



UBCM 2019

Shawna Lyttle
Manager of Executive Operations
Ministry of Agriculture

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUE NOTE

Ministry of Agriculture
Date: Sept. 6, 2019
Minister Responsible: Lana Popham

Large homes on ALR

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Our government is protecting the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) so people can count on a safe, secure supply of locally grown food for years to come.
- The ALR was not preserved to be a land bank for development - its priority use is for farming.
- The building of mansions and lifestyle estates on ALR land in urban areas has steadily increased in recent years, inflating farmland prices and preventing new and younger farmers from growing food. We are fixing that.
- Our legislation addresses mega-mansions and speculation in the ALR, so farmers can get onto the land and bring it into production and ensure farming families who need the extra space can apply to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).
- The revitalization of the ALR and ALC will ensure the province's best farmland is protected and communities can rely on fresh, local food and strong local businesses.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL FARMING FAMILIES

- To ensure fairness, landowners who had all their authorizations to construct or alter a residence in place when the ALC came into force will be grandfathered if construction of the foundation has substantially begun by November 5, 2019.
- Farmers know that we need to protect farmland in a way that also supports larger farming families. That's what we're doing.
- We recognize that large farming families may need greater living space to support farming. Those families will be able to apply to the ALC for

a primary residence larger than 500 m², as well as additional residences for farm help.

- **We're going to keep listening to people, and if there are challenges with implementation, we will certainly look at these.**

PROCESS MESSAGES

- **In November 2018, amendments to the Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA) were introduced to limit new house sizes to less than 500m², or less than 5400 sq. ft., except through application to the ALC in cases where it would support farming.**
- **Landowners seeking a larger house size than 500m² can apply to the Agricultural Land Commission if they have support from their local government.**
- **Local governments will have the authority to set lower house size limits in their respective jurisdictions. Richmond is one community that has already done this.**
- **To ensure fairness, landowners will be grandfathered to continue to build their larger homes if all their authorizations to construct or alter a primary residence were in place prior to when the ALCA came into force by regulation, and if construction of the foundation has been substantially begun by November 5, 2019.**
- **The amendments under ALCA became law on February 22, 2019.**

BACKGROUND:

In November 2018, legislation to revitalize the ALR and ALC received royal assent. The legislation focused on three key changes:

1. Addressing mega-mansions and speculation in the ALR so that farmers can get onto the land and bring it into production.
2. Cracking down on dumping construction waste and fill to protect our valuable, arable soil.
3. Re-instating one zone for all ALR land in B.C. to make it clear that the whole ALR benefits from the same strong protections.

The legislation requires landowners in the ALR to seek ALC approval if they wish to build a home larger than 500 m². The size was taken from a bylaw standard the Ministry of Agriculture developed and adopted in 2011.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

For larger farming families, there is an application process to apply to the ALC for a larger house size than the provincial maximum standard. Important to note, that as per the current ALC application process, the local government will need to review and forward the application to the ALC before it can be considered.

To ensure fairness, landowners who have all their authorizations to construct a residence in place when the Act comes into force by regulation, will be grandfathered to continue if construction of the foundation has been substantially begun by November 5, 2019.

The legislation was in response to pressures on farmland that had accumulated over the last 15 years which had increased the cost of farmland to be out of reach for many farmers and led to farmland being damaged by other uses.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

**CONFIDENTIAL
ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Agriculture
Date: Sept. 6, 2019
Minister Responsible: Doug Donaldson

Cannabis Policy on ALR

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- In July 2018, our government announced a policy framework regarding cannabis production on land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- This policy has not changed.
- It provided local and First Nation governments with the authority to prohibit cannabis production in the ALR within their communities, unless it is grown in ways that preserve the productive capacity of agricultural land, such as inside a structure that has a base entirely consisting of soil.
- The regulatory change ensured that, effective immediately, local and First Nation governments had the authority to prohibit new cement-based cannabis-production facilities on ALR land within their communities, while clarifying that cannabis production in the ALR cannot be prohibited if grown lawfully:
 - In an open field;
 - 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 a structure existing as of July 13, 2018, that constructed for the purpose of growing crops inside it.
- In 2015, the government of the day protected the production of medical cannabis by regulation. This meant that local governments, First Nation governments, and the ALC could not prohibit cannabis production in the ALR.
- Our framework announced last summer clearly enabled local and First Nation governments to make decisions about cannabis production that align with local planning and community priorities.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

Why did you require a regulatory change in Feb 2019?

- **The regulatory change that came into effect on Feb. 22, 2019, was a housekeeping amendment as part of Bill 52 being brought into force.**
- **It removed reference to cannabis production as a “designated farm use”. The production of a plant, including cannabis, is a farm use and did not require a secondary designation as a farm use.**
- **The federal government had announced as part of the federal Cannabis Act that came into force on Oct. 17, 2018, that licensed cannabis producers could grow cannabis in open fields, greenhouses and industrial bunkers.**
- **There is no biological difference between cannabis grown for medical or for non-medical purposes.**

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the previous government had made an amendment that classified medical cannabis production as a protected farm use, which protected it as an agricultural crop, meaning local governments and the ALC could not prohibit it.

In July, 2018, in the lead up to the federal legalization of recreational cannabis and in response to significant public concern from mayors and councillors throughout the province, the Government of B.C. announced a regulatory change that gave municipalities the ability to prohibit cannabis production in the ALR within their communities, unless it is grown in way that preserve the production capacity of agricultural land, e.g. soil-based production.

In February 2019, a regulation was brought forth to bring Bill 52 into force that included housekeeping amendments that removed the reference to cannabis production as a “designated farm use”.

The reasoning behind the change was that an agricultural crop is already considered a farm use does not also require a secondary designation as a farm use.

It did not suggest that certain non-designated forms of cannabis production were not a farm use and therefore required a non-farm use application.

There is no biological difference between cannabis grown for medical or non-medical use.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

<p>CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture Date: Sept 11, 2019 Minister Responsible: Lana Popham</p>	<p>ALR Rules Regarding Food and Services</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The ALC is an independent, administrative tribunal – arm's length from government – with an important mandate to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming in British Columbia.
- Our government strongly supports farmers including value-added activities on their farms within the ALR to help them build and sustain their farming businesses and connect people in B.C. to the local food and beverages they enjoy.
- We are always considering ways to increase the business opportunities available to farmers within the ALR, while recognizing that any changes must be balanced, and ensure we continue to protect valuable agricultural land in B.C.
- Government will be engaging directly with farmers, the public and stakeholders to discuss how we can support more value-added activities on farms within the ALR.

Rusted Rake:

- To be clear, the ALC's decision was made based on rules put in place by the former BC Liberal government in 2016.
- The ALC decision is clear – value-added service must be secondary to the farm operation which is not the situation here.
- In this case, this full-service restaurant didn't go to their local government to apply for permits to build and operate their business.
- As the Regional District of Nanaimo has stated, in order to have a full-service restaurant on their property, the Official Community Plan for the RDN would have to be amended and the entire property rezoned for commercial use.

Local Government Approvals:

- Applicants must receive support from their local governments to ensure a business aligns with current zoning and community plans and they have the correct permits and permissions to operate before approaching the ALC.

KEY FACTS:

The previous government established rules for serving food in the ALR. Generally, restaurants have always required a decision from the ALC to operate on the ALR. Farm businesses that produce alcohol are able to serve food, though non-alcohol producers are not able to serve food at this time.

The only change made by the current government was allowing all alcohol producers in the ALR the same opportunities as those that were previously provided only to wineries, including the ability to operate a food and beverage service lounge.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

Government is considering whether further changes are needed to better support producers, while continuing to protect the ALR.

The current rules on events in the ALR were introduced by the previous government in 2016. They have been in place for three years and have not changed. Landowners wishing to hold events that exceed the criteria in the 2016 regulation can apply to the ALC, which will make an independent decision on their applications.

Rusted Rake:

The property is a 7.2-hectare parcel in the Regional District of Nanaimo.

Media coverage on the restaurant's closure has included criticism of the government and ALC but also noted the farm did not apply for the needed permits or zoning from local government.

The farm has a 15-bed greenhouse, garden and vegetable beds, 700 blueberry plants, fruit and nut trees, and several grain fields, including two hectares of barley. It also has chickens, geese, bees and two steers. The vegetables, eggs and beef served in the restaurant were raised on the farm.

The issue began in October of 2017, when the ALC's compliance and enforcement notified Lucas and Gemmell to cease their unauthorized non-farm use activity and required them to seek approval from the commission.

The owners applied for a permit to build a brewery and also to continue to operate the restaurant.

Gemmell indicates that they invested \$450,000 into the business (\$300,000 for the restaurant, and \$150,000 into the brewery).

The process included RDN staff visiting the farm. They did not endorse the already erected building where the restaurant is located as it did not receive permits from the regional district prior to or after construction and operation.

The property is also not zoned for commercial use.

Regarding its decision, ALC notes that: "The panel is not amenable to supporting a proposal which would result in a farm operation becoming ancillary to a non-farm use. For these reasons the panel finds that the eatery is not an appropriate use of the property and would be more appropriately located outside of the ALR in an area that is zoned for commercial restaurant use.

And that there is not a sufficient amount of agriculture to support a restaurant of the eatery's size and scale given the number of seats and hours of operation." The restaurant has been open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. six days a week and can accommodate about 100 people inside and 40 outside.

Rustic Rake closed on September 8th.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUE NOTE

Ministry of Agriculture
Date: Sept. 6, 2019
Minister Responsible: Lana Popham

Additional Homes on the ALR

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Bill 52, the Agricultural Land Commission Amendment Act, protects farmland in B.C. to support farmers.
- Right now, people who live in the ALR and want to build additional homes on farmland to support their farming operations can do so with permission from their local government and the ALC.
- Farmers have continued to be able to apply to the ALC for a manufactured home to support their farming activities while government was working on the legislative framework to revitalize the ALR.
- As it continued to work on regulations to support Bill 52, the B.C. government listened to local governments and people living in the ALR, including those who purchased land in the ALR for residential use, not to farm.
- As a result from those conversations, a July 4th regulatory change extended the grandfathering period for people who are not farming on the ALR to have manufactured homes on their property for immediate family members.
- The change permits landowners in the ALR to include a manufactured home for immediate family members on their land, providing the home meets specific criteria, and the landowners obtain all the required permits and authorizations before Feb. 22, 2020.
- Local governments were consulted to ensure enough time was made available for people to obtain the necessary permits for manufactured homes.
- With a growing population, climate change and ongoing land-use pressures, it has never been more important to ensure that the tiny percentage of land in B.C. that is best suited for agriculture is available and affordable for farmers and ranchers to produce the food that British Columbians need.

Mobile homes for immediate family members (not farming in the ALR)

- **Landowners in the ALR can apply to the ALC to have a manufactured home for immediate family members on their land, providing the home meets specific criteria and the landowners obtain all the required permits and authorizations before Feb. 22, 2020.**
- **Local governments were consulted to ensure enough time was made available for people to obtain the necessary permits for manufactured homes.**

BACKGROUND:

In November 2018, legislation to revitalize the ALR and ALC received royal assent. The legislation focused on three key changes:

1. Addressing mega-mansions and speculation in the ALR so that farmers can get onto the land and bring it into production.
2. Cracking down on dumping construction waste and fill to protect our valuable, arable soil.
3. Re-instating one zone for all ALR land in B.C. to make it clear that the whole ALR benefits from the same strong protections.

There has been criticism from some landowners and families that they have been left hanging with farm properties that they had intended to build on but missed being grandfathered when Bill 52 came into effect.

To ensure fairness, people who had all their permits and authorizations in place on Feb. 22, 2019, when the regulations became law, will have construction of their principle residence grandfathered under the old system provided they begin substantial construction by Nov. 5, 2019. Construction of additional residences was also grandfathered if all permits and authorization were in place and substantial construction had begun by Feb 22, 2019.

Manufactured homes

The B.C. Government heard from a number of ALR landowners concerning the February 22, 2019 regulatory change to the manufactured house allowance under the ALR Use Regulation.

Some manufactured home purchases were underway at the time of the change and were not grandfathered because final permits or foundation construction was not substantially underway by February 22, 2019.

Balancing the protection of the ALR with the needs of ALR families is a key interest of the B.C. Government. A transition period has now been established that will enable owners to seek local government approvals and permits for a manufactured home on their ALR property provided they have all required permits in place by February 22, 2020.

