

ALC Board & Panels

Highlights:

- The Minister has made 15 appointments to the ALC since July 2017.
- In Nov. 2018, MLA Paton (Delta South) accused Minister Popham of “reducing these [regional ALC] panels to the point of disregarding them,” saying “application are going to stack up.” (Country Life in B.C.)

Main Message:

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Highlights:

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- Jennifer Dyson was appointed as the Chair of the ALC on May 14, 2018, following the conclusion of former chair, Frank Leonard's term.
- Ms. Dyson served as an ALC Commissioner from 2008 to 2017 and Vice-Chair of the Island Panel. Ms. Dyson has been appointed for a five-year term.

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- The ALR was a ground-breaking idea when it was first adopted by the Barrett government in the 1970's.
- I'm proud to continue that tradition by supporting its revitalization to protect farmland and farming for future generations.
- Our government is going to continue to stand up for farmers farmland so people in B.C. can count on fresh, local food for years to come.

Support for Sustainable Aquaculture

Highlights:

- On March 4, the Opposition raised aquaculture in QP as a supposed example of an industry they claim government is attempting to shut down.
- They claim that the tenuring model used with aquaculture will be extended to other industries.
- On Dec. 14, 2018, government, First Nations and industry announced jointly supported recommendations stemming from the Broughton process.
- On June 20, the Minister announced a new approach to salmon farm tenures. That approach is unique to this sector.

Contrast:

- For far too long, the old government ignored concerns about the impacts of open net salmon farming on our environment and on wild salmon.
- They pushed the issue aside, and let a situation develop that didn't work for anyone – wild salmon, our environment, First Nations or industry.

- In December, we announced **recommendations in the Broughton Archipelago that have the support of government, First Nations and industry.**
- The success of the Broughton talks demonstrates that **when we work together, we can come up solutions that works for everyone** – Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, industry and workers.
- In June, we put in place a new approach to salmon farm tenures that outlines our expectations and provides clarity for operators moving forward.
- That policy is specific to this sector. In fact, the requirement for agreements with First Nations was recommended by the old gov't's MAACFA council.
- We developed a new B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund with the federal government.
- It will benefit aquaculture producers by innovation, clean technology adoption and green infrastructure.

“Free Prior & Informed Consent [are] outcomes of a process & characterizing this as #Veto is inflammatory”

– Chief Bob Chamberlin, Twitter (June 19, 2018)

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Highlights:

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- On Jan. 4, the Canadian Federal Court ruled against DFO, requiring they change their policy to require testing for piscine orthoreovirus (PRV) before issuing licences for the transfer or release of fish into open net pen fish farms.

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Solution:

- People in B.C. want to see our wild salmon thriving now, and for future generations.
- We're committed to protecting B.C.'s wild salmon and the 10,000 jobs that depend on them.
- We've secured historic new funding from the federal government to support wild salmon – over \$450M.
 - New B.C. Salmon Restoration & Innovation Fund
- We've launched the Premier's Wild Salmon Advisory Council – including MLA for Saanich North & Islands.
- They're working to develop a made-in-B.C. wild salmon strategy. Their final report is coming soon.
- We've taken action with historic gov't-to-gov't recommendations in the Broughton Archipelago and rigorous new requirements for salmon farm tenures.
- I'm encouraged to see the federal government's recent re-engagement on the West Coast.
- We're going to keep working with the federal gov't to ensure they fully live up to their responsibilities on fish health & protecting wild salmon.
- Wild salmon are crucial to coastal communities, First Nations and our southern resident orcas.
- We're working as partners to advance reconciliation & protect B.C.'s wild salmon for future generations.

On closed containment:

- Companies around the world are doing innovative work on closed containment systems.
- My staff and I have met with companies, including companies from Norway, innovating in building ocean-based closed containment solutions.
- I'm pleased the federal government is embarking on a feasibility study around closed containment.
- We're open to working with our partners – including the federal government – to see what role government can play in supporting those kind of innovations.

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On Broughton implementation:

- Our gov't-to-gov't talks with First Nations in the Broughton produced historic recommendations to address Nations' longstanding concerns.
- This shows that when we work gov't-t-gov't with First Nations, we can deliver results that work for industry, and make life better for everyone in B.C.
- The recommendations will:
 - help protect and restore wild salmon stocks,
 - allow an orderly transition of open-pen finfish aquaculture from the Broughton,
 - create a more sustainable future for local communities.
- The First Nations, B.C., DFO and industry are working collaboratively to develop a First Nation's guardian and monitoring plan in the Broughton, including:
 - Testing & compliance monitoring
 - Open & transparent public reporting
 - Action to avoid & mitigate any impacts on wild fish
 - Monitoring & testing of sea lice management programs

Validator Quotes:

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- In Feb. 2019, the B.C. government announced the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice will become B.C. law on June 1, 2019. The codes are generally accepted management practices for owners of farm animals in B.C. and include areas such as animal handling, feed and water, housing, health and welfare management, and husbandry practices. The new codes cover beef, bison, hatching eggs, poultry breeders, chickens and turkeys, equines, farmed fox, farmed mink, pigs, pullets and laying hens, rabbits, sheep and veal cattle. The Dairy Code of Practice has been a part of B.C. law since July 9, 2015.

Livestock Codes of Practice

Highlights:

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Message:

- We all want to see livestock and farm animals treated with the utmost care and respect.
- **Our livestock operators are among the best in Canada.**
- Adopting these national Codes of Practice supports their good work, making it clear to people in B.C. that the animals in their care are being treated well.
- **The old government implemented the Dairy Codes of Practice with the SPCA and industry in 2015.**
- **A number of provinces, such as Alberta, also use the SPCA as their enforcement agency in rural areas.**

- We're now working to implement the Codes for farmers with meat livestock, poultry and fur animals.
- The Codes outline generally accepted management practices for livestock and farm operators and their employees.
 - Things like: animal handling, feed and water, housing, health and welfare management, and other husbandry practices.
- **We have been working closely with our livestock and poultry associations, and with the SPCA on building the Codes of Practice into regulation.**
- We're also funding specific livestock training to ensure enforcement will best address animal welfare in poultry, beef and pork operations.
- **We're going to keep working together to make sure that this works for everyone – keeping animals safe and supporting our producers' incredible work.**

- Currently, there are 12 codes including: Beef (2013); Bison (2017); Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens, and Turkeys (2016); Dairy Cattle (2009); Equines (2013); Farmed Fox (2013); Farmed Mink (2013); Pigs (2014); Pullets and Laying Hens (2017); Rabbits (2018); Sheep (2013); and Veal Cattle (2017).
- The B.C. government adopted the National Dairy Code of Practice in 2015, and is working to implement the remaining 11.

Cannabis Recusal (MLP)

Highlights:

- Cannabis legalization occurred on October 17, 2018.

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Message:

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- I have recused myself from all Cabinet discussions on the legalization of cannabis, and have had no part to play in the decision making.

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- I'm grateful to Minister Donaldson for his work on this file.

Cannabis – ALR & Odour

Highlights:

- Some municipalities continue to call for a provincial moratorium on cannabis production in the ALR. UBCM has endorsed a resolution to that effect, and the Minister's Advisory Council on ALR Revitalization recommended the same.
- On Nov. 8, MLA Coleman wrote to Minister's Eby and Farnworth, along with the federal government, regarding odour complaints at Canopy Growth in Langley.
- Minister Farnworth replied on Dec. 6, encouraging MLA Coleman to follow up with federal government as the authority for enforcing federal regulations.
- On July 13 2018, B.C. gave authority to local and First Nation governments to prohibit concrete-based cannabis production facilities on ALR land.
- In his speech to UBCM, the Leader of the Opposition stated: "When Mayor Lois Jackson and her council in Delta say they don't want cannabis grown in greenhouses of Delta – then cannabis should not be grown in greenhouses in Delta." (Sept. 14, 2018).

Contrast:

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Solution:

- Our government is committed to protecting farmland and farming for future generations.
- As we approached cannabis legalization, we heard from municipalities in B.C. that they were concerned about protecting agricultural land.
- We listened.
- In July 2018, we took action to give municipalities more decision-making power on cannabis production methods in their communities.
- Local governments are now able to prohibit concrete-based cannabis facilities on ALR land.
- We want ensure we're preserving the productive capacity of agricultural land and soil in B.C.
- Local governments are free to regulate or prohibit cannabis production on land outside of the ALR as they see fit.
- We will continue to engage with the agricultural community, local governments, First Nations and other organizations beyond legalization to ensure interests and concerns are addressed.

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Validators:

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Background:

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- The Minister's Advisory Council for Revitalizing the ALR and ALR recommended that the Province:
 - "Establish an immediate moratorium on all non-soil bound cannabis production and facilities in the ALR pending provincial-level analysis of impacts" and "Following a provincial level analysis, enable the ALC to establish rules/criteria for cannabis production throughout the ALR; permit cannabis production in the ALR only through application to the ALC" (p. 19)
- UBCM endorsed similar resolutions, include a resolution calling on the province to explore leasing Crown lands to accommodate cannabis production.
- On July 13, 2018, a regulatory change gave authority to local and First Nation governments to prohibit certain methods of cannabis production on ALR land in their communities.
- However, it clarifies that cannabis production in the ALR cannot be prohibited if grown lawfully:
 - in an open field or in a structure that has a soil base;
 - in a structure that was either fully constructed or under construction, with required permits in place, prior to July 13, 2018; or in an existing licensed operation.
- The regulation allows local governments and First Nations to prohibit the altering of existing structures to increase the size or material used as the base of the structure, and applies, or will apply, to licensed medical and non-medical cannabis facilities in the ALR.
- The regulatory change pertains only to land in the ALR. Local and First Nations governments can regulate or prohibit cannabis production on lands outside of the ALR.
- Under the federal Cannabis Act, the federal government allows cannabis producers to grow cannabis in open fields, greenhouses and industrial bunkers.

Support for Supply Management

Highlights:

- The new USMCA (formerly NAFTA), included more access to the Canadian market for U.S. dairy producers.
- While the supply management system is maintained, U.S. dairy producers have acquired access worth about 3.6% of Canada's current dairy market (according to preliminary estimates from the Dairy Farmers of Canada).
- The federal government has committed to compensation for Canadian dairy producers for the cumulative impacts of a number of recent trade agreements. The exact dollar figure and details have not been announced.

Main Message:

- Our dairy producers are critical to our food supply in B.C. and to the prosperity of communities across the province.
- The USMCA deal was challenging news for dairy producers in B.C.
- I immediately had a number of calls with B.C. Dairy Association and their Chair, Dave Taylor.
- I also connected with my Federal counterpart, Minister MacAulay, to ensure he was aware of the frustration that B.C. dairy producers are feeling.
- I was pleased that the federal government has confirmed they will be providing compensation.
- We continue to be in touch with the federal government about ensuring support for producers.

- The B.C. government remains a steadfast advocate for the more than 7,800 people working in B.C.'s dairy industry.
- Over the course of the challenging USMCA negotiations, the Premier and I made our support for our dairy producers clear.
- With 479 licensed milk producers and 52 provincially licensed dairy plants, our industry accounts for almost 9% of the Canadian market.
- People in B.C. count on the trusted, consistent supply of safe and high-quality products that come from our dairy producers.
- Our government supports our dairy producers, we value the work they do, and will continue to stand up for them.

Animal Health Centre

Highlights:

- On September 15, the Ministry of Agriculture issued an Information Bulletin announcing that the B.C. AHC's accreditation with the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) has been renewed.
- The B.C. Animal Health Centre is one of three Canadian labs accredited by the AAVLD as a veterinary diagnostic laboratory.
- On October 25, 2017, a Review of Animal Health Centre launched, conducted by Don Wright, Deputy Minister to the Premier and head of the Public Service.
- This followed comments by Dr. Kristi Miller-Saunders, a scientist with the DFO.
- On March 15, 2018 the Deloitte review of the AHC was released and found that there were no conflicts of interest, but did make 9 recommendations to further enhance the organization's approach to performing diagnostic services for farmed salmon and address the potential for real or perceived conflicts of interest in the future.

Solution:

- Last spring, the Deputy Minister to the Premier concluded a review of the Animal Health Centre after some of their services were called into question.
- Deputy Minister Wright found that nothing in the review, conducted by Deloitte, shows any evidence of "dubious data or conflict of interest."
- However, the Deloitte Report did identify a number of areas in which improvements could be made.
- The Director of the AHC and my Deputy Minister have accepted these recommendations.
- The Ministry is working to implement all of them.

- The Animal Health Centre makes science-based decisions. It is important that the public trusts the information that is used to inform policy decisions.
- I am pleased that the review found that the Centre is working well on behalf of British Columbians, without any conflicts of interest.
- As a former farmer, I know how important the AHC is to our province's agriculture sector.

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Validators:

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Background:

- On Saturday, October 14, 2017 CTV's W5 aired a story regarding B.C.'s fish farms that called into question the scientific results coming from B.C.'s Animal Health Lab.
- Federal researcher Dr. Kristina Miller alleged during the W5 story that research coming out of the Animal Health Lab that ministry staff have "...a relationship with the industry, and (they are) also ...doing the pathology associated with the regulatory programs. Even if it isn't a conflict of interest, it certainly has the appearance of one."
- On October 25, 2017 a Review of Animal Health Centre launched, conducted by Don Wright.
- On March 15th, 2018 the Deloitte review of the AHC was released and found that there were no conflicts of interest.
- However, the report does make 9 recommendations to further enhance the organization's approach to performing diagnostic services for farmed salmon and addressing the potential for real or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Deputy Minister to the Premier Don Wright issued a release stating that he was satisfied with the report and that "the Animal Health Centre operates with strong professional, scientific and ethical integrity."

Buy BC

Highlights:

- On June 23, 2018 Minister Popham re-launched the Buy BC marketing program.
- The program was first introduced in 1993, but had been cut in 2001.

