to make many changes, as all businesses have, but have embraced virtual learning and hosting their own online events,” says Hugh McClelland of the Naramata Bench Wineries Association, “and it will be great to see that continue through Fortify.”

Plans are also underway for a virtual trade show. Last year’s in-person trade show was sold out, but going online this year means it can expand. Attendees will be able to visit the “floor” virtually, pick up information, and even meet one-on-one with vendors.

A digital conference allows for a wider roster of speakers and presentations from experts from across North America and around the world, and is an opportunity for attendees from across Canada to join their colleagues online.

“We don’t know what November will bring relative to COVID protocols, but we do know that business must go on, and in that vein, so will Fortify. We are pleased to see this move ahead with the third year of this high-caliber event that the industry has come to appreciate and support,” says Al Hudec of Farris LLP.

Fortify was established to fill a need across industries for education, training and networking opportunities to help B.C.’s breweries, wineries, distilleries, and cideries affordably access business supports and tools, and is coordinated by the Business Alliance for Artisan Fermenters and Distillers and builds on the popular Wine Industry Roundtable previously hosted by MNP LLP and Farm Credit Canada, who are the event’s foundational sponsors along the B.C. provincial government’s Buy BC program.

A sign-up form is available at <https://fortifyconference.ca/>. Information and registration will be shared as plans are solidified. Potential vendors are encouraged to get in touch soon by emailing Carolyn MacLaren at [dcmacclaren@shaw.ca](mailto:dcmacclaren@shaw.ca) for more details.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION: Conference Coordinators

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