For more information please see the following: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AGRI0054-001392>

ADVICE TO MINISTER

The legislation was in response to pressures on farmland that had accumulated over previous years which had increased the cost of farmland to be out of reach for many farmers and led to farmland being damaged by other uses.

Minister Popham Meeting Schedule

UBCM – Vancouver, BC

Tuesday, September 24, 2019

Meeting Time	Municipality	Meeting Room
8:00 AM	20 Salmon Arm	Room 16
8:20 AM	117 McBride	Room 16
8:40 AM	130 East Kootenay	Room 16
9:00 AM	134 Sooke	Room 16
9:20 AM	214 Pitt Meadows	Room 16
9:40 AM	238 Abbotsford	Room 16
10:00 AM	286 Tahsis	Room 16
10:20 AM	298 Fraser-Fort George RD	Room 16
10:40 AM	315 Kent	Room 16
11:00 AM	348 Comox Valley RD	Room 16
11:20 AM	379 Southern Interior Local Government Association	Room 16
11:40 AM	392 Bulkely-Nechako RD	Room 16
LUNCH 12:00 – 1:00 PM		
1:00 PM		
1:20 PM		
1:40 PM		
2:00 PM		
2:20 PM		
2:40 PM		
3:00 PM		
3:20 PM	717 Sechelt Indian Government District	Room 19
3:40 PM	50 Sayward	Room 19
4:00 PM	721 North Okanagan RD	Room 19
4:20 PM	475 Oliver	Room 19
4:40 PM	736 Nakusp	Room 19

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 U.B.C.M CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: City of Salmon Arm

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Food Hub Study

REQUEST: Please provide update

BACKGROUND: Funding Follow up

Shuswap Food Hub Feasibility Study Update (Added by AGRI)

Funding from the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture has been provided to the City of Salmon Arm to complete a Shuswap Food Hub Feasibility Study. This project will help to quantify the industry demand for a food hub in the Shuswap region, assess market opportunities and recommend a food hub model to support economic diversification through agriculture and food processing. The project began in June, 2019, is expected to be complete by September 30, 2019, and is being led by the Salmon Arm Economic Development Society (SAEDS), with oversight from a working group consisting of members from SAEDS, the City of Salmon Arm, Columbia Shuswap Regional District, Okanagan College and the Ministry of Agriculture. The working group may expand as additional stakeholders are identified during the project.

To date, consultations have been conducted with the Columbia Shuswap Regional District Board of Directors, the Ministry of Agriculture, the City of Salmon Arm, First Nations and industry stakeholders to help inform the project. Industry engagement has also been conducted by way of an open house held on August 15th (approximately 50 regional stakeholders attended), in addition to an industry survey that was circulated. Next steps include reviewing the stakeholder engagement findings, researching processing infrastructure needs for the region, and establishing recommendations for a Shuswap Food Hub model. A draft feasibility study report is expected by September 13th and a final feasibility study report is anticipated by September 30th.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

B.C. Food Hub Network & Upcoming Funding Opportunities

The Province is developing a provincial Food Hub Network, which will be comprised of a Food and Beverage Innovation Centre at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver campus, and a series of inter-connected regional Food Innovation and Processing Hubs ("food hubs"). The goal of the B.C. Food Hub Network is to foster growth and innovation in the processing sector through improved industry access to facilities, equipment, technology, technical services and business supports.

- Two regional food hubs have received Provincial funding to date. The first is a pilot and demonstration Regional Food Hub at the Laurel Street location of Commissary Connect in Vancouver and the second is the North Cariboo Regional Food Hub, led by the City of Quesnel.

Drafted By: Chelsea Sutherland, Agri-Innovation Analyst, Innovation and Adaptation Services Branch
Date: August 22, 2019

- The Ministry intends to fund four additional regional food hubs by the end of the 2020/21 fiscal year using a two-stage competitive application process, with two intake cycles for applications. The Ministry may fund additional Food Hubs at the Province's discretion and if the budget permits.
- The first intake for Food Hub Implementation funding this fiscal year (2019/20) has closed.
- The second application intake for Food Hub implementation funding (for the 2020/21 fiscal year), is expected to open in January of 2020, subject to funding availability, and result in contracts with successful Proponents in April 2020. This is the next available opportunity for Salmon Arm to apply for provincial Food Hub funding.
- The Ministry is funding Food Hub projects in three different categories with different maximum project funding amounts available (Appendix A). The three categories consist of common core requirements and additional requirements specific to each category. The project categories and maximum funding amounts available per project are as follows:
 1. Food Innovation Hub, up to \$500,000;
 2. Full-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Hub, up to \$750,000; and
 3. Small-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Hub, up to \$500,000.
- The City of Salmon Arm and project partners are welcome to follow up with Ministry staff supporting the Food Hub Network initiative for full details and further discussion on the application process, project requirements and funding eligibilities.
 - Dennis.Jess@gov.bc.ca
 - Chelsea.Sutherland@gov.bc.ca

Appendix A: Food Hub Project and Funding Eligibilities

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Funding is available to support the development and implementation of Food Hubs, in any region of the Province, in three different categories:

1. Food Innovation Hub
2. Full-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Hub
3. Small-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Hub

All three categories of Food Hubs should include the following required facility and service components:

Table 1: Required facility and service components for all food hub categories:

Facility Components*	Service Components**
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food processing area(s) or room(s) and equipment• Food packaging area and equipment• Food storage• Office/board room/training space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product development services• Business services• Training and education on food processing and food safety• Facility and services coordinator• System for user booking of and access to services and facilities

**The lead Proponent does not need to own/operate every facility component (i.e. facility components and services can be delivered at different facilities and/or at partner facilities within the same region)*

***The services are not required to be delivered by the lead Proponent. The proposed Food Hub should have the capacity to host the required services and the services can be delivered by the Proponent, a partner, or a third party, (e.g. existing Ministry of Agriculture or Industry Association programs). Participation in the Network will enable sharing of resources and knowledge to support service delivery at each Food Hub. It is not expected that services need to be newly created by each Food Hub, rather the Hub should facilitate access to and delivery of services.*

In addition to the above required facility and service components, for all three Food Hub categories there are additional components specific to each of the three different Food Hub categories. The table below lists the additional facility and service component requirements specific to each of the three categories.

Table 2: Additional food hub category specific requirements:

Food Hub Category	Facility Components	Service Components
1. Food Innovation Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food testing and research lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lab (analytic) services• Applied research (e.g. process technologies, food safety, product formulation)
2. Full-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food testing lab and/or equipment• HACCP-eligible facility (required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shared commercial production (24/7)• Lab (analytic) services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFIA inspection and licensing (dependent on type of processing) 	
3. Small-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Authority regulations met (at minimum) 	1 Shared commercial production

FUNDING DETAILS AND ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A one-time maximum funding allocation is available per project. The maximum funding amounts are as follows:

- Category 1, Food Innovation Centre: \$500,000
- Category 2, Full-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Centre: \$750,000
- Category 3, Small-Scale Food Innovation and Processing Centre: \$500,000

Eligible Activities

- Incremental labour costs specifically required for the project such as contract salaries, benefits and specific per diem fees (this is not applicable for existing full or part time staff associated with the Respondent);
- Salaries for new staff positions and/or consultants required to operationalize the food hub;
- Purchase of new or used food processing, testing, laboratory, or packaging equipment for the Food Hub;
- Costs of retrofitting, renovating or leasing a facility to serve as a Food Hub;
- Costs of engineering or technical designs required to operationalize the Food Hub;
- Costs of meeting the regulatory requirements for the Food Hub, including Health Authority, provincial or federal permits and approvals, and/or Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) audits; and
- Administration costs (the accepted rate for administration of a project is maximum of 10% of cash costs).

Ineligible Activities

- Purchase of land or buildings;
- Permits and approvals related to the land/facility site;
- Normal operating costs associated with carrying out a business or non-profit, such as salaries and benefits of non-contract staff, office space, utilities, phone, materials, labour, board, committee and annual meetings;
 - Funding for a Food Hub cannot be used to pay for the current, regular salaries of existing staff of the applicant organization. However, funding can be used to pay for the salaries of new staff positions, or expanded staff positions, or consultants that are intended to support the implementation and/or operations of a Food Hub.
- Normal costs of establishing or maintaining the Proponent entity, organization, or association;
- Any cost, including a tax, that is eligible for a rebate, credit or refund;

- Financing charges and loan interest payments;
- Costs not specifically required for the implementation of a project; and
- Eligible costs that were incurred before the application was submitted.

Decisions on eligible and ineligible activities are at the discretion of the Province.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of McBride

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Robson Valley Farm Gates to Plate

REQUEST: Opportunity to discuss the policy issues restricting rural and remote farming dependent communities in getting meat to markets. An update from last year is being requested.

BACKGROUND: McBride states that policy issues are restricting the ability for local farmers to get meat to the market. McBride has stated that the Robson Valley requires licencing that allows farmers to process meat and sell locally. This is an economic driver for the Robson Valley and will assist in diversifying the local economy.

Class D and E licences allow producers to process and sell meat in areas of the province where there is either limited or no access to inspected slaughter. Because slaughter occurs without the presence of an inspector, the associated food safety risk and potential concern about animal welfare is higher. Class D licences are only available in 10 areas of the Province prescribed in regulation where it is unlikely for a Class A or B facility to open. Class D licences have higher production limits than Class E licences and can sell to retail outlets, whereas Class E licensees can only sell at farm-gate and farmers markets. The “policy issues” referenced by McBride likely refer to the fact that the area is not designated for Class D licences. Class E licences are available in McBride. There are seven Class E licences (all located in McBride) and one Class A licence (in Prince George) within the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George. Class A facilities have been licenced and were doing business in McBride in the past but were unable to sustain operations. This was likely due to a combination of factors, including management, and community preference for uninspected slaughter. There is a common misperception that Class A and B establishments are large and expensive to build. In fact, most Class A or B establishments are small scale operations: 82 percent of Class A and B production is from four of the 58 licensed establishments. The other 54 account for only 19 percent of provincial production. Some of these plants process only 20 animals per year. In September 2018, the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food released a report with 21 recommendations, all of which the Province accepted. Progress on recommendations related to Class D and E licensing includes: reducing travel time restriction policy associated with Class E applications from two hours to one hour; free food safety and animal welfare workshops for rural producers; and launching consultation opportunity with local governments about Class D regions, which closes for submissions October 1st, 2019.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

Drafted By: Diana Berry
Date: August 19, 2019

- Consumer safety is paramount. British Columbians must be confident that their provincial meat inspection system is continuing to support the highest standards of food safety.
 - B.C. licensed abattoirs (Class A and B) have significant protocols for maintaining required standards of meat safety, facility hygiene and animal welfare.
 - A small Class A or B abattoir should always be considered when a Class D or E facility is being proposed. There is no minimum size requirement or limits on production for Class A and B establishments, which can be scaled to meet local needs.
 - Any producers interested in starting a slaughter establishment should contact Ministry staff to discuss the licensing process and all available options. I recommend that you contact: Klaus Noegel, Operations Manager at 250-784-2561.
 - I appreciate your comments and your feedback about the challenges facing small producers. The Ministry of Agriculture has been actively working on the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food's recommendations, and has introduced significant changes to support local slaughter capacity and local food security.
-

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of McBride

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: ALC Changes

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

Opportunity to discuss ALC changes directly impacting the Robson Valley.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

No information provided.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization

- In Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, legislative amendments to B.C.'s Agricultural Land Commission Act were enacted to encourage farming and ranching in B.C. and to strengthen the independence of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to better fulfill its mandate of preserving the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- These legislative changes will help stop damaging practices in the ALR and make farmland more affordable for new farmers.
- They are designed to protect B.C.'s farmland so residents can access locally grown food, and communities and local economies can prosper through farming, ranching and agriculture businesses
- Bill 52 – 2018, was brought into force on February 22, 2019 through regulation and provided for three key changes:
 - Directly addressing mega-mansions and speculation in the ALR by limiting the size of primary residences and empowering the ALC to approve additional residences for farm use;
 - Restricting the removal of soil and increasing the penalties for dumping of construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR; and,
 - Reunifying the ALR as a single zone, ensuring consistent rules with strong protections.
- Bill 15 – 2019, received Royal Assent on May 30, 2019 and will be brought into force by regulation. It strengthened ALC governance tools by:
 - Replacing the ALC governance structure of six panel regions with one commission to be comprised of regional representatives from all six administrative regions;
 - Providing the ALC Chair with more flexibility to organize commission members into decision-making panels by topic, technical expertise, or administrative region;