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Solution:

- We've relaunched BuyBC to support our producers and connect more people with fabulous B.C. food, beverage and seafood products.
- Bringing back the brand power of this marketing program will make it easier for more British Columbians to support B.C. growers and producers.
- We know that investing in agriculture builds good jobs and connects people throughout B.C.
- More and more, British Columbians want to explore and taste what is grown and produced in B.C.
- When a consumer picks up a product with the Buy BC logo at their local grocery store or farmers market, the message will be clear.
- The product they are purchasing was produced or processed by the passionate people in B.C.'s agriculture sector and contributed to good jobs in local communities.
- We're connecting producers with people shopping at their grocery store or market
 - so that British Columbians can access fresh local food
 - and to support thriving farming communities throughout B.C.

Background:

- The Buy BC Partnership Program will provide \$2 million in funding per year over the next three years, to help eligible applicants with their marketing efforts using the Buy BC logo on their products or promotional materials.
- The cost-shared funding will be available not only to agriculture and seafood producers, processors and co-operatives, but also to relevant industry associations, as well as agricultural fairs and markets within B.C.
- As well, logo-licencing agreements will be available for B.C. agriculture and seafood companies that do not require cost-shared funding, but still wish to use the Buy BC logo on products to help consumers easily identify their product as a local product.
- It will be administered and delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia, with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Confidential Issues Note - ADVICE TO MINISTER

Ministry of Agriculture Date: March 5, 2018 Minister Responsible: Hon. Lana Popham	Gallagher Lake Irrigation Siphon
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RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The Province announced \$5 Million to reroute the Town of Oliver's agricultural irrigation canal in the spring of 2017.
- The total cost for the project was estimated at that time to be \$10 Million.
- The Province's commitment of \$5 Million was conditional on:
 - the town raising the remaining funds,
 - consulting with stakeholders and First Nations
 - completing the necessary due diligence for the project, as well as
 - completing both an environmental impact and an archaeological review before the project begins.

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Background

- In January 2016, a rock slide damaged a section of pipe near Gallagher Lake that ensured the town of Oliver, the Osoyoos Indian Band and about 400 farmers in the Regional District of the Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) had reliable access to irrigation water.
- In March of 2016, the Government of B.C. announced \$525,000 in financial support to repair that section of pipeline.
- The need to reroute the irrigation canal was established while the temporary repairs were being completed in 2016 when it was identified that the rock face above was significantly unstable.
- In March of 2017, the Government of B.C. committed \$5 million in funding to reroute Oliver's agricultural irrigation canal to bypass Gallagher Lake, and run adjacent to Highway 97.
- The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has confirmed that federal-provincial infrastructure funding programs cannot support a standalone irrigation system as it does not meet the identified outcomes. The programs have been, and continue to be, focused on drinking water and wastewater.

Quote from March 22, 2017 News Release announcing the \$5M commitment:

Linda Larson, MLA for Boundary-Similkameen –

"Oliver's famous and first-class fruit and wine industry depends on irrigation to grow their products, and this proposal offers a long-term plan to keep the local fruit, wine and tourism economy growing. The proposed project offers more than a year-round reliable water source for growers, it offers the stability to build their businesses and continue the traditions of our agricultural community."

Confidential Issues Note - ADVICE TO MINISTER

Ministry of Agriculture Date: April 30 2019 Minister Responsible: Popham	Helicopters used to dry fruit
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Background:

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- BCFIRB, as an administrative tribunal, is responsible for hearing complaints from persons aggrieved by odour, noise, dust or other disturbances arising from agriculture and certain aquaculture operations.
- Details on the FIRB complaint process are @
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bc-farm-industry-review-board>

BACKGROUND:

- The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food (Committee) was established on April 24, 2018 and tasked with examining, inquiring into, and making recommendations concerning local meat production in B.C.
- From May 16 to June 15, the Committee hosted a broad public consultation and invited input from farmers, producers, processors, consumers, restaurateurs and all other individuals and organizations interested in local, small-scale meat production.
- The Committee received 74 survey responses, 50 in person presentations, 36 written submissions and 4 in-person briefings.
- On September 28, 2018 the Committee released "Local Meat Production and Inspection in British Columbia" (Report).
- The Report has three topics of focus:
 1. abattoir licensing and oversight;
 2. skilled labour and workforce; and
 3. industry growth and development.
- The Report has 21 recommendations for government:
 - 8 recommendations about abattoir licensing and oversight.
 - 3 recommendations about skilled labour and workforce.
 - 10 recommendations about industry growth and development.
- A formal response to the recommendations is anticipated soon. Since September, Ministry staff has been working to address many of the recommendations. Recommendations requiring regulatory changes, such as those related to alternative boundary restrictions for Class D sales will require more in-depth study.
- The Ministry is reviewing approaches to deliver improvements that balance the shared interests of government and the public in: maintaining competitiveness among enterprises of different scale; food safety, and animal welfare.

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Commercial Dog and Cat Breeders – Registering and Licensing

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- **Animal welfare is a priority in B.C. and the B.C. Government expects all British Columbians to treat their animals with care and respect.**
- **In March 2017, amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act enabled the creation of a B.C. licensing and registration system for commercial breeders of dogs and cats.**
- **This is intended to target and address irresponsible commercial breeders of dogs and cats, following two high-profile seizures at suspected puppy mills in B.C.'s Lower Mainland in 2017.**
- **Ministry engaged with key stakeholders including breeders, veterinarians and the BCSPCA to consult on the overall scope of the system and then again to inform the development of the aspects of the new system.**
- **Ministry staff continue to work with key stakeholders to develop the framework, including the standards of care for when the new system is launched.**

BACKGROUND:

- On March 16, 2017, amendments to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA) received Royal Assent.
- The amendments enable the creation of a licensing and/or registration system for commercial breeders of dogs and cats and accompanying inspections against minimum standards of care.
- This is a significant milestone to target and address irresponsible commercial breeders of dogs and cats, following two high-profile seizures at suspected puppy mills in the Lower Mainland.
- The Ministry conducted initial consultations with stakeholders in 2016 to inform the scope of the overall approach.
- In order for the new authorities to come into force, a new regulation is required.

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- The Ministry conducted further consultations in 2018 with stakeholders to obtain feedback on the enforceable Standards of Care.
- The regulation will also identify the "Designated Agency" responsible to administer the new registration system.

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British Columbia News

New legislation will strengthen independence of Agricultural Land Commission

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19106>

Thursday, March 7, 2019 10:17 AM

Victoria - Legislation has been introduced to strengthen the independence of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), so it can better fulfill its mandate of preserving the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), while encouraging farming and ranching within British Columbia.

Bill 15, the agricultural land commission amendment act 2019, continues the Ministry of Agriculture's efforts to revitalize the ALR, the farmland within B.C. that's protected for the province's food security.

"The bill tabled today builds on the work we started over a year ago to better protect farmland and encourage farming and ranching in B.C.," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "We are ensuring the commission has the tools and the governance model required to strengthen its independence and ability to act in the best interest of our farmland within the Agricultural Land Reserve, so that British Columbians are able to access safe, locally grown food for generations to come."

If passed, the legislation will strengthen ALC governance and independence, and further protect land within the ALR by:

1. replacing the current ALC governance model of six panel regions and an executive committee with one commission maintaining regional representation by requiring membership from all six administrative regions;
2. providing the chair of the ALC with more flexibility to organize commission members into a decision-making panel on applications when warranted, by topic, technical expertise or by an administrative region;
3. adding new decision-making criteria to prioritize the protection and enhancement of the size, integrity and continuity of the land base that the ALC must consider when exercising any power or performing a duty under the ALCA;
4. adding more compliance and enforcement capacity and tools, including a new offence for landowners who do not produce records to the ALC when ordered;
5. requiring that exclusions be submitted to the ALC only by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to encourage these type of applications be done as part of thoughtful land-use planning process.

The legislative changes are part of the government's ongoing commitment to revitalize the ALR and the ALC. The ALR was established in 1973 to protect land with prime agricultural conditions for farming and ranching. It currently protects approximately 4.6 million hectares of agriculturally suitable land in British Columbia. The ALR is administered by the Agricultural Land Commission, an independent tribunal mandated to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming on agricultural land.

"BC Agriculture Council appreciates working with government on its efforts to revitalize the ALC/ALR," said Stan Vander Waal, president, BC Agriculture Council. "In order to ensure farmland is protected for current and future food security, while protecting the rights of farmers and ranchers, the ALC's governance structure must have a decision-making process that is flexible, adaptive and efficient. Overall, the update is a positive step forward. We strongly support local regional input, which is critical given the diversity of agriculture in B.C."

Quick Facts:

- The ALR includes 46,159 square kilometres of B.C. that are preserved for agricultural use, which is

equivalent to less than 5% of B.C.'s total land base.

- Land in the ALR falls into one of seven soil classes, ranging from Class 1 (wide range of crops can be grown without difficulty) to Class 7 (unsuitable for soil-based agriculture or sustained grazing, suitable for barns, greenhouses and processing facilities).
- Currently, 10% of the land in the ALR produces 85% of B.C.'s farm receipts, and 3% of ALR land in the South Coast region produces 65% of the province's farm receipts.

Learn More:

For a news release on legislation to protect farmland, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AGRI0018-000261>

To see a news release on new legislation about "farmland is for farming", visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AGRI0083-002125>

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British Columbia News

Codes of practice to protect B.C. farm animals

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19067>

Thursday, February 28, 2019 3:00 PM

Victoria - British Columbians will have new clarity on how the Province is strengthening animal welfare, with the adoption of the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice.

The codes are generally accepted management practices for owners of farm animals in B.C.

"B.C. livestock and poultry farmers have worked closely with our government to implement the National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes of Practice," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "By accepting these codes of practice in their animal management practices, farmers and ranchers are making it clear that animals in their care are being treated with the utmost care and respect."

The codes of practice are for owners and employees, and include areas such as animal handling, feed and water, housing, health and welfare management, and husbandry practices. The codes of practice for farmers of meat livestock, poultry and fur animals is scheduled to become B.C. law on June 1, 2019. The Dairy Code of Practice has been a part of B.C. law since July 9, 2015.

"Livestock producers take animal care and welfare very seriously, realizing that they are responsible for giving their animals the best care and treatment possible throughout their life," said Kevin Boon, general manager of the BC Cattlemen's Association. "The National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes of Practice are being implemented to make sure that the best possible practices are being utilized."

The ministry has engaged and consulted with industry associations and the BC SPCA on the adoption of the codes since 2018. That collaboration will continue. The Province will facilitate conversations between the BC SPCA and industry associations to help determine the qualifications and any further training that will need to be provided to BC SPCA special constables in the coming months, focusing on referencing the codes in regulation, the reasonable and generally acceptable livestock management practices, the importance of guidance and support they provide to livestock operators, and the role of special constables within the context of the act.

"The BC SPCA is pleased to see this step forward for the protection of farm animals in British Columbia," said Craig Daniell, chief executive officer of the BC SPCA. "It is important that industry, government, animal welfare organizations and consumers work together to ensure the highest levels of welfare for the millions of farm animals raised in our province each year."

Quick Fact:

- The new codes cover beef, bison, hatching eggs, poultry breeders, chickens and turkeys, equines, farmed fox, farmed mink, pigs, pullets and laying hens, rabbits, sheep and veal cattle.

Learn More:

For more information on the NFACC Codes of Practice: <http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice>

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British Columbia News

Legislation to protect farmland now in force

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19029>

Saturday, February 23, 2019 9:00 AM

Victoria - Regulations that strengthen B.C.'s Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) came into force under Bill 52 on Feb. 22, 2019, enhancing food security and encouraging farming in the ALR.

"I'm very happy to see this law come into full force and effect," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "This new law will encourage farming and better protect farmland by banning mega-mansions, stopping the illegal dumping of waste on farmland and reinstating the one-zone system. It's a great step in our effort to revitalize the Agricultural Land Reserve so that British Columbians can count on a safe, secure supply of locally grown food on their tables for years to come."

The Agricultural Land Commission Amendment Act, 2018 provides three key changes, including:

- Restricting the removal of soil and increased penalties for the dumping of construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR.
- Directly addressing mega-mansions and speculation in the ALR by limiting primary residence size on ALR lands and empowering the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to approve additional residences if they are for farm use.
- Reunifying the ALR as a single zone, ensuring consistent rules with strong protections for all provincial ALR land.

"At the same time, we're supporting larger farming families by ensuring that those who need extra living space to support their farming operations have a path forward at the ALC to build a larger home," said Popham. "Multigenerational farming families are the backbone of agriculture throughout B.C."

Bill 52 was introduced on Nov. 5, 2018, and received royal assent three weeks later. It required a regulation to bring the law into force. The legislative changes make it clear that British Columbia's ALR is for farming and ranching, not for building mega-mansions and dumping construction waste.

Established in 1973, the ALR is administered by the ALC, an independent tribunal mandated to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming on agricultural land. The ALR includes over 4.7 million hectares of B.C. that are preserved for agricultural use — less than 5% of B.C.'s total land base.

Quick Facts:

- Farming families who need the extra space to farm have a path forward at the ALC to build a larger home to support their farming operations.
- To ensure fairness, people who have all their permits and authorizations in place on Feb. 22, 2019, when the regulations became law, will be grandfathered under the old system provided they begin substantial construction by Nov. 5, 2019.
- Under Bill 52, dumping construction waste and other damaging substances on farmland is prohibited, with strong penalties and new tools for enforcement.
- New offences for illegal fill and soil removal have been created under the new act, with maximum penalties of \$1 million or six months imprisonment for a first offence.

Learn More:

For more information, visit the Agricultural Land Commission's website:

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/contact-us>

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British Columbia News

Studying the fate of B.C. wild salmon in offshore feeding grounds

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19011>

Saturday, February 16, 2019 1:15 PM

Vancouver - During the International Year of the Salmon, the B.C. government is supporting a comprehensive study of the stock abundance, composition and condition of Pacific salmon in the Gulf of Alaska.

Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, was at Ballantyne Pier in Vancouver to wish a bon voyage to an international team of scientists boarding a research vessel to conduct the first comprehensive study of Pacific salmon in the Gulf of Alaska.

“Wild salmon are crucial to the success of B.C.’s economy, the prosperity of coastal communities and the lives, culture and history of Indigenous peoples,” said Popham. “We are always looking at ways to protect our wild salmon and this study will provide us with crucial information as we continue to support this important resource for British Columbia.”

Over the next several weeks, the scientists will trawl for salmon, identify their origins using DNA samples and use the data to estimate the abundance of salmon in the region, their general physiological fitness and condition. The expedition will cover an expansive area of ocean that is crucial to B.C. salmon stocks. The region is a feeding ground where the majority of Pacific salmon migrate to in the winter.

“There are 21 researchers from the five Pacific salmon-producing countries who have volunteered to share the data they collect with all of their colleagues,” said Dick Beamish, expedition organizer. “The discoveries that will be made will lead to an understanding of how to be responsible stewards of Pacific salmon in a future of changing ocean ecosystems.”

The \$75,000 in provincial funding will assist with the data analysis and management, shipping of equipment and samples, and modifications to the research vessel for sampling equipment. The data produced from the study will be managed by the University of British Columbia and used to plan and support healthy and sustainable salmon populations.

The Gulf of Alaska Salmon Expedition will include international scientists from Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States. The study will provide a better understanding of salmon survival at sea, as well as forecasting salmon returns.

“The future of salmon in this time of rapid change will depend on our ability to find solutions through broad collaboration at local and hemispheric scales,” said Mark Saunders, director of the International Year of the Salmon – Pacific Region. “The Gulf of Alaska Expedition embodies this, and we are excited to have the Province of B.C. engaged in this International Year of the Salmon initiative.”

The B.C. government is continuing to develop a renewed provincial approach to protecting and enhancing wild salmon, including a Wild Salmon Advisory Council report that provides key insights and guidance on protecting wild salmon in B.C.

Learn More:

To learn about the International Year of the Salmon, visit: <https://yearofthesalmon.org/>

To read the Wild Salmon Advisory Council’s report, visit:
<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/426/2018/11/Wild-Salmon-Strategy-Options-Paper.pdf>

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British Columbia News

2019 carbon tax relief grants open for greenhouse growers

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/18965>

Saturday, February 9, 2019 10:00 AM

Victoria - Applications for carbon tax relief grants for the 2019 production year for eligible commercial greenhouse operators are now open and will be accepted until March 29, 2019.

Commercial producers of B.C. vegetables, ornamental flowers and plants, forest seedlings and nursery plants are eligible to apply for the grant, providing they:

- had sales exceeding \$20,000 in 2018;
- used natural gas or propane to heat their greenhouses or produce CO₂; and
- had a production area greater than 455 square metres.

Cannabis is not an eligible crop at any phase of production including propagation. The grant covers 80% of the carbon tax that commercial greenhouse growers of eligible crops paid on the natural gas and propane they used for greenhouse heating and CO₂ production in 2018.

The greenhouse sector supplies British Columbians with fresh vegetables for about 10 months of the year on about 300 hectares of land. Over 100,000 tonnes of greenhouse vegetables are grown per year, including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplants, lettuce and others. B.C.'s floriculture and nursery industries grow more than 80 million cut flowers and over 50 million potted plants a year.

Application information, criteria, packages, a survey and e-forms are available at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/greenhouse-carbon-tax-relief-grant>

The Ministry of Agriculture expects the processing and completion of applications, and the grants to be issued, by June 2019.

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British Columbia News

Feed BC brings more B.C. food to Interior Health

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19115>

Friday, March 8, 2019 11:20 AM

Penticton - A new initiative by the Ministry of Agriculture ensures more of the food served to patients at Interior Health facilities is from British Columbia.

Feed BC is increasing the institutional procurement of food grown, harvested or processed by B.C. farmers, fishers and processors.

"Feed BC is a game changer. It's about working collaboratively to encourage, inspire and support a shift to more B.C. foods in health-care and other government facilities. It's food as medicine," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "Buying local not only supports the agriculture sector in B.C. and B.C. residents, it contributes to our provincial food security, helping build a more resilient and sustainable food supply."

Popham was joined by representatives of Interior Health, Sysco Canada-Kelowna and local farmers for a tour of the Penticton Regional Hospital's regional production kitchen, where they announced the new initiative that will increase the use of B.C. food in Interior Health facilities.

"Healthy, great-tasting meals can help people during recovery," said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. "Fortunately, we don't have to look far in B.C. for delicious and nutritious food. Increasing access to B.C.-grown and produced foods in health-care facilities not only improves the freshness and quality of the meals served, it better supports the patients' experience, outcomes and the livelihood of B.C.'s farmers and producers."

Oliver-based S&G Farms and Golden Valley Eggs, from Abbotsford, are two B.C. suppliers currently working with food distributor Sysco to provide Interior Health with more B.C. products to be prepared and served in all 55 Interior Health health-care facilities. Interior Health is also working closely with its partners to ensure food is of good quality and locally sourced whenever possible and follows strict food safety measures.

Penticton Regional Hospital and Vernon Jubilee Hospital serve as regional production kitchens making meals and food items served in all Interior Health facilities, as well as preparing meals for patients, families and individuals in need in the community.

The B.C. government is supporting Feed BC in the Interior by providing over \$350,000 in funding over the next year to help implement Feed BC in Interior Health facilities. The funding will include a project facilitator, patient information, procurement specialist services and a food-processing specialist who will support B.C. processors in meeting the product needs of health-care facilities.

The Feed BC initiative with Interior Health will act as a guide for the development of B.C. food procurement strategies that could be easily implemented in other provincial health authorities, as well as other public institutions, such as universities and colleges.

Feed BC is a key priority for the Ministry of Agriculture and supports the Province's commitment to increase the use of B.C.-grown and B.C.-processed foods in hospitals, schools and other government facilities. The Ministry of Health and the regional health authorities are supporting Feed BC by annually tracking B.C. food spends and exploring new opportunities to increase the use of B.C. foods in all health-care facilities.

Quotes:

Doug Cochrane, board chair, Interior Health —

“Interior Health is proud to launch Feed BC at our facilities. Having locally sourced food for our patients further connects Interior Health to the communities that we serve.”

Peter Simonsen, local farmer and vice-president, BC Fruit Growers’ Association —

“Feed BC is creating more opportunities and opening doors for British Columbians in the farming sector. We work hard to grow quality and delicious products that we are proud of and want to share with the rest of the province.”

Donna Koenig, manager of support services, Osoyoos and Oliver Interior Health —

“A healthy, well-balanced diet is important in maintaining good health, preventing disease and supporting and promoting recovery after illness. Interior Health and our partners — including the Ministry of Health, farmers, food processors and distributors — are therefore committed to sourcing out local foods within our province that meet quality, nutrition and safety standards.”

Kevin Boon, general manager, BC Cattlemen’s Association —

“High-quality, great tasting, nutritious food is an important part of everyone's health and healing. One of the ways of knowing you can trust that supply is by sourcing locally raised B.C. products. The B.C. cattle industry is working hard to establish a federally inspected packing plant to be able to increase the availability of B.C. beef to all British Columbians. It is especially important that our health-care facilities are at the front of the line to get it. This initiative is great for both the patient and the rancher.”

Quick Facts:

- Interior Health prepares over five million meals a year for patients, families and individuals in need in the community.
- For many years, Interior Health has chosen, when possible, to buy food that is produced or processed in B.C., like milk, bread, and seasonal fruit and vegetables.
- As part of the Feed BC initiative, Interior Health has already made the switch to B.C. shelled eggs and B.C. ground beef as part of its institutional buying plan.
- B.C. has 80 hospitals and 122 residential care homes, 25 public post-secondary institutions and over 1,500 public schools.
- Agriculture, seafood and food processing together form a \$14-billion industry in B.C.
- There are 17,500 farms in B.C. that produce over 200 agricultural products and over 1,800 food and beverage manufacturing operations.

Learn More:

More on Feed BC: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/growbc-feedbc-buybc/feed-bc>

Information on Interior Health: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

HealthLink BC: www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating

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British Columbia News

Recommendations delivered for Wild Salmon Strategy

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19117>

Friday, March 8, 2019 1:00 PM

Victoria - The Wild Salmon Advisory Council has submitted its final recommendations to develop a Made-in-B.C. Wild Salmon Strategy for the B.C. government's review and consideration.

The council made 13 recommendations that include immediate and mid-term actions that have three goals:

- Increase the abundance of wild salmon;
- Protect and enhance the economic, social and cultural benefits that come to B.C. communities from wild salmon and other fisheries, placing emphasis on adjacent communities; and
- Develop mechanisms, processes, practices and structures to engage citizens and governments in the effective stewardship and management of B.C.'s wild salmon.

In its recommendations, the council called on government to focus on “tangible, achievable, near-term actions that can address the immediate needs of wild salmon and their habitat”, as well as establishing “long-term provincial engagement on this issue, recognizing that impact will require ongoing and significant effort.”

The recommendations include input and feedback received from community meetings and a public engagement process that welcomed British Columbians' online participation. The engagement took place from fall 2018 to January 2019 and was based on an options paper the council prepared.

The Wild Salmon Advisory Council consists of 14 British Columbians who have a broad understanding of the role that salmon play within B.C.'s environment, for coastal and inland Indigenous communities, and local economies up and down the coast. The council is co-chaired by Chief Marilyn Slett of Heiltsuk Nation and Doug Routley, MLA for Nanaimo-North Cowichan. Adam Olsen, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, is also a council member.

The B.C. government is reviewing the recommendations as part of its commitment to support restoring healthy and abundant wild salmon stocks in B.C.

Learn More:

Report with recommendations for the Made-in-B.C. Wild Salmon Strategy:

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/426/2019/03/Wild-Salmon-Advisory-Council-Report.pdf>.

Summary of the public engagement: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/consultation/b-c-wild-salmon-strategy/>

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British Columbia News

Governments Support British Columbia Farmers Dealing with Farm Income Challenges

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19133>

Monday, March 11, 2019 1:00 PM

Victoria - *Courtesy of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC): <https://www.canada.ca/en/agriculture-agri-food/news/2019/03/governments-support-bc-farmers-dealing-with-farm-income-challenges.html>*

British Columbia's agriculture sector contributes \$3.2 billion to Canada's economy, with more than \$2.6 billion in agri-food exports to 147 markets. The governments of Canada and British Columbia remain committed to the continued growth and success of British Columbia's agriculture sector by ensuring producers have the tools they need to manage significant risks that threaten the viability of their farms.

2018 was an extremely challenging year for many British Columbia producers who faced financial pressures as a result of significant production and market losses. The governments of Canada and British Columbia are working together to ensure producers make full use of support available through existing programs.

Today, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau and British Columbia's Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham announced they have triggered the late participation mechanism under the AgriStability program for the 2018 program year to help farmers access needed support to deal with income losses. This new feature, introduced under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, means hundreds of additional farmers and ranchers from British Columbia will be eligible to join and benefit from the program. This feature can be triggered by governments in situations where there is a significant income decline in the farm sector and a gap in program participation.

This is in addition to assistance previously announced by governments in October 2018 under the AgriRecovery disaster framework that provided up to \$5 million to help the province's agriculture sector recover from the agricultural losses caused by the 2018 wildfires. These fires consumed 1,300,000 hectares of land, surpassing the record damage caused in 2017.

Today's announcement is part of Minister Bibeau's first agricultural tour. Minister Bibeau is meeting with farmers, processors and industry leaders, as well as participating in local agricultural events, to highlight strategic federal agricultural investments and programs and how they will help to build an even stronger and more innovative sector for Canada.

The tour begins on March 11 in Vernon, British Columbia and ends on March 13 in Winnipeg, Manitoba with stops in Kelowna, British Columbia and Calgary, Alberta.

Quotes

"Our Government recognizes that many B.C. farmers and ranchers are facing financial hardship caused by extreme weather events and poor market prices. The AgriStability late participation feature will help more farmers access the support they need to cope with income shortfalls. We encourage BC farmers to take full advantage of all available Business Risk Management programs, including AgriInvest and AgriInsurance."

- Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

"BC ranchers and farmers work hard to support our province's food supply and economy, and when they experience extreme hardship such as the last two years, they need our help. Adjusting the AgriStability

program to help more B.C. producers whose income declined in 2018, offers support to those farmers, the communities they are part of, and agriculture in BC.”

- Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, British Columbia

Quick facts

- In 2018, British Columbia’s agricultural sector was impacted by several major production and market losses as a result of unprecedented spring flooding, forest fires which caused substantial damage to farms and farmland, and a dramatic decline in market prices for raspberries.
- In August 2017, governments announced the Canada-British Columbia Wildfires Recovery Initiative, an up to \$20 million initiative to assist agricultural producers with the extraordinary costs associated with resuming their operations following the 2017 wildfires.
- Under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, producers have access to a robust suite of Business Risk Management (BRM) programs to help manage significant risks that threaten the viability of their farm and are beyond their capacity to manage. These programs include AgriInsurance, AgriStability and AgriInvest and AgriRecovery.
- More information on late participation for 2018 AgriStability will be mailed to British Columbia farmers and ranchers in the coming weeks. Information on AgriStability can be found on the program website or by calling the British Columbia program administration at 1-877-343-2767.
- The Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a five-year, \$3 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector. The Partnership includes programs and activities to enhance the competitiveness of the sector through research, science and innovation.

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British Columbia News

Growing B.C.'s artisan cheese industry for B.C. cheesemakers

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19180>

Friday, March 15, 2019 8:00 AM

Victoria - A new association has been formed, bringing together British Columbians involved in the artisan cheese sector to help shine a light on this growing industry.