- Adding new ALR decision-making criteria that the ALC must consider in order to prioritize the protection and enhancement of the size, integrity and continuity of the ALR land base
- Adding more compliance and enforcement capacity and tools, including a new offence for landowners who do not produce records to the ALC when ordered; and,
- Requiring that applications for excluding property from the ALC may only be submitted to the ALC by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to support more thoughtful land-use planning in the ALR

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of East Kootenay

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Kootenay and Boundary Farm Advisors

REQUEST: The Ministry provide funding to the Regional Districts of Central Kootenay, East Kootenay and Kootenay Boundary to enable the continuation of the Kootenay and Boundary Farm Advisors program.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: In 2017, the Regional Districts of Central Kootenay, East Kootenay and Kootenay Boundary and Columbia Basin Trust partnered to provide technical extension services, known as Kootenay and Boundary Farm Advisors (KBFA), to the agricultural sector within the Kootenays. Providing this service was a direct result of concerns heard during the individual Regional District's Agricultural Plans consultation processes - producers were concerned that the Ministry of Agriculture no longer provided extension services. The Regional Districts and Columbia Basin Trust have committed to funding KBFA until June 2020.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- In addition to the services listed above, KBFA advisors are Environmental Farm Plan Planning Advisors and have supported numerous climate adaptation initiatives. KBFA is recognized for their engagement on climate change issues in the development of the *"Kootenay and Boundary Regional Adaptation Strategy,"* released July 12, 2019 following a year of development led by the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI) and for their ongoing involvement in planned climate change projects under the Regional Adaptation Program.
- As of July 2019, 510 Kootenay region farms have connected with KBFA program through phone calls, emails, event attendance or farm visits. In many of these cases the Ministry has worked in concert with the advisors of KBFA program to provide expert advice, program funding or subject matter expert speakers at workshops and field days.
- The Ministry is supportive of KBFA program and commends the Regional Districts and Columbia Basin Trust for funding these important regional services.
- The KBFA program has provided many opportunities for collaboration with Ministry staff.
- The Ministry is focused on supporting province-wide initiatives through Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC which is a three-pillared strategy to enable sustainable shared prosperity for a better B.C. by supporting B.C.'s agriculture, seafood and food processing sectors, encouraging consumption of B.C. products and building resiliency within the sector.

- AgriService BC connects farmers, food processors and new entrants to agriculture to the services, programs and information the BC government offers to help them succeed. AgriService BC is available by phone, email, online, or by visiting a Ministry of Agriculture office.
- Knowledge Transfer Events Program facilitates knowledge and technical transfer to strategically support B.C.'s producers and processors to innovate and adapt to changing environmental, production, and market conditions.
- B.C. Land Matching Program delivered by the Young Agrarians and funded by the Ministry, provides land matching and business support services to new farmers looking for land to farm as well as landowners interested in finding someone to farm their land.
- As a part of implementing the *Kootenay and Boundary Regional Adaptation Strategy* the Ministry is providing \$300,000 over 2019-2023, through the Regional Adaptation Program delivered by CAI, for locally prioritized projects.
- Ministry staff are actively working to increase the capacity of B.C.'s producers by enhancing services and supports for the agriculture and food sector by working with educational institutions, industry associations, and regional groups such as KBFA program.
- At this time, the Ministry cannot commit to funding the regional services offered by KBFA.
- The Ministry is willing to explore further opportunities to support the agricultural sector within the Kootenay Region.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Sooke

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: ALR Regulations

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Though the protection of farmland for future generations is critical, it is presently more practical to farm on non-ALR land due to inflexibility with regarding housing options on ALR land and a lack of models for dealing with this challenge. Allowing only one large home to be built assumes a highly mechanized type of agriculture that is not financially viable on smaller lots where the cost per acre is high. The ALC appears to be operating in a siege mentality where any indication of putting more people on farmland is viewed with deep suspicion. The mandate of the ALC is to protect farmland for future generations and it has been very effective. This is now at the expense of actual farming.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The District of Sooke does not have a significant amount of ALR land and the majority of land that is in the ALR is not used for agricultural activity.
- There are numerous examples of recently constructed residential developments in the District that are adjacent to the ALR boundary.^{s.16}
s.16
- As the price of housing continues to rise in Victoria, many people are viewing Sooke as a more affordable alternative to living in Victoria.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization

- The Bill 52 -2018 changes to the Act, brought into law on February 22, 2019, include the requirement for ALC approval (rather than local governments) for any additional residence for farm-use through a non-adhering residential use application.
- The changes limiting allowable residences in the ALR were made to meet Government's commitment to revitalize the ALR and the ALC by recognizing that the ALR is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use, farming is encouraged and non-agricultural uses are managed carefully.

- Government extended the grandfathering of manufactured homes for immediate family members if placement permits are obtained by February 22, 2020. Engagement with local government and ALC continues to explore options to provide flexibility for additional residences for families.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the ALR.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the Homeplate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with general stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of Homeplate.
- You are welcome to provide input through the engage.bc.ca survey, but we want to assure you that there will be a deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of Homeplate and other topics that involve local governments.

TOPIC TWO: Affordability of farmland

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Farmers are ageing out and young farmers cannot afford to purchase their land and replace them. New models need to be tried as soon as possible. Climate change is a critical threat and the first impacts will be felt in our food systems. We need to develop a robust resilient agricultural sector that is not entirely dependent on rapidly dwindling supplies of fossil fuels. Due to the cost of land, hobby farms with horses and hay are becoming the norm on ALR land in Sooke. Food is not being produced.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

New Entrant Strategy

- New entrants to agriculture face significant barriers to entry. The rising cost of agriculture land and inputs makes it increasingly difficult to start-up a farm.
- From 2011 to 2016, the total number of B.C. producers fell from approximately 29,000 to 26,000 and the average age rose to 56 years.
- Despite these trends, the number of B.C. producers under the age of 35 increased by 205 to 1,825.
- New entrants, from diverse backgrounds, are entering the agricultural and agrifood sector across the province, bringing new ideas, skills, and capital that are helping to invigorate and promote growth in the sector.

- The Ministry of Agriculture's New Entrant Strategy is built on three pillars (land, knowledge and capital) to address the key barriers facing new entrants to the sector.
- These activities include supporting land matching services, delivering succession planning workshops, developing leaders and supporting mentorship, and facilitating farm start-up through training and events.

Climate Change

- We are committed to working with the sector to improving the resilience of agricultural production in a changing climate.
- The B.C. government is working with industry to address climate change risks and has invested significantly in climate adaptation programming. Along with the federal government, funding and commitments of approximately \$12 million have been made for between 2013 to 2023 to help farmers and ranchers across the province prepare and adapt to changing climate and weather conditions (\$6.2M for the CAP period 2018-2023 and \$5.8M for the GF2 period 2013-2018).
- The Ministry's Climate Change Adaptation Program is industry-led and delivered by the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative. The initiative develops tools and resources to enhance the ability of the B.C. agriculture sector to adapt to climate change. This includes working with local governments, industry and others to develop and implement regional agricultural adaptation strategies.
- Regional adaptation strategies have been developed or are underway in eight key agricultural areas of the province: Delta, the Peace, the Cariboo, the Fraser Valley, the Okanagan, Kootenay & Boundary, Bulkley-Nechako & Fraser-Fort George, and Vancouver Island.
- 80 projects have been funded since 2013, addressing climate related risks such as drought, excess moisture, flooding, pests, diseases, and wildfires.
- Over the next year, we will be actively participating in the development of the B.C. Adaptation Strategy by contributing to policy proposals that address provincial climate change adaptation priorities.

BC Land Matching Program

- This program provides land matching and business support services to new farmers looking for land to farm as well as landowners interested in finding someone to farm their land.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: City of Pitt Meadows

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Advocate for a funding regime to support farmers or local government.

REQUEST: Funding regime to be implemented for new studies.

BACKGROUND:

- In Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, legislative amendments to B.C.'s *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA) were enacted to encourage farming and ranching in British Columbia and to strengthen the independence of the ALC to better fulfill its mandate of preserving the ALR. The legislative changes are part of Government's commitment to revitalizing the ALR and the ALC.
- Local governments are required to ensure that their zoning bylaws are consistent with the ALCA, and a number of local governments have expressed frustration that they were unaware that the changes were occurring and the impact that the changes would have on consistency of their bylaws with ALCA.
- As amending bylaws is an expensive process that takes a significant amount of time and staff resources, local governments may be looking for some financial support for amending their plans and bylaws as a result of significant legislative change at the provincial level.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The Ministry of Agriculture has a variety of funding programs available to support farmers and help them adapt to the changing legislative landscape. These include programs related to business planning, environmental farm planning, food safety and traceability, to name a few.
- While there is no direct ministry funding to support local governments in updating bylaws as a result of legislative change, there is funding available to undertake studies related to agricultural planning.
- One of these sources (now frozen) has previously been the Agriculture Area Planning Program funded by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia (IAFBC). IAFBC has temporarily frozen the program while they conduct a strategic review of this funding stream. The status of this program, including possible future program parameters, will be announced in November 2019.
- Another funding source that local governments have accessed for agricultural planning and studies is the Real Estate Foundation.
- Ministry of Agriculture staff are available to provide in-kind support to local governments undertaking agricultural studies or agricultural planning projects and in updating zoning bylaws relating to agriculture. Ministry staff can also support local governments in the development of Agriculture Area Plans and in the Official Community Plan (OCP) updates.

- The Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) data has been invaluable to many local governments who are developing plans and bylaws or that may wish to assess the impact of any proposed regulations or policy.
- The Ministry is committed to supporting local governments in adapting to recent changes in legislation and Ministry staff can assist in a variety of ways. I encourage you to have your staff contact Ministry staff to discuss ways in which we can help and support you.

TOPIC TWO: Review or further consideration in new ALC regulation of application of banning paved asphalt.

REQUEST: Review and/or further consideration be given to this newly implemented ALC regulation.

BACKGROUND:

- The City of Pitt Meadows is typically a strong supporter of agriculture within their jurisdiction and has a history of implementing good bylaws and policies for the benefit of agriculture.
- Fill and the improper placement of fill has been an issue on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands in Pitt Meadows for a number of years.
- Bill 52 - 2018 made the key change of restricting the removal of soil and increased penalties for dumping of construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR.
- The City of Pitt Meadows appears to have confused the use of asphalt for fill, which is now prohibited, with the use of asphalt for paving, which is still permitted, provided clean fill is used as a base and a Notice of Intent (NOI) is filed with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for any area of fill greater than 1000m².
- There are some dairy farms in Pitt Meadows that have been caught in the new regulations as they were responsibly using crushed concrete waste as a base for roads and paved areas, and this is no longer permitted.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The new ALC regulations did not ban using asphalt as paving, but rather prohibited using asphalt from demolition waste (including grindings and slabs) as fill in the ALR.
- The reason for the change was that the ALC was encountering many properties where land owners were being paid to accept construction waste and debris as fill on their ALR properties that was damaging to the land and the soil. In addition to asphalt, this waste could include concrete waste, tile, brick, rebar, glass and other forms of construction waste, and was negatively impacting land in the ALR for future farming.
- There may be some cases where concrete waste was being recycled responsibly and being used as a road base for legitimate farm roads, but there were too many instances of abuse to allow this outright.
- Access roads for farm structures and driveways to residences may still be constructed in the ALR under the new regulations but require a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the ALC for any amount of fill that exceeds a 1000m² area.

- The road must be constructed of clean fill that does not contain any of the materials now prohibited. Approvals for roads and paved areas that are required for legitimate farm uses should be relatively quick under the NOI process if clean fill is used and the fill and paving are of a scale suitable for the farm use.
 - Asphalt and concrete may be used for the paving, but not the fill. Farm roads are dirt roads that are used to access a field and therefore typically not paved. An NOI is required to place any fill required for new farm roads, but using clean fill to maintain existing farm roads is permitted without an NOI.
 - The new regulations that were brought in under Bill 52 – 2018 should help the ALC and local governments immensely with enforcement of inappropriate fill in the ALR as it is now much clearer as to what materials are not allowed and a NOI is now required in many more circumstances.
-

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: City of Abbotsford

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: As the largest agricultural producer in BC, Abbotsford has a role in provincial policy development.

REQUEST: Information provided by Local Government

The City would like to discuss opportunities for Abbotsford, as county's the largest agricultural producer by hectare, to play a more predominate role in Provincial agricultural policy development.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Abbotsford is one of the most intensively and diversely farmed areas in Canada, supporting a wide range of crop and livestock operations. Approximately 25% of BC's annual gross farm receipts originate in Abbotsford, and 75% of the City's land base is located within the ALR, making agriculture a critical part the provincial economy as well as our community identity. The City recognizes the importance of protecting the capacity of our agricultural lands, however, the Province's uniform approach to Agricultural policies effectively disregards the individual strengths, opportunities and land-use attributes of Abbotsford's production capacities.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The City of Abbotsford's 2016 Official Community Plan (OCP) identified Special Study Areas in areas of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) that they would like to see excluded from the ALR in order to allow these lands to be converted to industrial use. Both Ministry staff and the ALC stated objections to these special study areas when reviewing the draft, but they were not removed or amended prior to final adoption of the OCP.
- The City of Abbotsford has a history of requesting exclusions from the ALR for industrial land going back to 1979. Many of the original areas that were excluded for industrial purposes were converted to big box retail or office park use which has driven further requests for exclusions for industrial land.
- The most recent exclusion that was granted by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) was for 178.5 ha (441 acres) near Abbotsford International Airport and north of Highway 1 on Mount Lehman Road in 2003.
- While some of these lands have since been converted to industrial use as planned, a number of parcels still remain vacant, and agriculture has ceased to exist on many of these lands as a result of the industrial designation in the OCP.
- Mayor Henry Braun was re-elected in 2018 after stating during his campaign that he would continue to pursue ways to allow industrial growth in Special Study Areas of the OCP.

- The ALC rejected an application from City of Abbotsford to exclude the land identified in Special Study Areas A and B of the OCP on April 27, 2018. The land in these two Special Study Areas totaled 201.09 ha (497 acres) and is primarily located in west Abbotsford north of Highway 1 adjacent to the Township of Langley Gloucester Industrial Estates and in the area adjacent to the Abbotsford International Airport.
- Many communities in B.C. (particularly in the Lower Mainland) are struggling with shortages of industrial land, but have started to recognize that utilizing existing industrial lands more effectively is a better approach than asking for further ALR exclusions.
- Ministry staff would support an industrial lands study by the City of Abbotsford, provided the primary focus was on how to use existing industrial lands more effectively, rather than large-scale block applications for ALR exclusion.
- AgRefresh is a comprehensive three-stage planning process to review agricultural policies, bylaws and regulations, and to establish a framework for ongoing bylaw compliance for land within the ALR. AgRefresh will provide three deliverables: updated OCP policy, updated Zoning Bylaw regulation, and a Bylaw Compliance Strategy.
- The AgRefresh project included extensive public consultation and City staff were preparing to draft amending bylaws, but this work was put on hold pending the outcome of the ALR Revitalization. City staff have expressed frustration that it is difficult to know when to continue with AgRefresh if legislative changes are still being planned at the provincial level.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization

- In Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, legislative amendments to B.C.'s Agricultural Land Commission Act were enacted to encourage farming and ranching in B.C. and to strengthen the independence of the ALC to better fulfill its mandate of preserving the ALR.
- The legislative changes are part of Government's commitment to revitalizing the ALR and the ALC.
- These legislative changes will help stop damaging practices such as dumping construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR and make farmland more affordable for new farmers.
- They are designed to protect B.C.'s farmland so residents can access locally grown food, and communities and local economies can prosper through farming, ranching and agriculture businesses.
- They advance several recommendations put forward by the Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.

- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of Tahsis

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Open Net Salmon Farms

REQUEST: Information provided by Local Government

Institute a provincial policy to transition open net salmon farms to land-based closed systems. Develop a policy to ensure that coastal communities that are impacted by fish farms and provide services receive economic benefit or compensation from the business activity.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

In 2017, in response to the escape of 305,000 Atlantic salmon into the Salish Sea, the First Nations Fisheries Council passed a resolution calling for a transition from open net ocean systems to land-based closed containment systems. There are significant risks posed from the pathogens and diseases introduced into the ocean environment by open net systems, like those in Nootka Sound and Esperanza Inlet. The operating practices by the owner in this region have raised grave concerns. Moreover, Tahsis receives no economic benefit from the operation of these fish farms although they use municipal services that are paid for by Tahsis property owners.

Information provided by the Ministry

- In June 2015, the B.C. government announced a Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Council on Finfish Aquaculture (MAACFA), which was tasked to examine the social and ecological sustainability of the sector.
- MAACFA's final report was provided to the Province in February 2018. In coordination with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and other provincial agencies, progress has been made on many of the strategic recommendations and associated actions. One of the recommendations was to provide incentives for the continued research, development and adoption of salmon farming technologies that reduce the risk to wild salmon, including land-based closed containment.
- In support of this recommendation, the Ministry is currently providing funding (in partnership with DFO and Sustainable Development and Technology Canada) for a Study on the State of Salmon Aquaculture Technology, due in 2019.
- On June 4, 2019, DFO announced a suite of measures to set more sustainable aquaculture practices in the province. These measures include establishing three new Technical Working Groups (TWGs), one of which is dedicated to Aquaculture Production Technologies. The main objectives of this TWG will be to review the study on the State of Salmon Aquaculture Technology and other relevant information.

- This TWG will seek to provide recommendations for alternative technologies which lower risk factors (e.g., reduce wild/farmed disease transmission risk and benthic impacts) and identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership for all stakeholder groups and Indigenous communities that can advance adoption of alternative technologies.
- In June 2018, the Province announced that as of June 2022, *Land Act* tenures will only be granted to fish farm operators who have satisfied DFO that their operations will not adversely impact wild salmon stocks, and who have negotiated agreements with the First Nations in whose territory they propose to operate.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- We are encouraging stronger action from our federal partners to make sure salmon farming operations do not put our wild salmon stocks at risk.
- The Province is taking steps to transition to a sustainable salmon aquaculture industry that respects wild salmon, embraces reconciliation with First Nations and protects jobs.
- The B.C. government supports the evaluation and use of innovative technologies like closed containment to explore new markets and build on B.C.'s reputation as a provider of great-tasting, sustainable seafood.
- Our new approach will create clarity for salmon farming by bringing industry and First Nations together in full partnership.
- Thousands of jobs depend on maintaining a healthy marine environment in B.C., along with the livelihoods and economic prosperity of coastal communities and First Nations.
- Several operators already have agreements with First Nations. Those types of partnerships will grow and lead to more predictability over the long term as First Nations and industry work together.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Agriculture Land Commission Act Changes

REQUEST: Information provided by Local Government

An opportunity to have dialogue with the Minister.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

We would like an opportunity to share some of thoughts on the changes within our communities regarding the legislative changes.

Information provided by the Ministry

- In 2001, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) entered into a Delegation Agreement with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, which grants decision making powers for subdivision and non-farm use applications within approved official community plan areas.
- The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (the Act) is clear that a Delegation Agreement is a mechanism for fulfilling the goals of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and does not elevate local government matters above the mandate of the ALC.
- In 2013, the ALC completed its review of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Delegation Agreement, which remains active.
- The Strengthening Farming Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture frequently reviews and provides comment on subdivision and non-farm use applications within the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George.
- Virtually all applications are approved (through the authority of the Delegation Agreement) and agricultural considerations are rarely taken into account when decisions are made.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization

- In Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, legislative amendments to B.C.'s Agricultural Land Commission Act were enacted to encourage farming and ranching in British Columbia and to strengthen the independence of the ALC to better fulfill its mandate of preserving the ALR.
- The legislative changes are part of Government's commitment to revitalizing the ALR and the Agricultural Land Commission.

- These legislative changes will help stop damaging practices such as dumping construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR and make farmland more affordable for new farmers.
- They are designed to protect B.C.'s farmland so residents can access locally grown food, and communities and local economies can prosper through farming, ranching and agriculture businesses.
- They advance several recommendations put forward by the Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee.

TOPIC TWO: Exclusion Application Process

REQUEST: Information provided by Local Government

We would appreciate an update from the Minister on the status of this initiative.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

At the time of our meeting request there was no information nor clarity of expectations regarding the role that local governments will play in inclusion applications.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Bill 15)

Bill 15 – *The Agricultural Land Commission Amendment Act* – received Royal Assent on May 30, 2019 and will be brought into force by regulation. Bill 15 strengthened ALC governance tools to further protect ALR land by:

- focusing on strengthening the governance and independence of the ALC to prioritize “protecting and enhancing” the “size, integrity and continuity” of the ALR and its use for farming and improves the ALC's enforcement powers.
- replacing the current ALC governance model of six panel regions and an Executive committee with one Commission requiring membership from all six administrative regions to ensure consistent provincial decision making and regional representation is maintained;
- providing the ability for the Chair of the ALC to create a decision-making panel to assess applications for inclusion, exclusion or variances in the ALR where appropriate;
- requiring landowners who want land removed from the ALR to work with their local government or First Nations government to have them bring it forward for consideration by the ALC as part of a community planning process (note: this option exists in the current Act; however, Bill 15 removes the option for landowners to deal with the ALC and their local government or First Nations government separately); and,
- adding additional compliance and enforcement capacity, including the ability to register remediation orders with the Land Title Office, thereby making all prospective buyers aware of any outstanding issues regarding ALR land.

Exclusion Application Process

- Changes to the exclusion application process in Bill have not yet been brought into force.
- Government is working with the ALC to outline a seamless implementation of Bill 15.

Drafted By: Reed Bailey, Anna North, Arlene Anderson and Heather Anderson

Date: August 27, 2019

- Government is committing to providing local governments with guidance materials on the changes to the exclusion process and providing sufficient opportunity for local governments to understand the changes before the exclusion process changes are made to the law.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
 - We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
 - We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
 - The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
 - The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
 - The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
 - You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.
-

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Kent

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Bill 15 with lack of consultation with local governments.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Background will be submitted at a later date.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The District of Kent has been lobbying the Minister to allow the exclusion of ALR land adjacent to the town site of Agassiz, after the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) rejected a landowner application on December 18, 2017. The District of Kent forwarded that landowner application to the ALC with their support. The Minister previously responded with a letter requesting a meeting to discuss this issue.
- The District of Kent had identified the lands within the application adjacent for future residential development and large format retail. Both Ministry staff and ALC objected to this designation during development of the Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2014, but District of Kent did not remove the designation or make any amendments prior to final adoption of the OCP.
- The District of Kent recently attended an ALC Executive Committee meeting to talk about their need to grow and that they are running out of room to do so. They wish to develop the lands that were part of the rejected exclusion application, but also have other ALR areas that they wish to develop. The Executive Committee expressed concerns about the type of development proposed for these lands.
- The lands are extremely high capability (Class 1 and 2) and excluding them to accommodate low density residential and large format retail does not support agricultural objectives or modern planning principles.
- The District of Kent may soon be embarking on an OCP update, which represents an opportunity to engage and encourage good community planning based on modern planning principles.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Bill 15)

- Bill 15 focuses on strengthening the governance and independence of the ALC to prioritize 'protecting and enhancing' the 'size, integrity and continuity' of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its use for farming and improves the ALC's enforcement powers. Changes include:
 - Replacing the current ALC governance model of six panel regions and an Executive committee with one Commission requiring membership from all six administrative regions to ensure consistent provincial decision making and regional representation is maintained;

- The ability of the Chair of the ALC to create a decision-making panel to assess applications for inclusion, exclusion or variances in the ALR where appropriate;
- Requiring that applications for excluding property from the ALC may only be submitted to the ALC by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to support more thoughtful land-use planning in the ALR; and,
- Adding additional compliance and enforcement capacity, including the ability to register remediation orders with the Land Title Office, thereby making all prospective buyers aware of any outstanding issues regarding ALR land.

Implementation of Bill 15

- Government is committed to supporting local governments in implementing the changes in Bill 15 and providing sufficient time to understand and respond to legislative and regulatory changes.
- Going forward, government is adopting a formalized engagement plan with key stakeholders, like local governments, in its exploration of policy and legislative changes on the ALR.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

TOPIC TWO: Land exclusion application at the teacup.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Background will be submitted at a later date.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Bill 15)

Drafted By: Alison Fox, Anna North, Arlene Anderson and Heather Anderson

Date: August 27, 2019

- Bill 15 focuses on strengthening the governance and independence of the ALC to prioritize ‘protecting and enhancing’ the ‘size, integrity and continuity’ of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its use for farming and improves the ALC’s enforcement powers. Changes include:
 - Replacing the current ALC governance model of six panel regions and an Executive committee with one Commission requiring membership from all six administrative regions to ensure consistent provincial decision making and regional representation is maintained;
 - The ability of the Chair of the ALC to create a decision-making panel to assess applications for inclusion, exclusion or variances in the ALR where appropriate;
 - Requiring that applications for excluding property from the ALC may only be submitted to the ALC by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to support more thoughtful land-use planning in the ALR; and,
 - Adding additional compliance and enforcement capacity, including the ability to register remediation orders with the Land Title Office, thereby making all prospective buyers aware of any outstanding issues regarding ALR land.