Artisan cheese is a unique product that can be developed through value-added food processing. Cheesemakers can work with dairy suppliers to turn B.C. milk into an amazing variety of tasty cheeses, ranging in types from blue cheese to cheddar and brie, and using milk from goats, sheep and water buffaloes, as well as cows.

"The BC Artisan Cheese Association is creating a space for B.C.'s cheesemakers to share experiences, challenges and successes with one another," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "It's also an opportunity for them to network and connect with other British Columbians to increase value-added food processing right here in B.C."

The BC Artisan Cheese Association (BCACA) has been created to represent the province's artisan cheesemakers and the individuals from different sectors involved in the cheese-making process, starting with the source of the milk to the finished product on grocery store shelves. There are approximately 25 artisan cheese producers throughout B.C.

"Cheesemakers across B.C. are being noticed for their creativity and impressive quality," said Emma Davison, chair, BCACA. "We're using B.C. milk, which has some of the highest standards in the world. We make some of Canada's best cheeses right here in B.C. Becoming unified in this association allows us to leverage our reach and educate consumers about the importance of cheeses that are produced locally."

The BCACA, with support from the Ministry of Agriculture, is gathering in Vernon, for a two-day strategic planning session and its first annual general meeting. B.C.'s artisan cheesemakers, along with members of the BC Milk Marketing Board, BC Dairy Association and other closely related organizations, are attending to take part in the strategic planning session with an opportunity to share knowledge and become members of this new organization.

The founding members of BCACA are from cheese companies in B.C.'s dairy centres. They include Davison of Golden Ears Cheesecrafters in the Fraser Valley and Jason Dykstra, director and treasurer, from Mt. Lehman Cheese Company, also in the Fraser Valley. Raymond Gourlay, vice-chair and secretary, is from Little Qualicum Cheeseworks on Vancouver Island.

The Ministry of Agriculture is supporting value-added food processing in B.C. through Feed BC, to create more opportunities for British Columbians in food processing, like those in the artisan cheese sector, and others wanting to get involved.

Learn More:

Check out how Feed BC is supporting the food processing industry: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/19023>

Find out more on Feed BC: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/19115>

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British Columbia News

BeeBC funding continues to create buzz within bee community

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19240>

Saturday, March 23, 2019 9:00 AM

Victoria - Beekeepers in the Fraser Valley and the Thompson Nicola region are working to save bees and pollinators with support from the B.C. government.

"We wouldn't have an agricultural industry without bees. We need them. It's critical. And bees are facing challenges around the globe," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "It's awesome to see BeeBC funding help with those challenges and support communities as they find solutions to support bees."

Responding to the need to support bees in the province, communities are using BeeBC funding to help generate educational initiatives and plant beneficial plants to help pollinators thrive.

In Langley, Carolyn Essaunce of the Honest to Goodness Farm Co. is working to restore an acre of land on MacInnes Farms and convert it into a pollinator conservation area. The site will include space for a nesting ground and beneficial flora focusing on bloom times that are sparse. The site will encourage education through a marked path that will include benches and informative plaques encouraging visitors to create spaces for pollinators on their own land as well. The work of converting the farm will be volunteer led with support from the Langley Environmental Partners Society.

"Initiatives like BeeBC are perfect for encouraging people to step outside their comfort zones and do something positive for pollinators," noted Essaunce. "A pollinator conservation area creates a space where all the beneficial insects have a safe space to nest and exist, everybody wins!"

In Clearwater, a town in the Thompson Nicola region, Yellowhead Community Services is working to increase nectar and pollen sources by planting pollen-rich plants in community and municipal park spaces, school gardens and community gardens. In an effort to increase winter survival rates of local hives, Yellowhead is also using the funding to secure a bee health consultant to visit the community for an educational opportunity on hive health and overwintering colonies.

"We are so excited to be working with our community to promote healthy honeybee and pollinator populations and for the opportunity to expand the knowledge base of beekeepers in our valley," said Joanna Hurst, Yellowhead Community Services. "The health of all pollinators is so important to our food supply!"

Both projects incorporate an educational component to strengthen community knowledge about pollinator conservation while working to provide additional resources for pollinators foraging for food. These projects are two of 10 that have received support from the Province's BeeBC program during the second intake of applications. To date, 23 projects throughout the province have been funded by the program.

The BeeBC program provides funding to smaller-scale community-based projects that support the health of B.C.'s bees. The fund provides support to research, explore, field-test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health. The BeeBC program is administered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Quick Facts:

- In late 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture provided \$25,000 in funding to support research work on bee health and pollination.
- In May 2018, BeeBC received \$100,000 in funding to support community-based projects on bee health to research, explore, field-test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health.

- In October 2018, Popham announced an additional \$50,000 in funding through BeeBC to help support even more community-based projects in B.C.
- Honeybees are an important part of B.C.'s agriculture sector as pollinators of crops, contributing an estimated \$538 million to the provincial economy.
- Across Canada, honeybees have an economic contribution estimated at over \$3.2 billion.
- The BC Honey Producers' Association represents the province's commercial, sideline and hobbyist beekeepers and is one of Canada's oldest agricultural associations.

Learn More:

For more information on BeeBC, visit: <http://iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/bee-bc/>

Learn more about BeeBC program projects funded under the first intake of the program: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/18326>

Find out more about ethical bee projects funded by BeeBC: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/18150>

For more information on the Honest to Goodness Farm Co., visit: <https://www.honestfarming.ca/>

For information about the Ministry of Agriculture's apiary program, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/animal-production/bees>

For more information on Yellowhead Community Services, visit: <https://www.yellowheadcs.ca/>

A backgrounder follows.

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Backgrounders

BeeBC funded projects

The following B.C. projects received approximately \$96,108 through the first and second intake of the BeeBC program:

Bee Awareness Society: \$5,000 to construct hives, observation hives and to deliver education to youth in the West Kootenays.

Brad Cooke (beekeeper): \$3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on southern Vancouver Island.

Central Cariboo Beekeepers Association: \$5,000 to support the monitoring of members' collective colonies for desirable attributes for breeding and the preservation of breeding eggs for future use in establishing new colonies in the Cariboo Chilcotin region.

Curtis Robinson (beekeeper): \$3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on southern Vancouver Island.

Environmental Youth Alliance Society: \$5,000 to enhance habitats for bees by creating strips of native wildflowers near and in urban farms and food-producing community gardens in the Lower Mainland.

Heartford Honey: \$5,000 to research the best protein sources to support hives in the Lower Mainland.

Heidi Schnepf (beekeeper): \$3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on central Vancouver Island.

The Honest to Goodness Farm Co.: \$5,000 to support the restoration of one acre of land on MacInnes Farms as a pollinator conservation area and planting beneficial plant species to support pollinators in Langley.

Honey Bee Zen Apiaries Ltd.: \$5,000 to support research on fungi that are beneficial in reducing viral loads in honey in the Kootenay region.

Honey Bee Zen Apiaries Ltd.: \$4,500 to support beekeepers in accessing electron-based sterilization in the Kootenay region.

Howe Sound Honey & Bees: \$3,313 to support the establishment of mass storage bank colonies of mated queens on Bowen Island.

Iain Glass (beekeeper): \$3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on the Gulf Islands.

Mark Schilling (beekeeper): \$3,000 to support the development of a locally bred varroa sensitive hygiene bee strain on central Vancouver Island.

Michael Campbell (beekeeper): \$5,000 to support research of bee dysentery treatments in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley.

Michael Campbell (beekeeper): \$5,000 to support the research of yellowjacket wasp control in partnership with Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Emma's Acres and LINC Society in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley.

Michael Campbell (beekeeper): \$5,000 to support research of control measures for high humidity in hives, in partnership with Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Emma's Acres and LINC Society in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley.

Morgan Creek Farm: \$4,665 to support the enhancement of bee habitats and deliver education on bees to youth on Vancouver Island.

Oceanside Hive: A Beekeepers Collective: \$3,350 to continue a queen rearing program that progresses queen cells to mated queens, to plant forage plants to support the bee population and complete hygienic testing on Vancouver Island.

Pollinator Partnership Canada Society: \$5,000 to create a demonstration native plant pollinator meadow, best management practices and community engagement activities for bee awareness on Vancouver Island.

Roselyn Lambert (beekeeper): \$1,180 to compare queen performance in the Central Interior region.

Elk Root Conservation Farm: \$5,000 to establish carefully selected natural bee-forage plants to increase the overall health of bees, to demonstrate how other communities can implement similar practices in the Kootenay region.

Sunnyside Farm and Apiary: \$4,100 to raise and improve locally adapted hygienic- and disease-resistant queens and learn to prepare antennae for examination to reduce hive diseases on Bowen Island.

Yellowhead Community Services: \$5,000 to support the increase of nectar and pollen sources, and create community club learning opportunities from a bee health consultant in Clearwater.

British Columbia News

B.C. hazelnut growers encouraged to apply for renewal funding

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19305>

Saturday, March 30, 2019 9:00 AM

Victoria - British Columbia's hazelnut growers now can apply for the next intake of Hazelnut Renewal Program funding.

This program supports the B.C. hazelnut sector by allowing growers to replace trees and establish new orchards with disease-resistant varieties.

"Hazelnuts are a delicious and nutritious source of protein and healthy fats in high demand throughout the world, and one of the only edible tree nuts that grow well in British Columbia's current climate," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "The past decade has not been kind to our province's hazelnut sector, with Eastern Filbert blight (EFB) wiping out many of B.C.'s hazelnut orchards. Our government and our sector are joining forces to fight this disease, and with the help of the Hazelnut Renewal Program, to rebuild B.C.'s hazelnut industry."

Popham recently visited two family-owned hazelnut orchards in Chilliwack. The first stop was with pioneer grower Helmut Hooge, who showcased several varieties of disease-resistant trees growing in his orchard.

A short drive down the road, the tour continued at Fraser Valley Hazelnuts Ltd., a receiving station that provides washing, drying and shipping services for hazelnut growers. In 2018, Fraser Valley Hazelnuts Ltd. processed about 21,000 kilograms (46,000 pounds) of nuts, representing approximately 90% of the hazelnut production in the province. The company was able to market 70% of last year's hazelnut production through contacts made during Every Chef Needs a Farmer, Every Farmer Needs a Chef, an event organized by the Ministry of Agriculture in November 2018.

The Hazelnut Renewal Program looks to build on the success of last fall, when 15.4 hectares (38 acres) and 8,254 EFB resistant trees were planted. In addition, more than 10.1 hectares (25 acres) with 3,025 EFB susceptible trees were removed. The areas covered include Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Langley and Pender Island.

The program is accepting new applications until July 15, 2019, for fall planting. B.C. hazelnut growers can apply here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/hazelnut-renewal-program>

Quick Facts:

- The Hazelnut Renewal Program's ongoing goal is to offer greater flexibility and accessibility.
 - The minimum eligible acreage for planting new orchards is 0.4 hectares (one acre).
 - The maximum eligible acreage for 2019-20 planting is four hectares (10 acres per farm operation).
- The spring 2019 season commitment is part of \$300,000 in funding over the next three years that the Ministry of Agriculture allocated to the BC Hazelnut Growers in July 2018.

Learn More:

November 2018 news release announcing Every Chef Needs a Farmer, Every Farmer Needs a Chef event: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AGRI0088-002187>

July 2018 news release announcing the Hazelnut Renewal Program: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AGRI0052-001408>

For more information about the Hazelnut Renewal Program, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/hazelnut-renewal-program>

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British Columbia News

Funding supports professional development for B.C. farmers

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19339>

Thursday, April 4, 2019 1:00 PM

Victoria - The Ministry of Agriculture brought the classroom to the field by offering farmers and ranchers around the province the opportunity to attend a variety of agriculture-related learning events with support from the governments of Canada and British Columbia.

Members of B.C.'s agricultural industry were invited to participate in a series of field days, workshops and other learning opportunities that promoted growth and viability within the farming sector. The program provided funding to support knowledge and technical transfer for B.C. farmers and food processors.

Seventeen "knowledge-transfer" events were offered in regions throughout the province during the past three months, covering a wide range of farming and ranching activities that would contribute to and improve the competitiveness, innovation and resilience of B.C.'s agriculture and agri-food sector.

Participants learned best practices and strategies; new and emerging opportunities within the sector; and techniques to adapt to changing environmental, production and market conditions. The programs also offered peer learning, educational networking and relationship-building opportunities for under-represented and target groups, such as new entrants, youth and Indigenous peoples.

The activities were co-ordinated with Ministry of Agriculture staff and included the following: information sessions on agricultural tools and strategies to help adapt to climate change; and discussions on the latest trends in integrated pest management, improving production operating costs, herd health, and opportunities within the sheep and goat industry.

The Knowledge Transfer Events Program supported industry activities that contribute to and improve the competitiveness, innovation and resilience of B.C.'s agriculture and agri-food sector. The funding facilitated knowledge and technical transfer events to strategically support B.C.'s producers and processors to innovate and adapt to changing environmental, production and market conditions. The program was supported by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year, \$3-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Quotes:

Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food –

"Our government is pleased to partner with British Columbia to support the growth of the agriculture sector through initiatives such as the Knowledge Transfer Events Program. This investment under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership gives B.C. farmers and ranchers the knowledge, skills and tools they need to be innovative, competitive and keep their business growing."

Lana Popham, B.C.'s Minister of Agriculture –

"The agricultural industry is continually growing and changing to adapt to emerging opportunities and changing environmental, production and market conditions. We are committed to providing the support our ranchers and farmers need to ensure they are able to grow with the industry through hands-on learning and peer-taught workshops coming from within the farming community."

Megan D'Arcy, Smithers Farmers' Institute –

"This year, the Smithers Farmers' Institute is using funding from the Knowledge Transfer Events Program to help make our third Carrots to Cattle: Growing from the Ground Up conference possible. The funding is

helping us bring two leading experts: one in agricultural soils, the other in permaculture and land design, to northwestern B.C. to share their knowledge. The objective is to inform producers about adaptive management practices that help to make their farm and ranch operations more resilient to seasonal stresses, such as drought. In addition to knowledge extension, these conferences are valuable networking events that provide an opportunity for producers to learn from each other. We are very grateful for the support we receive from the Knowledge Transfer Events Program, and for the Canadian Agricultural Partnership that makes it possible.”