Exclusion Application Process

- Changes to the exclusion application process in Bill 15 have not yet been brought into force.
- Government is working with the ALC to outline a seamless implementation of Bill 15.
- Government is committing to providing local governments with guidance materials on the changes to the exclusion process and providing sufficient opportunity for local governments to understand the changes before exclusion process changes are made.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Kent

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Balancing drainage needs on farm land with cost of species at risk.

REQUEST:

Note: Information provided by Local Government

The District of Kent requests that the Ministry considers allocating funds annually to ensure that the national and provincial priorities of managing species at risk is maintained.

BACKGROUND:

Note: Information provided by Local Government

The District understands the need to protect species at risk; however, due to the agricultural sector within the District, it is important that the 143 kilometers of drainage infrastructure is well maintained. Citizens in both Canada and British Columbia are requesting the government to manage species at risk; therefore, the value goes beyond the boundaries of the District of Kent.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

Thank you for your request. The Ministry of Agriculture understands that it is challenging to maintain good drainage for farmland while protecting species that may need those same watercourses and that the needs of drainage and species at risk may not align. This is a complex issue. To address this issue, the Ministry would like to learn more about your specific concerns, to explore ways to reduce costs, improve riparian function, and reduce erosion of farmland while providing habitat for species at risk.

Currently, there are programs to help finance the cost to farmers of beneficial management practices that benefit species at risk. The Environmental Farm Plan (<http://ardcorp.ca/programs/environmental-farm-plan/>) program may be helpful. Participating farmers can apply for funding to improve riparian management and drainage and enhance biodiversity on their farms. The Species at Risk Partnerships on Agricultural Lands (<https://ardcorp.ca/programs/sarpal/>) program is a federal initiative to help develop, test and implement beneficial management practices that help to protect species listed in the Species at Risk Act.

While funding opportunities may exist and new ones might emerge, it is important to us that we start by learning about the challenges and how the District of Kent, farmers, and government can work together to address these challenges. To continue this discussion, please contact Thom O'Dell, Agroecologist (Thom.Odell@gov.bc.ca; phone: 250-897-7529) or Kim Sutherland, Regional Agrologist (Kim.Sutherland@gov.bc.ca; phone: 604-556-3073) with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Drafted By: Thom O'Dell, Agroecologist, Ministry of Agriculture
Date:

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of Comox Valley

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Legislative Changes

REQUEST: Information provided by Local Government

To discuss and clarify recent legislative changes and upcoming provincial programs.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

To provide an update on Comox Valley agricultural activities and initiatives; recent legislative changes and upcoming provincial programs.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Legislative Changes)

- In Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, legislative amendments to B.C.'s Agricultural Land Commission Act were enacted to encourage farming and ranching in B.C. and to strengthen the independence of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to better fulfill its mandate of preserving the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- These legislative changes will help stop damaging practices in the ALR and make farmland more affordable for new farmers.
- They are designed to protect B.C.'s farmland so residents can access locally grown food, and communities and local economies can prosper through farming, ranching and agriculture businesses
- Bill 52 – 2018, was brought into force on February 22, 2019 through regulation and provided for three key changes:
 - Directly addressing mega-mansions and speculation in the ALR by limiting the size of primary residences and empowering the ALC to approve additional residences for farm use;
 - Restricting the removal of soil and increasing the penalties for dumping of construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR; and,
 - Reunifying the ALR as a single zone, ensuring consistent rules with strong protections.
- Bill 15 – 2019, received Royal Assent on May 30, 2019 and will be brought into force by regulation. It strengthened ALC governance tools by:
 - Replacing the ALC governance structure of six panel regions with one commission to be comprised of regional representatives from all six administrative regions;
 - Providing the ALC Chair with more flexibility to organize commission members into decision-making panels by topic, technical expertise, or administrative region;

Drafted By: Gregory Bartle, Anna North, Arlene Anderson and Heather Anderson

Date: August 27, 2019

- Adding new ALR decision-making criteria that the ALC must consider in order to prioritize the protection and enhancement of the size, integrity and continuity of the ALR land base
- Adding more compliance and enforcement capacity and tools, including a new offence for landowners who do not produce records to the ALC when ordered;
- Requiring that applications for excluding property from the ALC may only be submitted to the ALC by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to support more thoughtful land-use planning in the ALR

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

**MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Southern Interior Local Government Association

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Secondary housing/seasonal worker housing on farmland. (Replacement of meeting 287)

REQUEST: Information provided by Local Government

To discuss the implications of Bill 52 on farmers/orchardists in the SILGA region with regard to seasonal worker housing and secondary family housing. Clarification regarding grandfathering of secondary housing on farmland is also requested.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

During picking seasons, farmers require an influx of workers to get their product from the fields to market. These workers need housing close to the fields. But Bill 52 requires approval of any additional residences in the ALR to curb non-farm development. Also, farming is no longer limited to an immediate family - often two or three families and/or extended families are required to properly manage the farm and sufficient housing, via secondary housing, on the farm is critical.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) comprises local governments primarily from the Central Okanagan, North Okanagan, Thompson-Nicola, Columbia Shuswap, and Squamish-Lillooet Regional Districts.
- SILGA members, especially those in Central and North Okanagan, have experienced an increase in tree fruit production in recent years, with an associated increase in required seasonal farm workers.
- These members have also experienced an influx of new residents in recent years, partly due to an increase of retirees, which increases competition for land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- The 2018 Farm Credit Canada Values Report indicates that the Okanagan region now has farmland value/acre numbers higher than the south coast (\$97,903 versus \$94,657).
- SILGA member the Township of Spallumcheen has brought forward UBCM resolution B75, requesting the Ministry of Agriculture place a moratorium on legislative changes.

ALR/ALC Revitalization – Grandfathering Provision

- On February 22, 2019, the Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA) and its regulations were amended to bring into force a maximum size limit of 500 m² (5380 sq. ft) on principal residences in the ALR.

- The amendments also provided that additional residences are permitted on the ALR if the Agriculture Land Commission (ALC), rather than local governments, determine the additional residence is necessary for farm use.
- Under the changes, principal and additional residences existing on a parcel before February 22, 2019 are grandfathered if they were constructed with all required authorizations (i.e., permits). Repair and partial replacement of grandfathered residences are also permitted if certain conditions are met.
- If a parcel of ALR land had two residences before February 22, 2019 and were constructed with all required authorizations, these residences can continue to exist.
- The ALCA and its regulations do not:
 - prohibit the renting out of grandfathered residences;
 - require occupation of a residence by an owner for grandfathered residences to be rented out; or
 - require farming to occur on the parcel before the residences can be rented out.
 - However, local governments may have restrictions on the use of residences as rental properties and confirmation of their bylaws is recommended.
- If a parcel of land on the ALR has one residence that is grandfathered, it is considered the principal residence.
- The later construction of a residence over an existing structure would be considered an additional residence and must be necessary for farm use as determined by the ALC on application.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The new rules are meant to address speculation that inflates the cost of farmland in B.C. beyond what's attainable for B.C. farmers.
- The changes were made to meet the B.C. Government's commitment to revitalize the ALR and the ALC by reaffirming that the ALR is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use, farming is encouraged, and non-agricultural uses are managed carefully.
- The ALC oversight role for some residential use structures in the ALR addresses residential development pressures including mega-mansions and additional residences not related to farming.
- Government extended the grandfathering of manufactured homes for immediate family members if placement permits are obtained by February 22, 2020.
- The Ministry continues to explore options to provide flexibility for additional residences for families through engagement with local governments and the ALC.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.

- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: New ALC Regulations and Northern Panel

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

The RDBN requests that the regional panels be continued. The Northern Panel is essential in providing a northern perspective and representing northern interests, in addition to identifying economic opportunities.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Strict regulations have been adopted which limit 2nd dwellings and soil deposit. The RDBN feels that these regulations do not fit the north and have significant negative impacts on northern agriculture. The previous 2 zone system allowed the ALC some ability to develop and implement regulations in consideration of the northern B.C. context.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) has traditionally been a vocal advocate for regional ALC decision making panels
- The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) hosted a regional seminar in Prince George on June 12, 2019 that was attended by municipality/regional district staff from the Cariboo/Central Interior area (including RDBN staff) to provide an update on recent changes to the ALC Act and Regulations.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Bill 15)

- Bill 15 focuses on strengthening the governance and independence of the ALC to prioritize 'protecting and enhancing' the 'size, integrity and continuity' of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its use for farming and improves the ALC's enforcement powers. Changes include:
 - Replacing the current ALC governance model of six panel regions and an Executive committee with one Commission requiring membership from all six administrative regions to ensure consistent provincial decision making and regional representation is maintained;
 - The ability of the Chair of the ALC to create a decision-making panel to assess applications for inclusion, exclusion or variances in the ALR where appropriate;

- Requiring that applications for excluding property from the ALC may only be submitted to the ALC by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to support more thoughtful land-use planning in the ALR; and,
- Adding additional compliance and enforcement capacity, including the ability to register remediation orders with the Land Title Office, thereby making all prospective buyers aware of any outstanding issues regarding ALR land.

Regional Representation

- Regional representation will be preserved for the ALC. The changes to ALC composition and governance that will occur once Bill 15 comes into force will allow the ALC to organize itself to efficiently make land use decisions to support farmers.
- The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* provides a path for farmers to obtain ALC approval from additional residences necessary for farm-use through a non-adhering residential use application.

Secondary Dwellings

- Government extended the grandfathering of manufactured homes for immediate family members if placement permits are obtained by February 22, 2020.
- Engagement with local governments and the ALC continues to explore options to provide flexibility for additional residences for families.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Sechelt Indian Government District

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: We would like to discuss how we can best work together to implement the Foundation Agreement

REQUEST:

Information provided by Local Government

We would like to discuss how we can best work together to implement the Foundation Agreement, including shared decision-making around finfish aquaculture development. We explore the many concerns shíshálh has regarding finfish aquaculture development and ways to address them.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by the Ministry

In October 2018, the B.C. Government and Shishalh (Sechelt) Nation signed a progressive Reconciliation agreement dubbed the Foundation Agreement. The Foundation Agreement included a transfer of lands, as well as commitments to jointly manage resources and land use planning initiatives. There are also provisions in the agreement that call for the creation of a Resource Management Table to make decisions on joint management of fish and wildlife, hunting and fishing, aquaculture, and parks and conservancies. Currently in B.C., aquaculture companies must operate in a multi-jurisdictional space where provincial and federal roles and responsibilities are clearly defined through legislation.

- The provincial government sets the overall policies regarding economic development, regulates processing and transportation and disposes the use of crown land for the purposes of aquaculture through tenure administration. These roles are divided between the Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR) respectively.
- The federal government regulates the actual culture or rearing of fish, fish health, marine environmental effects and monitors and mitigates potential implications to wild fish stocks.

On June 20, 2018, the Province announced new conditions for the disposition of crown land for salmon aquaculture. These new conditions come into effect for new and replacement tenures as of June, 2022 and require that operators:

- Meet all existing and future federal aquaculture license conditions that assures protection of the health of wild salmon;

- Demonstrate support from relevant First Nation(s) in whose territory they propose to operate via industry / First Nations agreements; and,
- Meet all provincial *Land Act* policies related to the siting of finfish aquaculture sites.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The Province is taking steps to transition to a sustainable salmon aquaculture industry that respects wild salmon, embraces reconciliation with First Nations and protects jobs.
- In 2018 we announced a new policy for issuing salmon farm tenures that will come into effect in June, 2022. This transition date – three years from now – will ensure that the salmon farming industry has the time it needs to address environmental concerns and build full partnerships with First Nations.
- As of June 2022, the Province will only grant *Land Act* tenures to fish farm operators who have satisfied Fisheries and Oceans Canada that their operations will not adversely impact wild salmon stocks, and who have negotiated agreements with the First Nations in whose territory they propose to operate.
- We are encouraging stronger action from our federal partners to make sure salmon farming operations do not put our wild salmon stocks at risk.
- Our new approach will create clarity for salmon farming by bringing industry and First Nations together in full partnership.
- Thousands of jobs depend on maintaining a healthy marine environment in B.C., along with the livelihoods and economic prosperity of coastal communities and First Nations.
- We are committed to working with the Sechelt, under the terms of the Foundation Agreement, to ensure economic prosperity continues while preserving the marine environment.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of Sayward

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: The increasing impact regulations are having on the fish farm industry and the small communities

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

While we appreciate the work the government is doing to protect wild salmon stock, we are concerned that increased regulation will have a detrimental impact on the economic survival of Sayward. Without fish farms and revenue it generates for our community, our Sayward Futures Society would not exist.

We recognize that the environmental concerns must be considered, we ask that any regulations be considered in terms of best practices to both foster economic development and care for the environment.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by the Ministry

- Sayward is a village located in the Sayward Valley on the northeast coast of Vancouver Island. In 2018, the mayor of Sayward requested a meeting with the Premier to discuss impacts of the Province's salmon farming policy changes. There is significant infrastructure associated with the salmon farming sector in the Sayward region:
 - There are five finfish aquaculture sites within a 20km radius of the village.
 - Mowi's (formerly Marine Harvest) Dalrymple freshwater facility is a large hatchery located near Sayward. Mowi recently invested \$40M to update this facility to build seven new recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS) to produce smolts for seawater grow-out.
 - Cermaq has their Little Bear Hatchery nearby, which has also recently been upgraded.
 - Brown's Bay Packing Company (a major fish processing facility dedicated to servicing the salmon-farming sector) is nearby in Campbell River and is a significant employer. B.C. (AGRI) recently entered into a cost-shared initiative with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and Brown's Bay for an upgrade to their water treatment system.
- On June 20, 2018, the Province announced new rules and expectations for the disposition of Crown land tenures for open-net pen salmon aquaculture in provincial waters. Effective June 2022, the Province will only grant *Land Act* tenures to fish farm operators who have satisfied DFO that their operations will not adversely impact wild salmon stocks and who have negotiated agreements with the First Nation(s) in whose territory they propose to operate.
- In addition, the recent Broughton negotiations with First Nations have led to the short term transition of some farm sites, as well as the potential for further removals if agreements with First Nations cannot be met. These possible production losses have the potential to decrease activity, and economic contribution to the Sayward region.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Thank you for sharing your concerns with me. This government is committed to working with First Nations, the industry and DFO to ensure B.C.'s aquaculture sector is successful, environmentally sustainable and respects First Nations' rights while providing good jobs for British Columbians.
- Our historic, government-to-government talks with First Nations in the Broughton have produced important recommendations to address Nations' longstanding concerns and protect and restore wild salmon stocks.
- The decisions we have made for salmon aquaculture were done with the spirit and intent of stabilizing the path forward for that sector by establishing clarity for operators and building public confidence and Indigenous support for these operations.
- Wild salmon have a unique role in the lives, culture and history of Indigenous peoples and it is imperative that salmon-farming operations operate in full partnership with the First Nations in whose territories they operate. This new approach includes making sure Ottawa plays its full role in the protection of wild salmon.
- I want to assure you that we are taking these steps in an effort to modernize and incent the salmon aquaculture industry to a place where they can operate without conflict and with more certainty.

If asked about industry's role in the Broughton:

- The two companies operating in the Broughton Archipelago were part of this process, and are supportive of the recommendations it produced.
- Industry has told us that there will be minimal to no job impacts at the sites as a result of the orderly transition outline in the recommendations.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO)

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Agricultural Tourism

REQUEST:

Information provided by Local Government

We are seeking your input on agricultural tourism ideas for the 110 acre remainder property located inside the perimeter trail. We are considering innovating farming technologies and are currently working with the Young Agrarians on a potential land-matching program

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

The BX Ranch is currently owned by the RDNO and designated as a park. It is a 166 acre property, of which 56 acres have been used to establish a walking trail on the perimeter of the property.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

The Ministry is supportive of the RDNO exploring agri-tourism on the ALR and encourages the RDNO to work with the ALC to find a mutually beneficial result.

- The Ministry is aware of the RDNO's application to the Agricultural Land Commission regarding the subdivision of land and creation of a linear open space between Mutrie Road Parks to Black Rock Park and BX Ranch (Application ID 58295). The Ministry expectation is that RDNO would comply with the application process and any conditions for ALC approval.
- The Ministry expectation is that RDNO will follow the Agricultural Land Commission's policy regarding Agri-Tourism Activities in the ALR (Factsheet, October 2016) to ensure potential agri-tourism activities are viable and will result in a successful outcome. The highest priority is the agricultural activity that takes place on the farm. Agri-tourism uses shall be secondary, incidental and compatible with the agricultural production activities.
- The Ministry has developed a guide on Farm Diversification through Agri-Tourism and an accompanying webinar is available to provide step-by-step guidance for those who are interested in engaging in agritourism.

The Ministry supports the B.C. Land Matching Program delivered by the Young Agrarians with a land matcher working in the Okanagan to provide land matching and business support services to new farmers looking for land to farm as well as landowners interested in finding someone to farm their land.

- The Ministry is supportive of the RDNO funding for the B.C. Land Matching Program and welcome the interest from local government in providing more land opportunities for new farmers looking for land.

The Ministry is working on ways to better engage with local governments on new policy initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.

- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- If a local government wishes to provide comments on policy topics the Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Town of Oliver

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Gallagher Lake Siphon - Funding Mechanism for the Government of Canada

REQUEST: The request is that the Province assist with communicating to the Federal Government to identify a funding mechanism that will move this project forward by expanding on the funding program to include this important PUBLIC infrastructure. Joint meeting Premier, Min Robinson, James, Popham and Beare.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: A rock slide damaged public irrigation infrastructure at Gallagher Lake in 2016. The Province agreed to commit \$5 M towards repair; total cost estimated at \$10.4 M. This funding is contingent on the Town of Oliver raising the remaining funds. The Town of Oliver has lobbied the Federal Government to contribute towards the total \$10.4 M. A funding mechanism has not been identified to enable the Federal Government to contribute. The Town of Oliver has completed the necessary due diligence for the project. Former Mayor met with Federal Ministers in October 2018 to discuss the Funding Mechanism. The Town was not successful with the DMFA grant application. *Department of Public Safety Works and Government Services Act* regarding sections that may allow expenditures on any real or immovable property.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The Town of Oliver's irrigation canal siphon at Gallagher Lake was damaged by a large rock fall event in January 2016. A temporary pipe repair was completed to allow the siphon to operate during the crucial irrigation season, however with a reduction in supply capacity. To date, the reduced flow has been sufficient to manage the water supply however this is a temporary measure.
- The Town of Oliver is pursuing a long-term solution that reroutes the siphon to follow Highway 97 at a total estimated cost of \$10.4 M.
- The Province recognized the tremendous impact to the economic, social and tourism viability of the south Okanagan and contributed \$5 M to reroute the siphon. This funding is contingent on the Town acquiring the balance of the funding. The Province also provided a one-time grant of \$0.525 M to be applied to the permanent repair of the irrigation system. These monies are in addition to the minimum \$0.475 M being contributed by the Town of Oliver and are to be used after the Town of Oliver's contribution is complete.
- Other conditions of the provincial commitment include consulting with stakeholders, completing the necessary due diligence for the project and both an environmental impact and an archaeological review before the project begins.
- The Oliver area is home to over 30 wineries and produces more than \$30 M worth of wine grapes, cherries, peaches, apples and forage crops each year, with the regional district producing over \$130 M

worth of crops annually. Almost all crops in the area require irrigation water to grow, with irrigation usually beginning in early April.

- s.13;s.16

- The BC government stands by its existing \$5 M agreement, and supports the Town of Oliver pursuing funding from other sources so that the project can move forward.

- s.13;s.16

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of Nakusp

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: ALR

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

Council would like the opportunity to discuss the barriers and potential solutions to removing land from the ALR with the Minister

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

The Village of Nakusp is surrounded by provincially zoned land in the ALR. As a community looking to expand, we would need to access the land in the ALR, zone it accordingly to accommodate for new residential and industrial developments. Council for the Village of Nakusp would like the opportunity to discuss the barriers and potential solutions to removing land from the ALR.

Information provided by the Ministry

- There has been no Ministry of Agriculture contact with any staff from the Village of Nakusp.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Bill 15)

- Bill 15 focuses on strengthening the governance and independence of the ALC to prioritize ‘protecting and enhancing’ the ‘size, integrity and continuity’ of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its use for farming and improves the ALC’s enforcement powers. Changes include:
 - Replacing the current ALC governance model of six panel regions and an Executive committee with one Commission requiring membership from all six administrative regions to ensure consistent provincial decision making and regional representation is maintained;
 - The ability of the Chair of the ALC to create a decision-making panel to assess applications for inclusion, exclusion or variances in the ALR where appropriate;
 - Requiring that applications for excluding property from the ALC may only be submitted to the ALC by local governments, First Nations governments or the Province, to support more thoughtful land-use planning in the ALR; and,
 - Adding additional compliance and enforcement capacity, including the ability to register remediation orders with the Land Title Office, thereby making all prospective buyers aware of any outstanding issues regarding ALR land.

Exclusion Application Process

- Changes to the exclusion application process in Bill 15 have not yet been brought into force.
- Government is working with the ALC to outline a seamless implementation of Bill 15.
- Government is committing to providing local governments with guidance materials on the changes to the exclusion process and providing sufficient opportunity for local governments to understand the changes before exclusion process changes are made.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

Minister Popham Meeting Schedule

UBCM – Vancouver, BC

Wednesday, September 25, 2019

Meeting Time	Municipality	Meeting Room
8:00 AM		
8:20 AM		
8:40 AM		
9:00 AM		
9:20 AM		
9:40 AM		
10:00 AM		
10:20 AM		
10:40 AM		
11:00 AM		
11:20 AM		
11:40 AM		
LUNCH 12:00 – 1:00 PM		
1:00 PM	397 Spallumcheen	Room 16
1:20 PM	445 District of Delta	Room 16
1:40 PM		
2:00 PM		
2:20 PM		
2:40 PM		
3:00 PM	484 Slocan	Room 16
3:20 PM	530 Peace River RD	Room 16
3:40 PM	562 Lake Country	Room 16
4:00 PM	605 Northern Rockies	Room 16
4:20 PM	631 Alberni-Clayoquot	Room 16
4:40 PM	690 Fraser Valley RD	Room 16

**MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Township of Spallumcheen

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Home Plating within the ALR and future agriculture regulations

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

That the Township of Spallumcheen have the opportunity to provide input regarding regulation changes related to the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Ministry of Agriculture as discussed with Minister Popham via conference call Wednesday, May 1st, 2019 at 3 pm & reiterated in the letter dated May 13

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

The Township of Spallumcheen Council members would like to discuss Spallumcheen's opportunity to provide feedback regarding agricultural regulations as well as input regarding dwellings within a home plate. With the Township being 50% Agricultural Land Reserve land we have many farming operations including organic crops, hobby farms, grain and hay crops, fruit and vegetable operations, beef, dairy, chicken, goat, pig, etc. all the way to industrial farming and so decisions ultimately impact our community in a major way. The opportunity to discuss upcoming regulations and protecting the farmer is a high priority for our community and we believe we have a lot of expertise to draw from.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The District Spallumcheen Agricultural Area Plan (AAP) was adopted in 2006. There may be an interest in updating this local government document.
- Similar to the District of Coldstream and the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO), the Township of Spallumcheen has raised concerns in the past regarding the Farm Practices Protection Act – likely related to the recent expansion of cherry production into the North Okanagan and associated farm practice concerns.
- Spallumcheen's Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) has also recently (2018) identified an interest in raising more awareness within their community concerning typical farm practices that might be expected in Spallumcheen's farming areas.
- Ministry staff have received eight Spallumcheen bylaw referrals so far in 2019 for Ministry staff review and comment.
- These include an Official Community Plan amendment, zoning bylaw amendments, and Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) subdivision, non-farm use, and non-adhering use application referrals. The RDNO provides land use planning services for the Township of Spallumcheen.