Learn More:

Find out more about The Knowledge Transfer Events Program:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/knowledge-transfer-events>

For more about the Canadian Agricultural Partnership programs in British Columbia:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs>

For more information on Canadian Agricultural Partnership, visit: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849>

A backgrounder follows.

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Backgrounders

Funding for B.C. farmers' professional development

The following projects received funding from the Canada-BC Knowledge Transfer Events Program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District in partnership with the Alberni Farmers' Institute:
\$1,150 to provide support for the agricultural sector through development of a community-based plan for producers in case of emergencies such as wildfire, flooding or another catastrophic event.

BC Association of Farmers Markets:

\$5,000 to offer farmers market organizers, board members, vendors, small food processors and agricultural

community leaders the opportunity to attend three workshops: SuperHost training; Labelling, Merchandise and Pricing; and Market Assessment to learn new skills and network.

BC Cranberry Marketing Commission:

\$5,000 to better understand the importance of various inputs to cranberry production to better improve fruit quality and yields.

BC Landscape & Nursery Association:

\$3,100 to teach nursery growers the latest Integrated Pest Management recommendations to manage troublesome nursery weeds, such as liverwort and horsetail.

British Columbia Dairy Association:

\$4,000 to speak to producers in the Smithers and Okanagan regions and provide an overview of actionable items that Manitoba farmers have successfully adopted to get a strong grasp on operating costs of production, overall farm efficiency and improving their farm's bottom lines.

Certified Organic Association of British Columbia (COABC):

\$5,000 to support a two-day conference with the theme, Celebrating the COABC, with inspiration, learning and networking that included presenters from all areas of the organic world.

Community Futures Central Kootenay – Basin Business Advisors Program/Agriculture:

\$4,500 to provide an overview of the environment for today's farmers and why succession planning is important, as well as offer presentations by specialists in various areas of agriculture succession planning.

Community Futures North Okanagan:

\$4,950 to bring together producers, processors, distributors, retailers and food services with local government, non-profit organizations and academics to examine best practices, review the challenges and opportunities in the food system and develop a strategy; focus on land issues, including land access for new entrants, caring for the land in an environmentally sustainable way and impacts of climate change on agriculture in the region.

Feeding Growth for Food Processors:

\$4,490 to provide participants with the practical tools and knowledge needed to make informed certification decisions on the topic of socially and/or environmentally progressive food certifications (e.g., organic, fair trade).

Kersley Farmers' Institute:

\$5,000 to give producers more tools and strategies to help adapt to lower precipitation levels, conserve water resources, enhance soil quality and minimize erosion.

North Okanagan Livestock Association:

\$2,640 to host a seminar focusing on best practices and how producers can better manage their production through animal nutrition and soil health.

Pemberton Farmers' Institute:

\$4,400 to educate market garden/small-scale producers on the importance of managing potato and tomato disease in Pemberton and create connections within the farming community.

Prince George Cattlemen Association:

\$3,740 to raise producers' production knowledge on current challenges and opportunities in the cattle industry.

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako:

\$5,000 to host a workshop for independent producers to meet and network and form a sheep producers

association, as well as increase the economic viability of the sheep/goat industry with opportunities for wool and artisan sheep/goat cheese.

Smithers Farmers' Institute:

\$5,000 to provide forward-thinking management practices and good business decisions to meet challenges around soil fertility, innovative permaculture techniques and more conventional water storage options that comply with the Water Sustainability Act.

Society Promoting Environmental Conservation co-organized by Kwantlen Polytechnic University:

\$3,575 to follow up on previous years' small farm sessions with a focus on ecosystem services and allow for an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to agriculture in the region and provide insight into current techniques, programs and information.

Vancouver Island Fibreshed and the Mid Island Farmers' Institute:

\$2,450 to provide education presentations, hands-on demonstrations and networking opportunities for Vancouver Island Fibreshed farmers to get more value from their fleece production.

British Columbia News

Rabbit virus found for second straight year

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19382>

Wednesday, April 10, 2019 7:00 AM

Parksville - Rabbit owners in the mid-Island area are being advised to take precautions with their pet rabbits after the death of four feral rabbits in Parksville from a highly infectious virus.

Testing of the rabbits has confirmed the presence of rabbit hemorrhagic disease, caused by a calicivirus. It is the second year in a row that the virus has been found in mid-Island rabbits, but the source of the virus is unknown.

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease is an extremely infectious and lethal disease that is exclusive to rabbits. Humans and other animals, including dogs and cats, cannot be infected. The strain of the virus seen last year only affects European rabbits and is not known to affect native North American rabbits.

Pet owners should monitor their rabbits daily for signs of illness and contact their veterinarian immediately with any concerns. The virus causes hemorrhages by affecting the blood vessels and attacks the liver and other organs. Most affected rabbits die suddenly, but can show signs of listlessness, lack of co-ordination, behaviour changes or trouble breathing before death. There is often bleeding from the nose at the time of death. Once infected, signs of illness occur quickly — usually within one to nine days.

While there is no threat to humans, rabbit owners should avoid bringing the virus home by practising excellent hygiene when handling their animals and staying away from areas where the disease has occurred.

Rabbit owners who want more information about how to keep their pets safe can consult with their veterinarian regarding vaccinations and review an SPCA fact sheet on rabbit hemorrhagic disease at:

<http://spca.bc.ca/news/bc-sPCA-suspends-intake-of-rabbits-due-to-disease/>

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British Columbia News

B.C.-grown tech to improve B.C. food production<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19478>

Wednesday, April 17, 2019 2:45 PM

Victoria - British Columbia's tech sector is being invited to propose solutions to help B.C. food producers and processors increase their efficiency, sustainability and product traceability through the B.C. Agritech Innovation Challenge.

The federal and provincial government-funded challenge is offering a total of \$150,000 in support for made-in-B.C. technology solutions in three defined categories:

- Food processing technology: Mechanization, digitization and automation for micro- and small-scale processors to help ease the effects of any labour shortage. Examples could include shellfish shucking, plant-based protein processing and technology for fruit and vegetable freezing, drying and peeling.
- Food traceability technologies: User-friendly and economical options for micro- and small-scale producers and processors to provide product tracking from farm to consumer. Examples include apps and software with different features and equipment compatibility.
- Precision agriculture technologies and bioproducts: Improved precision tools, technologies and practices, as well as innovation that transforms agriculture waste into renewable products. Examples could include integrated sensors to monitor soil nutrients and bio-based materials (i.e., nutrients, bio-chemicals, fertilizers, fuels) produced from agricultural waste.

In addition to seed funding to advance new technologies, participants will receive mentorship and support through Innovate BC's Agriculture Venture Accelerator Program. The challenge is being presented in collaboration with Innovate BC and aims to help increase the efficiency, sustainability and competitiveness of B.C.'s agriculture and seafood industries, while providing access to new customers with global market potential, encouraging company growth.

Submission details and timelines are available at: <https://innovatebc.ca/what-we-offer/innovation-marketplace/agritech-challenge/>

Funding for the Agritech Innovation Challenge is provided by the Government of British Columbia and through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector.

Quotes:

Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food —

"Innovation is a driver for continued growth and competitiveness for food producers and processors across Canada. Our government is pleased to support this initiative that will help explore and find innovative tech-based solutions to enhance productivity, sustainability and traceability in the B.C. agriculture sector."

Lana Popham, B.C.'s Minister of Agriculture —

"It's wonderful to see the collaboration between the tech and agriculture sectors, as well as the federal and provincial governments, to connect our B.C. farmers and our local innovators to work on new ways to grow our province's agriculture sector. These opportunities provide important spaces for problems to be identified and cutting-edge solutions to be crafted."

Raghwa Gopal, president and CEO, Innovate BC —

"Technology is transforming industries all over the world. The only way for traditional industries like

agriculture to become more competitive, more efficient and more profitable is to adopt innovative, groundbreaking technologies that can have a global impact. Innovate BC is extremely excited to collaborate on this Agritech Innovation Challenge and help B.C. tech companies attract customers, secure funding and grow their businesses.”

James Donaldson, CEO, BC Food Processors Association —

“The BC Food Processors Association is excited about the potential for the Agritech Innovation Challenge to assist food and beverage manufacturers in B.C. Our industry is already well known for creating unique, innovative products, but in order to continue to compete and scale their businesses, there will be an ever-increasing need for technology, automation and advanced manufacturing to help them accomplish this. The Agritech Innovation Challenge creates a great platform for increased focus on this important field for our industries’ future.”

Quick Facts

- B.C. agri-food companies had sales of more than \$14 billion in 2017 and employ more than 61,000 people.
- More than 200 primary agriculture products and about 100 fish, shellfish and marine plant species are produced in B.C.
- B.C. exported a record \$3.9 billion in agri-food and seafood products to 157 markets in 2017.
- There are more than 10,500 tech companies in B.C., employing more than 114,000 people.
- The tech sector generates approximately \$31 billion in revenue a year in B.C.

Learn More

Innovate BC is a Crown agency that connects innovators — large and small, in every industry and region — with B.C. government funding, tools, resources and support: <https://innovatebc.ca/>

For more information on the many programs that support innovation in B.C. agriculture, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/canada-bc-agri-innovation>

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a five-year, \$3-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849>

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British Columbia News

B.C. food and beverage processors learn to lean

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19546>

Thursday, April 25, 2019 11:00 AM

Victoria - Two British Columbia processing companies providing unique beverage products are among 14 companies that participated in the B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program, which helps businesses improve production capacity, labour productivity and operating margins.

The B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program is being delivered to small, medium and large processing companies throughout B.C. The cost-shared program includes three days of formal training for managers and key production staff that focus on applying lean tools and approaches. This is followed up with two days of on-site training and coaching.

A wide range of B.C. processing businesses have participated in the program, including dairy, pet food, health foods, meal kits and beverages. The companies have ranged in size from three to five employees, to more than 100, and are looking for ways to improve efficiencies in their production processes.

Squamish Water Kefir, brewed by self-described nutrition nerds Sabrina and Kristin, has provided a tasty, fermented drink to its customers since 2015. The primary objective of its lean project was to reduce the bottling time to meet demand. Its improvements included:

- reduced bottling time, increased throughput and improved productivity of the process;
- eliminating the motion involved in handling the bottles by streamlining the production process; and
- establishing clear business goals and increased staff engagement by including them in the problem-solving process.

In Surrey, Route 18 Real Food produces and sells a line of drinking vinegar concentrates from unpasteurized apple cider vinegar. Its objective was to scale up production and deal with production waste. Its success included:

- improved food safety, record keeping and recall programs; and
- optimized commissary and bottling processes by standardizing workflow and training staff to improve consistency.

B.C.'s food and beverage processors produce approximately \$9 billion worth of food per year, representing 70% of total agrifood revenues. Over 30,000 British Columbians are employed in the food and beverage processing industries.

Funding for the B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program is provided through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial investment that includes \$2 billion in cost-shared strategic initiatives delivered by the provinces and territories, and \$1 billion for federal programs and services through March 2023.

Quotes:

Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food —

“Our government is proud to support British Columbia’s food processing sector through the B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program. This investment provides the knowledge and skills B.C. processing businesses need to improve efficiencies in their production and operations to remain competitive and ensure their continued growth.”

Lana Popham, B.C.'s Minister of Agriculture —

“There are more than 2,500 food processing companies in B.C. providing us with some exciting value-added products, including meat, seafood, dairy, fruit and vegetables, wine, beer, soft drinks, condiments and bakery items. These innovative folks do it all. The B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program is a great resource to help our sector streamline efficiencies to remain competitive and ensure continued made-in-B.C. success stories.”

Sabrina Horlyck, owner, Squamish Water Kefir Company —

“Our lean project opened our eyes to how small, specific changes can create huge results in our production facility, streamlining our efficiency and saving money we didn’t even know could be saved. We made changes in our current set up and, even more importantly, are now armed with knowledge and tools to help make decisions as we grow and increase production capacity. This project was a game changer for us.”

Rhoda Chilcott, owner, Route 18 Real Food Company —

“The results from the B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program have been completely unexpected, as they have exceeded our goals and expectations. We have been able to improve our manufacturing, food safety and bottling process, and, at same time, streamline our logistics, marketing program and customer service department. The lean processing knowledge has moved us from learned principles to a new company mindset.”

Learn More:

B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/bc-lean-for-food-processors-program>

Squamish Water Kefir Company: <http://squamishwaterkefir.com/>

Route 18 Real Food Company: <https://www.route18shrubclub.com/>

Canadian Agricultural Partnership: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849>

A backgrounder follows.

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Backgrounders

Businesses participating in the B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program

The B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program provides up to \$8,000 for eligible businesses to access business planning services from a qualified business consultant.

The businesses worked on several goals, including:

- condensing the time spent on production;
- increasing output to keep pace with rising demand; and
- standardizing processes to gain operational efficiencies.

The following 14 B.C. businesses have received a total of \$112,000 in funding from the B.C. Lean for Food Processors Program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership:

Chilliwack

Anita's Organic Grain & Flour Mill

Courtenay

Canadian Cultured Dairy Inc.

Cumberland

Harmonic Arts Botanical Dispensary Inc.

Delta

English Bay Batter LP

Kelowna

MotherLove Ferments

Mission

Emkao Foods Inc.

New Westminster

RippleFX Water Inc.

Port Coquitlam

Natural Immix Health Ltd.

Richmond

Chewters Chocolates (1992) Inc.

Wise Bites Collections Inc.

Squamish

Squamish Water Kefier Company Ltd.

Surrey

Route 18 Real Food Co. Ltd.

Vancouver

Chefs Plate

Amoda Tea & Wellness Inc.