- Ministry staff encourage Spallumcheen to continue sending referrals to the Ministry.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Delta

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Protection of Agricultural Land Reserve

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

Develop guidelines that set out a standard or criteria for consideration of applications to modify the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundary and/or permit non-farm uses. Educate property owners of land in the ALR about how they are permitted to use their land while maintaining the ALR designation.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

The ALR boundary is not viewed by the City of Delta to be temporary or readily adjustable. As per Delta's Agricultural Plan, "agriculture is vitally important to Delta's economic, environmental and social sustainability". In the past, Delta Council has supported applications for non-farm uses or ALR exclusions where there are no impacts or net positive benefits to agriculture negotiated such as ALR inclusion or amenity contributions. More transparency is required (in form of guidelines or a policy) about what types of applications to modify the ALR would be entertained by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Such guidelines or a policy would help to deter individual landowners from making non-approvable applications.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Exclusion and non-farm use applications are decided upon by the ALC.
- These applications are not considered by the ALC until a local or first nations government approves the application by resolution.
- The ALC is an independent tribunal that decides upon applications considering the evidence presented to it in the application process.
- There is no ability of government to fetter the discretion of the ALC in its decision making.
- Government can provide information on the ALC application process and the independence of the ALC to educate land owners.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.

Drafted By: Arlene Anderson, Anna North and Heather Anderson
Date: August 27, 2019

- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of Slocan

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Discuss agriculture in the Slocan Valley and the Regional Economic Development Partnership.

REQUEST: Review and discuss the report that was completed through the partnership, titled "Overview of Agriculture in the Slocan Valley". Discuss recommendations.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND:

[No Background Information Provided]

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

The Slocan Valley Economic Development Partnership (the Partnership) between three municipalities and one rural area (Village of Slocan, Silverton, New Denver, and Regional District Central Kootenay (RDCK) Area H) has worked with FLNRO to create an economic development strategy and plan (funded by Rural Dividend, local government and Columbia Basin Trust (CBT)). This strategy is currently finishing year one of a two year implementation period; additional support is being sought to extend the implementation period for a further two years.

To date, agriculture related economic development activities undertaken during the implementation period have included the development of the following reports:

- A. "Slocan Valley Cannabis Synopsis" (delivered at the Kootenay Cannabis Symposium April 2019) and;
- B. "Overview of Agriculture in the Slocan Valley" report (attached) which will be presented during the UBCM meeting. The overview report lists multiple recommendations under each of the following seven "Opportunities for Local Support":
 - 1. Keep Funding Kootenay Boundary Farm Advisors
 - 2. Show Capacity Building in the Agricultural Labour Force
 - 3. Support Improvements to Agriculture Water Use Resiliency (Climate Change Adaptation)
 - 4. Support Improved Access to Capital for Infrastructure
 - 5. Make Climate Adaptation a Cornerstone of Any Future RDCK Agriculture Plan
 - 6. Explore the Potential for the Slocan Valley to Become Agriculturally 'Branded'
 - 7. Review and Revise RDCK Agriculture Plan

Development of an action plan based on the overview report's recommendations is expected in fall 2019. Once the action plan is created, the Partnership would likely seek technical and program pathfinding support from AGRI during implementation.

- The Ministry is appreciative of The Partnership's interest in agriculture and in pursuing further development of the agriculture sector in the Slocan Valley.
- Many of the seven recommendation groups identified in the report "*Overview of Agriculture in the Slocan Valley*" align closely with Ministry programs and initiatives; there are opportunities for collaboration. Key areas of alignment, by opportunity number, include:
 1. Keep Funding Kootenay Boundary Farm Advisors
 - AGRI staff continue to collaborate extensively with KBFA to support area producers and processors in accessing knowledge and funding program support.
 2. Show Capacity Building in the Agricultural Labour Force
 - AGRI staff regularly engage with federal and provincial colleagues to advance key labour concerns of BC agriculture and food sector including labour and skill shortages.
 - There are several labour and training related programs available to communities, businesses and/or industry groups through both Federal and Provincial agencies; examples are included in [Appendix A](#) below.
 3. Support Improvements to Agriculture Water Use Resiliency (Climate Change Adaptation)
 - AGRI has programs and information resources that can enhance agriculture water use efficiency.
 - Resources such as the "*Agriculture Water Demand Model Report for Regional District of Central Kootenay*" completed in 2017 can support water use planning for agriculture.
 3. Support Improvements to Agriculture Water Use Resiliency (Climate Change Adaptation) & 5. Make Climate Adaptation a Cornerstone of Any Future RDCK Agriculture Plan
 - The Ministry is committed to working with the sector to improve the resilience of agricultural production and is funding programs and projects to help BC farmers prepare for emergencies and changing climatic conditions.
 - The "*Kootenay and Boundary Regional Adaptation Strategy*" <https://www.bcagclimateaction.ca/wp/wp-content/media/RegionalStrategies-KootenayBoundary.pdf> was released July 12, 2019 following one year of development led by the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI). With regional, industry, and Ministry input, the strategy identified priority adaptation areas.
 - Through the Regional Adaptation Program, delivered by CAI, the Ministry is providing \$300,000 over 2019-2023 for locally prioritized projects which will be initiated this fall.
 6. Explore the Potential for the Slocan Valley to Become Agriculturally 'Branded'
 - Funding is available under the [BC Agrifood and Seafood Market Development Program](#) to an eligible industry association to hire a pre-qualified consultant to develop a branding strategy.

- There is an established Provincial brand Buy BC in the market, the enhanced Buy BC marketing program can assist Slocan Valley food and beverage producers and processors grow their market share within BC.
- The enhanced Buy BC marketing program includes a province-wide advertising campaign, a logo licensing system and cost-shared funding program, retail partnership initiatives, and a range of promotional activities including the *Buy BC: EAT DRINK LOCAL* campaign and the provincewide *Every Chef Needs a Farmer, Every Farmer Needs a Chef* event.

7. Review and Revise RDCK Agriculture Plan”

- Based on funding availability, AGRI staff are available to support the update of land use inventories and associated area plans in collaboration with local governments.
- AGRI has several other programs and initiatives available to help support BC’s farmers, ranchers and processors; Slocan Valley producers are encouraged to connect with experienced AGRI staff through AgriService BC. AgriService BC connects farmers, food processors and new entrants to agriculture to the services, programs and information the BC government offers to help them succeed. AgriService BC is available by phone, email, online, or by visiting a Ministry of Agriculture office.

Appendix A

- Labour/Training Related Programs
 - The Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training's Sector Labour Market Partnerships (SLMP) Program allows organizations to apply for funding to address broader sector and regional labour market issues.
 - The Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology's Provincial Nominee Program offers opportunities for permanent pathways to residency, with a stream for skilled employment and a regional-pilot for entrepreneurs.
 - Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) also runs several programs for permanent pathways to residency including two new immigration pilots: Agri-Food Immigration and Rural and Northern Immigration.
 - Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is responsible for the delivery of the Temporary Foreign Workers Programs that allows Canadian employers to hire foreign nationals to fill temporary labour and skill shortages.

Overview of Agriculture in the Slocan Valley

June 2019



Written and researched by:

Alys Ford
Ravine Creek Farm
Fern Road, Highway 6
Slocan Valley BC

Preface

This report, written and researched by Alys Ford of Ravine Creek Farm, was commissioned by the Slocan Valley Economic Development Partnership (consisting of the Villages of Slocan, Silverton, New Denver and RDCK Area H).

The goal of the report is to get a quick snapshot of agriculture in the Slocan Valley, identifying the health of the sector and ways that it can be supported through local initiatives, particularly through economic development. The scope of the report is not meant to be all-encompassing.

In the public consultations leading up to the creation of the Slocan Valley Economic Development Plan, residents were asked what kind of businesses they would like to see expand or locate in the valley. "Agriculture/Agri-food Processing" was tied (with "Green Industry") for top response at 41.46% each. Agriculture, particularly local food production, was a key theme during the public consultations. Additional themes included agricultural education opportunities, agri-food tourism, providing land to youth/farmers and co-op farm and food processing/training.

The Slocan Valley Economic Development Plan identifies "Providing Support for Expanded Agricultural Opportunities" as one of six key focus areas within the Strategic Plan Framework.

Specifically, it recommends;

1. Coordinate Agriculture Asset Mapping Inventory
2. Create a Buy Local Agriculture Awareness Program (Slocan Grown).

The aim of this *Overview of Agriculture in the Slocan Valley* is to view agriculture from the perspective of a successful, established and horizontally-integrated market garden farm - that vends at local farmers markets, has a roadside produce stand and provides a community-supported agriculture program (where members pay a seasonal fee to receive a weekly share of produce).

The question is, from the perspective of a farmer and business owner, what support might the local agriculture sector need in order to thrive, and therefore how best can the Slocan Valley Economic Development Project help facilitate this?

Ron LeBlanc
Slocan Valley Economic Development Coordinator



SUMMARY

Agriculture in the Slocan Valley has shown promising growth in recent years. Farmers in our region have proven that small, commercially viable farm businesses are possible here and our communities are benefiting from it. Currently the Regional District of Central Kootenay has the opportunity to provide targeted support to key areas that will provide exponential benefits to the agricultural community and continue to build on the success of previous initiatives.

Key Requirements for Agriculture

1. Access to Land
2. Access to Water
3. Sufficient Capital for Infrastructure
4. Affordable Housing

Opportunities for Local Support

1. Keep Funding Kootenay Boundary Farm Advisors
2. Show Capacity Building in the Agricultural Labour Force
3. Support Improvements to Agricultural Water Use Resiliency
(Climate Change Adaptation)
4. Support Improved Access to Capital for Infrastructure
5. Make Climate Adaptation a Cornerstone of Any Future
RDCK Agriculture Plan
6. Explore the Potential for the Slocan Valley to Become Agriculturally
'Branded'
7. Review and Revise RDCK Agriculture Plan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	2
Summary	3
Overview of Agriculture in the Slocan Valley	5
Key Requirements for Agriculture	6
Opportunities for Local Support	7
Appendix 1 - A Rationale for Government Support for Local Agriculture - Alys Ford	12
Appendix 2 – West Kootenay Permaculture Perspective - Damon Chouinard	14
Appendix 3 – Central Kootenay Food Policy Council Perspective - Abra Brynne	15
Appendix 4 – Kootenay and Boundary Farm Advisors Perspective - Rachael Roussin	17
Appendix 5 – Basin Business Advisors (Agriculture) Perspective - Tracey Fredrickson	19

OVERVIEW OF AGRICULTURE IN THE SLOCAN VALLEY

In the past decade the Slocan Valley has emerged as vibrant contributor to the local agriculture renaissance. While the steepness of our ridges, quality of our soils and the relatively small size of our land-base means we will never be able to compete with Creston or Nakusp in sheer volume, our area has nonetheless generated over 500k **growth** in agricultural sales receipts between 2011 and 2016, a growth rate of 30%. This is 6% greater than the rate for the whole Central Kootenay for those dates (24%) and 9% greater than the national average for that year (21%). Source

As of the 2016 census farmers in Area H reported \$1,721,040 in gross receipts. Anecdotally this growth spurt shows no signs of slowing down, with new entrants to the business cropping up annually and well-established players expanding production we in the agriculture business are quietly optimistic for a continuation of this positive trajectory.

To illustrate: when it began a decade ago the Nelson Farmer's market had only a tiny handful of produce vendors, today there are over a dozen and nearly half of them are from the Slocan Valley. Likewise the Kootenay Organic Growers Society reports that from a historic low in 2012 membership has steadily grown with exceptional gains made in the last 4 years especially.



KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR AGRICULTURE

Listed here are the basic requirements for operating a successful farming venture with a brief assessment of conditions specific to the Slocan Valley.

- **Access to land**

Small gains have been made in recent years to improve access to land for prospective farmers. The rising profile of young farmers as entrepreneurs, and farming as a viable business have made some progress. The RDCK Land Use Inventory (2018) and programs such as the Young Agrarians land linking service have provided much needed support in this regard.

- **Access to water**

Farming in our bio-region necessitates the use of irrigation for virtually all crops. The majority of farms in Area H use water from privately (as opposed to municipal or RD) maintained systems. Wells and gravity fed surface water dominate.

- **Sufficient capital for infrastructure**

Farming enterprises require a significant amount of capital for infrastructure and equipment. The cash outlay required to secure these is often disproportionate to the return on investment, especially compared to other types of businesses which can reasonably expect better returns on capital investments.