British Columbia News

B.C. Land Matching Program brings opportunities for young farmers

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19564>

Friday, April 26, 2019 10:20 AM

Victoria - New and young farmers throughout B.C. are seeing results and getting agricultural land into production, thanks to the support of regional land matchers and the B.C. Land Matching Program, delivered by Young Agrarians.

“The challenge for young and new farmers entering the agricultural industry is acquiring affordable farmland that they can farm,” said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. “Since expanding the B.C. Land Matching Program last summer, we’ve seen successful matches throughout the province, ensuring more B.C. farmland is in production and helping secure our farming industry and food security for future generations.”

After launching as a pilot in Metro Vancouver in 2016, the program expanded across southern B.C. in July 2018. Since 2018, the B.C. Land Matching Program has helped 19 new farmers and farming families connect with landowners in the province to sign farming agreements, with a total of 26.71 hectares (66 acres) brought into, or maintained in, agricultural production. The Province has committed \$375,000 in funding to build on the success of the program for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Land matchers assigned to Vancouver Island, Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, the Okanagan and Columbia Basin have been working closely with farmers, landowners, local governments and agricultural organizations to help facilitate agreements between farmers and land owners.

Tucked away between orchards and wineries overlooking Powers Creek in West Kelowna, Popham visited Alpine Roots Farm to meet with farmer Eoin Carey and landowners John and Anne Whittall, as well as their land matcher Tessa Wetherill, for a tour of their property. She announced the results of the B.C. Land Matching Program there, as well as additional funding for the program for 2019-20.

The land owners and the farmer signed their lease this past January, and Carey and his family have already started to till the land for what will be a 0.80-hectare (two-acre) market garden, selling to community-supported agriculture members. They also plan to partner with local restaurants throughout Kelowna and the region and are excited to offer chefs the option of having grow-to-order unique, or hard-to-find, varieties of produce.

For the Whittalls, both retired, this was an opportunity to see the agricultural land they own and steward in full production, while allowing them to keep the land’s farm-classification status, which will support them as they age in place on a fixed income.

The B.C. Land Matching Program falls within Grow BC, a mandate commitment of the Ministry of Agriculture that supports young farmers and food producers seeking a career in B.C. agriculture and addresses major challenges for new farmers, such as gaining access to land in regions around the province. The program is part of the Province’s larger New Entrant Strategy, a framework for increasing the number of new and young farmers working in B.C.’s agriculture sector.

Quotes:

Eoin Carey, farmer, Alpine Roots Farm —

“I had been looking for suitable land on and off for a few years. I found it next to impossible to find anything. The main issue was overpriced lease values and a complete shortage of anything being advertised on the classified ads or local agriculture publications. I believe overall the B.C. Land Matching Program has

accelerated my business development by at least a year, maybe more. I found answers to all my questions and more when I got involved with Young Agrarians. I really hadn't expected the level of help I received and am forever grateful for it.”

John and Anne Whittall, landowners —

“Our smaller acreage is well suited for farming, but we are no longer active in that. Young Agrarians seemed like a wonderful way to see the land used productively, helping us regain our farm status and give an opportunity to a younger, aspiring farmer. Making a ‘match’ went very smoothly. We are confident that it is an excellent one and now we are excited for the growing season to begin.”

Tessa Wetherill, Okanagan Young Agrarian land matcher —

“I’ve been honoured to facilitate negotiations and open discussions that have led to successful land matches. It’s an incredible thing to witness people coming together, being honest about their needs, values, roles and responsibilities. It is ultimately this foundation, along with a spirit of collaboration, that carry these folks forward into mutually beneficial, long-term relationships.”

Quick Facts:

- Since the pilot launch in 2016, the program has helped 29 farmers and farming families, with 40.47 hectares (100 acres) brought into or maintained in agricultural production.
- Since the program expanded in July 2018, 19 matches have been finalized, with 19 farm businesses supported, representing 22 agreements on 21 properties.
- Number of land matches by region:
 - Okanagan: four matches finalized;
 - Vancouver Island: six matches finalized;
 - Columbia Basin: one match finalized; and
 - Metro Vancouver/Fraser Valley: eight matches finalized, supporting eight new farm businesses with 11 agreements on 10 properties.

Learn More:

Find out more about the B.C. Land Matching Program:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/land-matching>

Young Agrarians B.C. Land Matching Program: <http://youngagrarians.org/land/>

Government of B.C.’s New Entrant Strategy: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/farm-management/farm-business-management/6322_agri_newentrantstrategy_web.pdf

A backgrounder follows.

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Backgrounders

B.C. Land Matching Program

The program is helping make connections for new and young farmers all over the province:

Okanagan:

- A three-year lease was completed for a 0.71-hectare (1.75-acre) cherry orchard in the South Okanagan.
- A one-year lease agreement with three-year renewal option on 1.01 hectares (2.5 acres) between landowners in West Kelowna and a new market gardener.
- A 20-year lease in Summerland for a new vineyard on 7.28 hectares (18 acres).
- A year-to-year lease agreement for a new flower farm on 0.24 hectares (0.6 acres) in Central Kelowna, on Agricultural Land Reserve land.

Vancouver Island:

- A market garden was matched to 0.20 hectares (0.5 acres) on a property outside Duncan on a rolling lease.
- An established 0.08-hectare (0.2-acre) garden with housing in Saanich was matched to a farming couple, with other sites already in production on the peninsula.
- 1.61 hectares (four acres) of a 2.8-hectare (seven-acre) property in Cobble Hill for a market garden were matched to a land-seeking farmer with eight years of experience at an incubator farm.
- A garlic farmer starting up was matched to a 0.80 hectare (two-acre) property in Saanich for a year-to-year rolling lease.
- An apiary was matched to an organic market garden farm in Metchosin for a year-to-year rolling lease.
- A cow, goat, sheep and chicken farmer was matched to 1.21 hectares (three acres) in Yellow Point.

Columbia Basin:

- A 10-year lease on 1.01 hectares (2.5 acres) in Creston between a new farmer starting up doing garlic production and a neighbouring landowner was completed.

Metro Vancouver/Fraser Valley:

- A four-year lease agreement was completed for a farmer starting a 0.18-hectare (0.45-acre) vegetable and apiary operation in Langley.
- A startup apiary was matched to a 8.09-hectare (20-acre) property in Surrey with a temporary six-month lease, and is in negotiations for a 10-year leasing agreement.
- A farmer specializing in Japanese vegetables was matched and completed agreements for a total of 0.81 hectares (two acres) on two neighbouring properties in Surrey.
- 0.30 hectares (0.75 acres) on a 1.21-hectare (three-acre) property in Burnaby were matched to a flower farmer.
- A land-use agreement template was developed for a farmer with a six-year lease on property in Burnaby to use with additional farmers on the land — a flower farmer and a mixed-vegetable farmer.
- A farmer with an apiary operation was matched to two properties in Abbotsford. Approximately 0.10 hectares (0.25 acres) of each property is allocated for bees.
- An existing flower farm business was matched, and an agreement completed for 0.40 hectares (one acre) in Richmond, including the transfer of assets from the previous farmer.
- A five-year lease agreement for a seed startup and educational program was completed for 1.21 hectares (three acres) of a 8.09-hectare (20-acre) property in Abbotsford.

British Columbia News

Government releases independent report on revitalizing ALR, ALC

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19604>

Tuesday, April 30, 2019 2:00 PM

Victoria - The Province has released the final report of the independent Advisory Committee for Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

"I want to thank the committee for its dedication and the thoughtful recommendations made in this report," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "Our government is committed to helping farmers farm. We asked the committee members to provide advice on how the ALR and ALC can provide the best support for farmers, ranchers and producers to ensure B.C.'s agricultural sector continues to thrive, and they delivered."

The committee, consisting of eight British Columbians with diverse agricultural backgrounds and experience, proposed 32 recommendations to support agriculture in the province. The final report is available here: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/impact/agricultural-land-reserve-results/>

More than 2,300 British Columbians responded to the committee's online discussion paper and survey, and the committee also received over 270 written submissions. The committee held engagement sessions with local governments and agricultural stakeholders in nine communities throughout the province and met with the Union of B.C. Municipalities and the ALC.

Following the committee's interim report of 13 key recommendations for legislative change, the B.C. government took action.

Bill 52, passed into law in November 2018, implemented changes to keep farmland affordable for farmers and crack down on the illegal dumping of construction waste and unauthorized fill on farmland.

Bill 15, tabled in February 2019, focuses on giving the ALC the tools it needs to support farmers and ranchers in every corner of B.C.

These changes work in concert with other actions taken by government to help farmers farm so they can keep creating good jobs around B.C. These include:

- relaunching Buy BC to connect farmers and consumers to more made-in-B.C. products;
- a Feed BC initiative to increase the amount of B.C. food in hospitals, bringing new opportunities for producers and better hospital food for people; and
- helping more people start farming through Grow BC with a new Land Matching Program that has already connected 29 new and young farmers with farmland throughout B.C.

The release of the final report completes the committee's work that began in January 2018.

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British Columbia News

Buy BC: Eat Drink Local on the menu for May

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19608>

Wednesday, May 1, 2019 1:30 PM

Victoria - It's time to explore, enjoy and experience what happens when B.C. foods and beverages meet B.C. chefs in a month-long celebration of culinary and farming skills.

The Province and the BC Restaurant and Food Services Association (BCRFA) are proud to present the second annual Buy BC: Eat Drink Local campaign. This month-long event, held in May 2019, offers diners the opportunity to sample innovative, tasty cuisine, B.C. style, at more than 300 venues throughout the province, including everything from food trucks to fine dining, and coffee shops to brew pubs.

"Buy BC: Eat Drink Local is not only a good excuse to try a new local restaurant, it's a way to thank our farmers, growers and processors, as well as make an investment in the future of B.C. food and our farming communities," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "It's a win-win for all of us!"

From the vegetables grown in the province's rich, fertile soil to the fresh seafood from its waters, British Columbia is a foodie destination. Taste buds will soon be awakened to the best that B.C. has to offer, with venues participating in more than 46 communities.

"B.C.'s restaurateurs and chefs are great champions of the Buy BC: Eat Drink Local campaign, giving customers another reason to dine out by offering unique culinary experiences to entice their taste buds while building a greater awareness of the quality, local products available to the province's outstanding culinary scene," said Ian Tostenson, president and CEO, BCRFA. "They're also supporting their local farmers and ranchers by increasing the number of B.C. products that are profiled and served on plates and in glasses throughout the province, helping grow local economies."

Buy BC: Eat Drink Local connects local farmers, ranchers and growers with restaurateurs and chefs who carefully develop feature menus highlighting locally grown and processed food and drinks. Participating restaurants throughout the province are showcasing B.C. food and beverage products on their menus all month, giving consumers a delicious opportunity to try local, seasonal and sustainable food grown right here in the province.

#BuyBC represents a wide range of fresh-tasting, high-quality agricultural and seafood products that are grown, harvested, raised and processed locally by British Columbians all over the province. As British Columbians, everyone can share in a collective sense of pride for the variety of products that come from B.C.'s very own soil and waters.

Learn More:

To find a participating restaurant nearby, visit: www.eatdrinklocal.ca/venues

Chefs wanting to participate can visit: www.eatdrinklocal.ca/participation

Sharing on social? Tag and follow @EatDrinkBuyBC and #BuyBC

Information on the B.C. Restaurant and Food Services Association: www.bcrfa.com

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British Columbia News

Premises ID helps farmers protect their animals

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19659>

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 8:30 AM

Victoria - When emergencies and extreme weather events present challenges to farmers, the B.C. Premises ID program — a pillar of Canada's national traceability system — is one tool farmers and ranchers can use to prepare for the unexpected.

"Wildfires and flooding have become a devastating annual occurrence in many B.C. communities," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "Traceability programs like Premises ID have proven to be an invaluable resource in reconnecting farmers with their livestock during and after a natural disaster. It's important for ranchers and livestock producers to register their premises to protect their animals and their businesses."

During the last two wildfire seasons, the Premises ID program helped more than 130 livestock owners in evacuation zones access their ranches to care for their livestock. Data made available by the program was instrumental in helping first responders, farmers and local governments in B.C. keep farmers and ranchers connected to their animals.

"The summers of 2017 and 2018 will never be forgotten in many parts of British Columbia, due to wildfires," said Donna Barnett, MLA for Cariboo-Chilcotin. "I am pleased that the Ministry of Agriculture is continuing to support our ranchers and farmers through the Premises ID and traceability programs. Registering for Premises ID is a step that farmers can take to prepare for the 2019 fire season."

"While Premises ID was originally designed for animal health traceability, we have found through recent fires and floods that it is helpful for any emergency regarding livestock," said Kevin Boon, general manager, B.C. Cattlemen's Association. "Only livestock producers are eligible to register for the unique identification number, which allows for quick verification that they are a livestock producer and that their services are critical for addressing the welfare of livestock. Premises ID has become a priority when considering access to livestock during emergencies and has proven valuable for ranchers beyond its original intent."

In 2017 and 2018, a wildfire emergency operations centre in the Cariboo Regional District relied on the Premises ID system to provide:

- contact information for livestock owners within evacuation zones;
- minimum estimates of livestock impacted by evacuation alerts and orders; and
- base data that supported efforts to identify premises impacted by wildfires and road closures to assist in the evacuation of animals and the distribution of feed.

The Province opened registration for the program in 2011 and created a free online registration process in 2016 to make program registration more accessible. With climate change making extreme weather, such as wildfires and flooding, increasingly common, producers are encouraged to register land where animals, plants or food are grown, kept, assembled or disposed of.

Quick Facts:

- In 2017, livestock and poultry generated \$1.53 billion in revenue.
- The Premises ID program is part of a three-pillared traceability system that includes components such as animal identification and movement reporting.
- 55% of livestock premises (4,479 registered premises) and 100% of supply-managed livestock premises are registered with the program (i.e. dairy cattle and poultry).
- During the 2017 wildfires, the Premises ID program performed 130 emergency registrations for livestock owners impacted by evacuation orders, thereby greatly improving their chances of being issued re-entry permits into the evacuation zones to care for their livestock.

issued to only permits into the evacuation zones to care for their livestock.

Learn More:

To learn more about the Premises ID program, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/premises-id>

PreparedBC is a one-stop shop for disaster readiness information. For tips on how to prepare an emergency plan and what to include in an emergency kit, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC

To learn more about traceability programs, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/food-safety/traceability>

To learn more about traceability funding, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AGRI0002-000044>

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British Columbia News

B.C. berries receive funding boost for innovation, market growth

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19709>

Saturday, May 11, 2019 11:15 AM

Victoria - The governments of Canada and British Columbia are investing in B.C.'s strawberry, blueberry and raspberry industries to help market competitiveness in berry production through innovative genetics and practices in the province.

"Our government is committed to ensuring our berry producers have the tools they need to succeed and be competitive," said Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. "This investment into berry plant breeding will give B.C. growers the best berry varieties suited to the local climate, helping them to meet growing consumer demand and create good middle-class jobs."

The Lower Mainland Horticulture Improvement Association is set to receive \$200,000 in annual funding for the next five years to improve berry genetics. Results from the research will support a plant breeding program that produces superior berry varieties suited to the local climate.

"The province's berry industry is made up of hardworking families from all over the province," said Lana Popham, B.C.'s Minister of Agriculture. "This funding is supporting innovation and competitiveness for B.C.'s berries that will help give farmers a leading edge in the blueberry, raspberry and strawberry market."

The program is expected to lead to improved crops, higher fruit quality and increased pest and disease resistance.

"The B.C. berry industry has identified plant breeding as the single most important research priority to maintain competitiveness in the global marketplace," said Sukh Kahlon, president, BC Raspberry Growers' Association. "We are pleased that the Province recognizes the importance of developing new varieties, as this partnership will support our industry's long-term viability."

The berry plant breeding program is supported by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. The partnership is a five-year, \$3-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Quick Facts:

- There are over 600 blueberry growers, 100 raspberry growers and 50 strawberry growers in B.C.
- In 2017, B.C. growers harvested:
 - \$136 million worth of blueberries;
 - \$20 million worth of raspberries; and
 - \$6.4 million worth of strawberries.

Learn More:

For more information on Canadian Agricultural Partnership programs in B.C., visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs>

For more information on the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, please visit:

<http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849>

For a Punjabi translation, visit: https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/NR_Berries_Punjabi.pdf

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British Columbia News

Okanagan Valley pouring wine from two new distinct areas

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19725>

Monday, May 13, 2019 3:30 PM

Penticton - When visiting their local liquor or British Columbia Vintners Quality Alliance (BC VQA) wine store, consumers will soon be able to purchase bottles with Naramata Bench and Skaha Bench on the label.

“The Okanagan Valley has always been known as one of our province’s premier grape growing regions, and today, we are taking it a step further by celebrating and showcasing the talent of growers and wineries in Naramata and Skaha,” said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. “Most of our B.C. wineries are family owned and operated. They are incredible people, and I am excited to see the new opportunities and continued growth of the sector.”

There are now four sub-geographical indicators (sub-GIs), or sub-appellations, in the province. Wineries in Naramata Bench and Skaha Bench join Okanagan Falls and Golden Mile Bench, near Oliver, as wineries that meet the requirements of the Wines of Marked Quality Regulation. Wines from all four of the sub-appellations can be labelled with a commitment to consumers that at least 95% of the grapes in the bottle come from that specific area.

Naramata Bench is roughly defined as the bench lands between Penticton Creek and Okanagan Mountain Park on the east side of Okanagan Lake. Skaha Bench covers a 10-kilometre stretch from the outskirts of Penticton and along the eastern shore of Skaha Lake. When wineries add area-specific labels to bottles, they help customers relate to the unique terroir in their specific area while increasing exposure to wine and agri-tourism.

From soil to shelf, more than 60 different grape varieties are produced in the province, including Merlot, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Gewurztraminer, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc. In 2017, B.C. wineries took home more than 2,000 medals in national and international competitions.

Quotes:

Miles Prodan, CEO and president, BC Wine Institute —

“The Okanagan Valley, comprising 84% of all B.C.’s vineyards, is a diverse region. Recognition of sub-geographical indications within the Okanagan is the next phase in being able to identify and promote the varying climate and terroir in the different parts of the region. We are proud of the hard work done by industry and wineries coming together to define and certify these meaningful and scientifically unique grapegrowing areas and we look forward to seeing Naramata Bench and Skaha Bench on BC VQA wine bottles soon.”

Kathy Malone, winemaker, Hillside Winery, Naramata Bench —

“Being the third region to receive sub-GI designation is especially exciting for the Naramata Bench as we have a long history of taking great pride in our terroir. I committed years ago to using only Naramata Bench grown fruit, and we at Hillside, together with our supplying vineyards and our winery neighbours along the Naramata Bench, are pleased that we can now state on the label clearly where the grapes are grown: Naramata Bench — the heart of the Okanagan Valley.”

Evelyn Campbell, proprietor, Blasted Church Winery, Skaha Bench —

“We are incredibly excited for the announcement of the Skaha Bench sub-GI. With this new designation, we will be able to push forward along with our neighbouring vineyards and wineries to tell the story of our unique terroir while continuing to produce wines that reflect our specific growing conditions. With just a quick glance at the wine label, consumers will be able to identify the wines, helping to provide an all-important sense of place to connect with, and what we’re achieving on the Skaha Bench.”

Quick Facts:

- Wineries in Naramata Bench include Bella, Bench 1775, Black Widow, D'Angelo Estate, Daydreamer, Deep Roots, Elephant Island, Forgotten Hill, Foxtrot, Hillside, Howling Bluff, Joie Farm, Kettle Valley, La Frenz, Lake Breeze, Lang, Laughing Stock, Misconduct, Moraine, Monster, Origin, Perseus, Poplar Grove, Red Rooster, Roche, Ruby Blues, Serendipity, Singletree, Terravista, Therapy, Three Sisters, Tightrope, Township 7, Upper Bench and Van Westen.
- Wineries in Skaha Bench include Blasted Church, Black Dog, Painted Rock, Pentage and Crescent Hill.

Learn More:

British Columbia Wine Authority: <http://www.bcvqa.ca/>

BC Wine Institute: <http://winebc.com/>

Hillside Winery: <https://www.hillsidewinery.ca/>

Blasted Church Winery: <https://blastedchurch.com/>

July 2018 news release announcing Okanagan Falls sub-appellation:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AGRI0054-001482>

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British Columbia News

Recognizing the sector that puts B.C. beef on people's plates

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19730>

Tuesday, May 14, 2019 12:15 PM

Victoria - The mouth-watering smell of barbecued beef was in the air outside the Parliament Buildings as the B.C. government and industry celebrated B.C. Beef Day.

"This is the perfect setting to get together with our industry partners and look at ways we can continue to grow ranching and beef processing in our province," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "The smiling faces and sounds of satisfaction are legendary on B.C. Beef Day, as hundreds of people enjoy this incredible product. Thank you to all the people working in our beef sector for making this day such a success."

The Province has proclaimed May 14, 2019, as B.C. Beef Day. The annual event showcases British Columbia's tasty, high-quality beef while recognizing the partnership between government and the BC Cattlemen's Association, BC Association of Cattle Feeders, BC Breeder and Feeder Association, BC Association of Abattoirs and the BC Dairy Association.

The beef, supplied by the BC Association of Cattle Feeders, was from Fraser Valley's Meadow Valley Meats and grilled to perfection by Brian Misko, barbecue pitmaster, and his team from House of Q. The B.C. Beef Day menu included B.C. sirloin tri-tip slices and beef on a bun.

"Today, ranchers from across B.C. are gathering in Victoria to share our great story about raising beef in the diverse ecosystems of British Columbia," said Larry Garrett, president, BC Cattlemen's Association. "Through the careful stewardship of land and environment, ranchers are committed to raising beef that exceeds the expectations of our fellow British Columbians, and we encourage you all to enjoy beef on the barbecue."

The B.C. beef industry is primarily cow-calf operations, with close to 80% of beef cows located on farms in three regions of the province: Thompson-Okanagan, Peace River, Cariboo.

In 2017, the sector marketed over 81,600 tonnes of beef, valued at nearly \$236 million in farm cash receipts.

Learn More:

BC Cattlemen's Association: <http://www.cattlemen.bc.ca/>

BC Association of Cattle Feeders: www.bcacf.ca

BC Breeder and Feeder Association: <http://www.bcbfa.ca/>

BC Association of Abattoirs: <http://bcmeats.ca>

BC Dairy Association: <https://bcdairy.ca/>

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British Columbia News

B.C. celebrates Wild Salmon Day by supporting conservation

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19748>

Thursday, May 16, 2019 12:30 PM

Victoria - As part of government's work to protect salmon habitat and restore wild fish stocks in B.C., the Province is investing \$5 million in the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) to continue its wild salmon conservation work.

"In B.C., wild salmon are part who we are. Coastal communities, First Nations, ecosystems and local economies depend on healthy wild salmon stocks," said Premier John Horgan. "Together with organizations like the Pacific Salmon Foundation, we are working to restore habitats that support wild salmon stocks in our province."

The announcement was made as part of the first B.C. Wild Salmon Day, a collaborative effort by PSF and the B.C. government to raise awareness of the need to conserve this important species for First Nations and all British Columbians.

"The important cultural and ecological role that wild salmon play in our province cannot be overstated," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture. "It's critical that we do everything that we can to protect this species for generations to come."

The investment will help PSF, a non-profit organization, restore wild salmon stocks through its conservation, science and habitat restoration projects, as well as connect the foundation with Indigenous communities and organizations to further reconciliation and conservation initiatives.

"The Pacific Salmon Foundation is grateful to the provincial government for this investment in our work and for making wild salmon restoration a provincial priority," said Michael Meneer, PSF president and CEO. "PSF is a collaborative organization. We intend to strategically leverage these funds through proactive partnerships developed during the past 32 years."

The funding aligns with key recommendations from the Wild Salmon Advisory Council's report, released in March 2019, which called on government to focus on near-term actions that could address the immediate needs of wild salmon and their habitats. It also delivers on the Province's commitment to revitalize and protect wild salmon, which will provide greater economic certainty for B.C.'s coastal communities.

The Wild Salmon Advisory Council consists of 14 British Columbians, including co-chairs Doug Routley, MLA for Nanaimo-North Cowichan, and Chief Marilyn Slett of the Heiltsuk First Nation. Restoration and protection of wild salmon is a shared priority with the BC Green Party caucus — Adam Olsen, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, also participated on the Premier's advisory council.

The event included students and teachers visiting the grounds of the Parliament Buildings and meeting with representatives of the PSF and community stream-keepers to learn about salmon conservation projects and how everyone can help protect B.C.'s vulnerable wild salmon populations in their communities.

Learning opportunities about salmon science, habitat conservation and restoration were paired with art activities such as the Stream of Dreams' Fish on Fences project, where students were able to paint wooden salmon, personalizing their learning experience at the B.C. Parliament Buildings.

Quick Facts:

- On March 15, 2019, the Province of British Columbia announced an investment of \$42.9 million over five years to support the B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund in partnership with the Government of Canada, for a total investment of \$142.85 million over 5 years.

- During the International Year of the Salmon, the B.C. government provided \$75,000 to support a comprehensive study of the stock abundance, composition and condition of Pacific salmon in the Gulf of Alaska.
- The B.C. government was part of a historic government-to-government process with First Nations to protect wild salmon in the Broughton Archipelago.
- The Pacific Salmon Foundation is a not-for-profit conservation group dedicated to protecting, conserving and restoring wild Pacific salmon populations in B.C.

Learn More:

Pacific Salmon Foundation: <https://www.psf.ca/>

Stream of Dreams: <https://www.streamofdreams.org/>

Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/initiatives/fish-fund-bc-fonds-peche-cb/index-eng.html>

For more information on the study in the Gulf of Alaska, visit:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AGRI0015-000243>

For more information on the Broughton Archipelago agreement, visit:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0151-002412>

For more information on fisheries and aquaculture in the province, visit:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/fisheries-and-aquaculture/minister-of-agriculture-s-advisory-council-on-finfish-aquaculture>

For more information on the final recommendations made by the Wild Salmon Advisory Group, visit:
<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/426/2019/03/Wild-Salmon-Advisory-Council-Report.pdf>

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British Columbia News

British Columbia Farmers and Researchers Team Up on Climate Change Adaptation

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19787>

Tuesday, May 21, 2019 9:30 AM

Victoria - Over the next four years, farmers and researchers across the province will be working together to demonstrate and evaluate technologies and practices that increase the resilience of British Columbia's (B.C.) farms and ranches as producers adapt to a changing climate.

Thanks to funding through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, delivered through the Farm Adaptation Innovator Program (FAIP), 10 new applied research projects will explore solutions to climate change-related challenges facing agricultural commodities across B.C.

Two projects, one led by the BC Forage Council and one led by the Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia, will investigate how innovations in forage management practices and technologies can improve soil health and boost yields while enhancing resilience to drought conditions and extreme rainfall. The projects, taking place in partnership with producers in the Cariboo and Peace regions, will also evaluate how these practices impact the capacity of the soil to store carbon and contribute to the removal of carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) from the atmosphere.

The University of British Columbia (UBC) is leading a project – in collaboration with vegetable producers in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and the Kootenay & Boundary regions – where on-farm trials will be used to implement, monitor and model soil and water management practices. The project will evaluate which practices are best for long-term soil health, based on regional climate conditions and soil type, to ensure soils are more resilient to the extreme rainfall and drought conditions expected with a changing climate.

Changing climate conditions are also resulting in shifting pest populations, and E.S. Cropconsult is leading two projects focusing on pest management. One project will test new pest management solutions with blueberry growers in the Lower Mainland, and one will increase access to pest management resources for small-scale berry and vegetable producers in the Lower Mainland and Squamish-Lillooet regions.

All 10 projects will include field trials, demonstrations and the development of producer-focused informational resources that will allow research results to be shared broadly.

The Farm Adaptation Innovator Program is part of the \$6-million Climate Change Adaptation Program funded by the federal and provincial governments through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership and is delivered by the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI).

Quotes:

Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

“Canadian farmers and ranchers are on the front lines of climate change and are key players in the fight against it. Our Government knows the environment and the economy go hand-in-hand, and we will continue working together with B.C. researchers and producers to find innovative and sustainable solutions that will help farmers across the province to adapt while remaining competitive.”

Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture for British Columbia

“When it comes to climate change, we have to work together to adapt. The Farm Adaptation Innovator Program is about farmers and researchers collaborating on solutions and results that can be shared throughout the province. Farmers work hard to offer British Columbians fresh and local products year round, and these

projects will support our food security in the future.”

Serena Black, BC Forage Council

Project: Innovative pasture rejuvenation practices in B.C.’s central and northern interior

“The Farm Adaptation Innovator Program enables producers to partner with researchers to trial innovative practices on-farm that address the immediate and long-term impacts of climate change. It also assists industry associations to work proactively with producers to ensure they are resilient and profitable into the future.”

Sean Smukler, UBC

Project: Too much water or too little: climate-resilient vegetable farming

“The Farm Adaptation Innovator Program supports researchers conducting applied research at the farm level. The benefit of this approach is that researchers have the opportunity to work with producers to co-develop research questions, to trial practices or technologies on working farms, and to share the research process and findings directly with other producers.”

Key Facts:

- \$1.4 million has been allocated across 10 FAIP projects to support research and knowledge sharing to help B.C. farmers adapt to climate change.
- Project and funding partners are providing an additional \$500,000 in project funding.
- Project work will begin in spring 2019 and run for up to four years.
- Fifteen projects were completed under FAIP between 2014 and 2018.
- FAIP is funded by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year, \$3 billion investment by the federal-provincial-territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector.
- The BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI) develops tools and resources that increase the capacity of agriculture to adapt to climate change. Guided by industry, CAI brings together producers, government and researchers to develop a strategic, proactive and pan-agricultural approach to climate adaptation.

Learn more:

- A list of the 10 projects and each area of focus is available as a backgrounder ([attached](#))
- More project details are available at www.bcagclimateaction.ca/farm-level/faip/faip-active/
- More information on the Climate Change Adaptation Program is available in the August 2018 program announcement at <https://news.gov.bc.ca/17817>
- Information about the Canadian Agricultural Partnership is available at www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership

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British Columbia News

Agritech making fruit more accessible for British Columbians

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19846>

Saturday, May 25, 2019 7:00 AM

Victoria - British Columbia's agritech companies are partnering with the federal and provincial governments to find the perfect pairing between food and technology.

A number of innovative projects are receiving investments under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

B.C. pears are a delicacy, though their ripening time makes it difficult for British Columbians to enjoy this fruit consistently. Consolidated Fruit Packers Ltd. (CFP) of Kelowna is eager to change that by bringing innovative methods to the Canadian pear market.

Pears are a unique fruit because they are one of only a few fruit species that do not ripen on the tree. They require time for the sugars to develop off the branch, which can pose a challenge for consumers eager to enjoy a local pear. CFP is studying the process required to create a pre-conditioned pear that consumers will be able to take home and enjoy immediately or soon after purchase.

Defining the conditions that create the perfect pear will allow CFP to offer a local pear with a more consistent texture and flavour. Approaching this challenge from another angle, CFP is developing the optimal method of packaging to further enhance the sweet, juicy flavour that B.C. pears are known for, to provide consumers with the best eating experience.

This project is one of many examples of businesses partnering with the federal and provincial governments to help British Columbians access more local fruit and support growers and producers.

A project by Vancouver-based Vintality, a subsidiary of Geotronics Consulting Inc., is working with B.C. vineyards and fertilizer companies to boost yields and grape quality while lowering the amount of fertilizer needed to grow grapes.

Geotronics Consulting has designed a fertilizer trailer with GPS technology that will automatically dispense precise amounts of liquid fertilizer to targeted areas on the property thanks to its built-in program. This will reduce the amount of fertilizer and water used in the vineyard while ensuring plants get the nutrients they need. The project is designed to increase the competitiveness of B.C.'s grape and wine industries by enhancing the tools growers, producers and processors can access to produce their products.

The CFP and Vintality projects are a small sample of the innovative ideas that B.C.-based organizations are working on to build a more sustainable future. Projects under the Canada-British Columbia Agri-Innovation Program have received nearly \$2.6 million in funding from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. The partnership is a five-year federal-provincial-territorial agreement that includes \$2 billion in cost-shared strategic initiatives delivered by the provinces and territories, and \$1 billion for federal programs and services through March 2023.

Quotes:

Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food –

“Canadian-made foods are recognized worldwide for the highest standards of quality and food safety. Through this investment, our government is supporting agricultural innovation so B.C. fruit producers and processors have access to new technologies and tools to be even more competitive and meet growing consumer demands for their excellent products.”

Lana Popham, B.C.'s Minister of Agriculture –

"It's no secret that B.C. fruit tastes amazing. Finding innovative ways to improve access to pears and grapes for British Columbians while creating neat tools to support our growers, producers and processors is fantastic. It's wonderful to see new technology supporting communities and industries throughout the province."

Gord Morrison, category director, Consolidated Fruit Packers –

"Consolidated Fruit Packers is committed to being the most innovative team in produce with an unwavering commitment to value and taste. The funding through the government's Agri-Innovation Program has provided us the opportunity to push the boundaries in agritech as we create a better eating experience for consumers with ready to eat, delicious local pears."

Chris Mark, operations, Vintality –

"The Canada-B.C. Agri-Innovation Program has given us the support to make our project a reality. Real change and innovation takes a lot of partners and the Agri-Innovation Program has been critical for us in creating this change. We believe B.C. should keep making the best wine that respects the *terroir*, and this is a big step in making that more and more a reality."

Quick Facts:

- B.C.'s climate makes it possible for farmers to grow, harvest and produce over 200 commodities.
- Agrifood and seafood sales in the province generated over \$14 billion in 2017.
- The B.C. food and beverage processing sector generated over \$9 billion in revenue in 2017.

Learn More:

To read the January 22, 2019, news release discussing other projects that have received funding, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AGRI0004-000053>

To read the May 22, 2018, news release announcing the program, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018AGRI0032-000974>

For more information on the Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/canada-bc-agriinnovation>

For more information on how to apply to the Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program, visit: www.iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/innovation/

For more information on the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, visit: www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849

For more information about Vintality, visit: <https://vintality.ca/>

For more information about Consolidated Fruit Packers, visit: <http://cfp-ltd.ca/>

A backgrounder follows.

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Backgrounders

Support for B.C. companies

These 12 projects received \$1,024,319 in support from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership under the Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program, bringing the total funding to nearly \$2.6 million since the program began in April 2018.

Brightside Poultry: \$25,000 to purchase a specifically designed vending machine to sell eggs at the farmgate.

Certified Organic Association of BC: \$118,000 to engage organic producers to adopt a new online certification tool to streamline the certification process and encourage more producers to follow up with organic certification.

Consolidated Fruit Packers: \$188,810 to purchase and implement a blueberry grading machine that can consistently grade size, colour classification and quality with high accuracy.

Consolidated Fruit Packers: \$131,450 to develop a perfect eating-stage preconditioned pear.

Farming Karma Fruit Company: \$55,000 to develop an industrial-scale machine to remove apple cores with seeds and stems prior to juice pressing.

Howling Bluff Estate Winery: \$47,871 to study the capability of a flex cube, an alternative storage container that could replace traditional oak barrels to reduce the cost of producing wine.

Joppa Wills Inc.: \$40,688 to develop a commercial-scale fruit dehydrator to divert about 45,360 kilograms (100,000 pounds) of raw-grade food waste back into the food supply.

Kwantlen Polytechnic University: \$10,000 to develop and confirm scientific protocols for effectively assessing the microbial health of soil.

Mirochembiotech Ltd.: \$70,000 to pilot test amino-acid chelated minerals to make them more readily available in Canada.

University of British Columbia: \$90,000 to research and demonstrate a suitable methodology for the detection of norovirus in fresh produce in B.C.

University of British Columbia: \$54,000 to develop a sustainable, cost-effective approach to manage dairy manure and recover value-added nutrients.

Van Eekelen Enterprises Ltd.: \$136,500 to develop and test a system for growing Witloof (leafy vegetable) to improve cleanliness, reduce repetitive labour and increase efficiency.

Vintality: \$57,000 to develop a GPS fertilization trailer to precisely apply fertilizer according to plants' needs.

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British Columbia News

B.C. celebrates Day of the Honey Bee

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/19881>

Wednesday, May 29, 2019 12:06 PM

Victoria - The spotlight was on the province's honeybees and other native pollinators at the Parliament Buildings, as May 29, 2019, was proclaimed the official Day of the Honey Bee in British Columbia.

Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, was joined on the steps of the Parliament Buildings by representatives of the BC Honey Producers Association, Capital Region Beekeepers Association and Worker Bee Honey Company. She announced that the Bee BC program will receive up to \$100,000 a year over the next three years to support community-based research on bee health.

"The beekeeping community in the province plays an important role in the daily lives of every British Columbian in B.C.," said Popham. "They contribute to our amazing agricultural industry by pollinating crops and produce delicious locally produced honey that British Columbians can trust. Bee health is important to our government, which is why we're increasing funding to Bee BC to support community-based research projects, to help support future generations of honeybees and other native pollinators."

The topics of honey bee and pollinator health were discussed. Peter Awram of the Worker Bee Honey Company spoke about his work developing a B.C. honey purity database. The BC Honey Producers Association was onsite with manual extractors and observation hives to help educate visitors about how honeybees work and how honey is harvested from hives.

"We appreciate all the help and support from the ministry and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC for helping ensure that honey, the only truly natural sweetener, stays pure," said Awram. "We are going to make sure that B.C. honey stays being the highest quality honey in the world."

Since 2017, the Province and the Investment Agriculture Foundation have provided \$150,000 to Bee BC. The program is delivered by the foundation and supports small-scale regional or community-based projects to research, explore, field test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health.

"The beekeepers of B.C. truly appreciate the support from Minister Popham and the people of B.C. through the Ministry of Agriculture," said Kerry Clark, president, BC Honey Producers Association. "Our beekeepers' association will continue to work hard to try to enable our piece of the bee world to improve."

Bee BC funding is helping British Columbians get active and inspired to save the province's bees and pollinators. To date, 29 projects have been funded through the program. The third round of projects just began, with close to \$27,000 allotted to the six projects underway.

The government has also increased support for the honey bee industry since taking office in 2017. Late last year, the province signed on as a co-sponsor of a study to find solutions to the bee-health problems of honey bee colonies involved in pollination, contributing \$50,000 to support that research.

B.C. beekeepers will also be well represented at the 46th Apimondia International Apicultural Congress taking place in Montreal in fall 2019, thanks in part to a contribution of \$20,000 in provincial support to send representatives of B.C.'s beekeeping industry.

The five-day event, themed "working together within agriculture, Canada's answer to sustainable beekeeping," will focus on the relationships between farmers and beekeepers. It will also focus on honey purity and the issues that are challenging the honey sector, such as global climate change and the implementation of new technologies.

Honeybees play an important part of B.C.'s agriculture sector as pollinators of crops, contributing an estimated \$538 million to the economy in British Columbia. Across Canada, they have an economic contribution estimated at over \$3.2 billion.

Learn More:

Bee BC: <https://iafbc.ca/bee-bc/>

BC Honey Producers Association: <http://bchoneyproducers.ca/>

Worker Honey Bee Company: <http://www.workerbeehoney.ca/>

46th Apimondia International Apicultural Congress: <https://www.apimondia2019.com/>

For information about the Ministry of Agriculture's Apiary program, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/animal-production/bees>

A backgrounder follows.

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Backgrounders**Bee BC supported projects****Green Bee Honey, Darwyn Moffaatt-Mallett, Bowen Island:**

\$5,000 to purchase insemination equipment to help the Bowen Island breeding project, in collaboration with the University of British Columbia. Local beekeepers will be trained to use the equipment. The objective is to test the performance of instrumentally inseminated queens in different wintering configurations including regular, nucleus and 'bank' colonies. The most successful queens will be made available to local beekeepers.

Smithers Beekeeping Association, Smithers:

\$5,000 to research pollen sources and consult with the District Agriculturalist, Pollinator Partnership Canada, Xeres and other beekeeping associations to determine appropriate and varied forage sources for honeybees and other pollinators. The project includes planting flowering trees and ground cover or other suitable plants to widen the variety and feeding season in the area.

Cariboo Apiaries, Lillooet:

\$4,110 to study bee health. Pollen traps will be set and monitored from the beginning of June until August to indicate when pollen forage is most abundant and which pollen bees prefer to collect. The pollen will be dried and prepared to be fed back to hives in early October. A control group will be fed regular pollen substitutes, and pathogen levels between the two hives will be monitored.

Elizabeth Huxter, Grand Forks-Boundary:

\$4,770 to plant a variety of sunflower and buckwheat to enhance nectar and pollen sources for bees at critical times of the year to enhance winter survival and bee performance.

Chilliwack Beekeepers Community:

\$3,285 to provide educational and awareness opportunities in the community, including elementary and secondary schools in the district. This includes school field days and city-endorsed educational events.

Peace River Beekeepers Association, Dawson Creek:

\$4,727 to demonstrate how beekeepers in the region could more accurately adjust their existing management to take better advantage of the forage available and achieve healthier colonies, resulting in better survival and higher yield. This includes the purchase of bee health monitoring equipment.