- **Affordable housing**

Slocan Valley has experienced the same low vacancy, high cost housing climate as the rest of British Columbia. Recent trends such as Airbnb/short term vacation rentals have only exacerbated the shortages. Agriculturalists face unique difficulties in that not only do they need to find shelter that is affordable and appropriate for their families, they are also looking for adequate farmland. While it is of course possible to live in one place and farm in another this solution complicates and adds burden to an already complicated and difficult profession.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL SUPPORT

1. Keep funding Kootenay Boundary Farm Advisors

This program has arguably had the single greatest positive impact of any local agriculture initiative in recent years. Highly popular. Well used. Unique services not offered by any other public or private institution. The program will only improve as the team continues to gain expertise through regular and close interaction with local operators and ongoing skills acquisition (e.g. 2 members of the KBFA team recently took training courses in Environmental Farm Plan assessment allowing them to officially advise operators on this important government program). A simple survey could provide ideas for how end users would like to see the project grow in the future.

2. Support Capacity Building in the Agricultural Labour Force

Slocan Valley faces unique challenges in regard to labour shortages in the agriculture sector:

- Modest profitability of small scale farms make it challenging for potential farm employers to offer competitive wages, compared to say cannabis.
- Because agriculture is an uncommon profession in the Valley, there are by extension relatively few skilled labourers in the area
- High cost of living for farm labourers
- Low vacancy rate for housing for farm workers

Here are some examples of how to assist in resolving to these challenges:

- a) Expand/replicate the recent success in Area D with the North Kootenay Lake Rural Revitalization Project grant from Rural Dividend to other RDCK Areas. This grant is a powerful tool to address small farm capacity to offer living wages to workers (see also capital investment). Application for Rural Dividend grants should be a top priority for the Slocan Valley.
- b) Strengthen the capacity of the **Basin Business Advisors** and **Community Futures** to provide regionally appropriate counsel to farm

businesses and to better see the 'Big Picture' needs of farm businesses in our region. Perhaps by improving the quality of communication between the RDCK, KBFA, CKFPC and the CBT gaps between the intention to support agriculture and delivery of programs can be eliminated (see comment on CBT wage subsidy programs below).

c) Partnerships with other key stakeholders, for example:

Kootenay Career Development runs a local jobs listing, currently there is not even a category for 'agricultural jobs'. The RDCK or one of its partner organizations such as the Central Kootenay Food Policy Council or the KBFA could give KCD a briefing on current needs/opportunities in the agriculture sector. In turn, KCD may have feedback to offer about funding opportunities for HR capacity building.

Selkirk College offers programing related to forestry, tourism and natural resource management but currently not agriculture. Again, a local organisation might provide a briefing on the needs and opportunities of this growing industry in our area. In the short term this could lead to, at a minimum, networking between faculty and local farm businesses – in the longer term local farms could serve as case studies, field trip locations and co-op placements.

While there are some useful Hire-A-Student/Career Development programs for wage subsidies, farms are disqualified on two counts;

- 1) Student employees are required to work in their field of study – with no locally available agriculture study programs there are virtually no agriculture students in our area.
- 2) None of the currently available CBT wage subsidy grants are applicable to farms for technical reasons, School Works program is only Sept. – May, farms are generally not operational during those dates, Apprentice Wage Subsidy does not list farm worker as one of the eligible positions, Co-op Wage Subsidy requires a co-op program which currently there are none in our Area.

3. Support Improvements to Agricultural Water Use Resiliency (Climate Change Adaptation)

It is a well understood fact that climate modeling projections for the Kootenays predict hotter, drier growing seasons – indeed recent years have already borne this out. [Source](#)

According to the West Kootenay Climate Vulnerability and Resilience Project, Report #1:

Across all of the study area, all three [modeling] scenarios project bioclimate envelope shifts that reflect *decreasing* moisture availability at mid and lower elevations with scenarios differing in the magnitude of change, but not the direction. At the lowest elevations in the South subregion, all of the scenarios project shifts from interior cedar-hemlock (ICH) bioclimate envelopes to grassland-steppe envelopes. [emphasis added]

Slocan Valley farmers will increasingly find surface water and shallow well sources running low or dry during the summer months.

- The RD could offer economic support for improvements to irrigation systems for commercial farms, including farms that might need to access ground water for the first time. The drilling of proper, legal wells is a costly proposal not easily borne by small farming businesses. (According to a 2015 Vancouver Sun article, the city of Delta recently supported their farmers' access to irrigation by spending 20 million dollars on municipal system improvements. [Source](#))
- The RD could support the implementation of best practices through research and consultation with other jurisdictions, or coordination with the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative and then pass on the findings to local farmers through KBFA



4. **Support Improved Access to Capital for Infrastructure**

There are a number of possible routes to improving access to capital for Slocan Valley farmers;

- Area D just asked for and received a Rural Dividend grant that will allow them to provide direct financial support to eligible farmers for infrastructure improvements. Area H should follow suit.
- An alternative to simple grants for infrastructure could be the establishment of a small fund to supply zero interest short-term loans for infrastructure with seed money from the Rural Dividend
- Or, if the RD does not wish to manage a fund they could pitch to a proposal to our local credit unions to develop a zero interest loan program modeled on the Van City/Farm Folk-City Folk program. This innovative program offers loans ranging from \$1000 - \$20,000 to eligible businesses. [Source](#)
- Finally the RDCK could ask one of its partner organisations to research and report on other innovative models for direct financial support for small scale agriculture

5. **Make Climate Adaptation a Cornerstone of Any Future RDCK Agriculture Plan**

As agriculture will be deeply impacted by the effects of climate change any plan for the future must be grounded in good climate science. BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative is a new program aimed at helping communities and governments plan for both climate adaptation and mitigation (reducing GHGs).

Directors would be well advised to familiarize themselves with the support available from this program.

6. **Explore the Potential for the Slocan Valley to Become Agriculturally 'Branded'**

Returning now to the hyper-local perspective of the Slocan Valley the following possibility emerges: As the productivity and profile of area farmers increases it is conceivable that the conditions for a popular local reputation might be emerging.

While in the past efforts to start farmer's markets in Winlaw or Crescent Valley have not been successful nor have other initiatives to brand the products of the Valley, it is conceivable that local demand, which historically has been consistent but modest, could experience enough growth to lead to sufficiently improved sales at local farm stands, stores and restaurants that a local reputation (brand) could emerge with enough drawing power to sustain a small, regional agri-tourism industry.

Such an industry could serve citizens from our regional urban centers who already make use of ex-urban areas for other kinds of recreation. As well as Slocan Valley residents looking for locally produced food.

The time could be right to capitalize on the clearly demonstrated momentum of local food - support from local governments for marketing, public education and advertising at this time may offer exponential benefits.

7. **Review and Revise RDCK Agriculture Plan**

It has been nearly a decade since the research for the RDCK Agricultural Plan was executed in 2010. Much has changed in the intervening years; changes to the demographic make-up and dominant industries of our communities, to say nothing of climate change and the legalization of cannabis have significantly altered the agricultural landscape in the Central Kootenay.

The 2011 Ag Plan has been a vital guiding document whose recommendations have yielded the exceptional Kootenay Boundary Farm Advisors program, supported the formation of the Central Kootenay Food Policy Council and helped the Columbia Basin Trust identify agriculture as a Strategic Priority. The time has come to update our Agriculture Plan to continue to build on successes and address gaps in policy and services.

A Rationale for Government Support for Local Farmers

There is a truism that states 'you can't make any money farming'. While this statement has a kind of common-sense to it, it hides the reality of farming which is more nuanced. The flow of logic runs like this:

In Canada, as in much of the industrialized world we hold a cultural value that adequate nutrition is a basic human need and that barriers to basic nutrition should be reduced as much as possible. "Statistics Canada figures show that, in 1969, food ate up 18.7 per cent of spending in the average household. By 2009, that number had fallen to 10.2 per cent." Source

This is undeniably a good and moral belief.

The Green Revolution beginning in the 1950's synergized with mechanical innovations to create exponential gains in productivity and efficiency on industrialized farms. Later, globalization and free trade moved technological innovation to geographic locations where land, water and labour were less robustly protected and therefore less costly – add to this the artificially cheap cost of shipping and suddenly by the turn of the 21st century it is less expensive to grow broccoli in Mexico and ship it to Nelson than it is to grow broccoli in Appledale and ship it to Nelson.

These truly remarkable reductions of consumer barriers to food did not come without a cost. Gone was any sort of social commitment to ensure farming and agricultural work retained living wage standards. To say nothing of committing to ensure environmental and social protections for the people and places who now grow the majority of our food.

A straight line can be drawn from the dramatic decrease in the cost of food in the 20th century to the equally dramatic decline in the remuneration available to Canadian agriculturalists, whether farmers or farm workers.

As a society we have loudly declaimed the contradictory statement that *access* to food matters very much but not the *necessary means to produce it*. This, it is implied, the market will resolve for itself. The resolution to this paradox is the current state of affairs where, even those of an inclination to pursue the career and lifestyle of farming struggle to reconcile the cost of production with average retail prices (return on investment). Those of us who would farm here at home are competing directly with products from around the world and a customer base steeped in laudable Canadian values that food is a necessity not a luxury and should be priced as such.

The price of goods not only provide an important indicator of the balance between agricultural production and market demand, but also have strong impacts on food affordability and income. *Food prices not only influence consumer affordability, but also influence the income of farmers and producers.* In low-to-middle income countries in particular, a large share of the population is employed in agriculture. Producers typically benefit from higher food prices; consumers from lower prices. [Source](#)

If we as a society choose to maintain our commitment to low food prices (relative to disposable income), as we should, we must also address the losses transferred to our agricultural communities by these choices. Governments in partnership with public institutions and the non-profit sector can play a leading role in redressing this imbalance.

Fortunately there is precedence to draw from for guidance. At the turn of the last century public opinion changed in relation to another fully privatised industry: education. As moral opinion about the rights of all children to a basic education shifted from a belief that education was the responsibility of individual families to a belief that basic education was a civic right, governments big and small stepped into the breach to address the change in social mores.

There was of course political wrangling and much spilling of ink but in the end the idea that basic education is a right of all citizens prevails in most of the world today. The purveyors of that education - teachers, school boards, principals and janitors - are paid reasonable wages by public funds.

In the last century in Canada other previously private industries have also benefitted from a shift in social perspective; the arts (dance, music, film, graphic arts, creative writing) and health care are notable examples of Canadian industries proudly supported by public funds. Food and its production are as core to a culture's identity as how we make art or educate future generations or provide care to the ill.

Given the current economic climate for small scale agriculture there is a strong case for social, cultural and government institutions to provide direct support to this industry. Its not called *agriculture* for nothing.

Alys Ford – Ravine Creek Farm, June 2019

Appendix 2



West Kootenay Permaculture Co-op Perspective
Appendix for the Slocan Valley Agriculture Report
By: Damon Chouinard, Director - WKPC

Over the past 5 years the West Kootenay Permaculture Coop has been involved in local food initiatives within the Slocan Valley and elsewhere in the Kootenays. As our board of directors is made up of individuals from a variety of backgrounds related to food and agriculture, as well, activism and education, we feel strongly about the cross section of agriculture and sustainability.

In a world that is changing quicker than ever, creating strong systems of support around the Slocan Valley's farmers seems more critical than ever. Alys Ford's report offers many suggestions that are timely and relevant. From practical ideas to policy suggestions, she covers a sentiment that goes beyond the Slocan.

The past decade, as Alys points out, has had many positive initiatives implemented. She is correct though in suggesting a reassessment of the RDCK Agriculture Plan. The changes within the last ten years have been significant and it is necessary in order to stay relevant that we continue to check back in to feel the current pulse.

The WKPCoop is a community based cooperative working to build a healthy and resilient region, we support recommendations and actions that will see sustainable agricultural as a thriving part of our future in the Slocan Valley.

Appendix 3



Central Kootenay Food Policy Council Perspective
Appendix for the Slocan Valley Agriculture Report
By: Abra Brynne, Executive Director

About the Central Kootenay Food Policy Council

The Central Kootenay Food Policy Council was formed in December 2016 and consists of up to 26 individuals. The Central Kootenay Food Policy Council fosters a just, sustainable and prosperous food system in our region by identifying challenges and opportunities and by advocating for effective policy.

Council members reflect the diverse regions and population of the Central Kootenay. Each member serves as a vital conduit for information exchange between their respective sector and communities and the Food Policy Council. We explore issues related to hunger, food waste, land and water, distribution and production. With Council members that reside across the region and that are engaged in many facets of our food systems, our collective relationships, knowledge and experience helps to identify and create solutions that are not possible for any one organization or community on its own. We have had strong representation on the Council from the Slocan Valley since its founding.

Building strong economies and communities through food

As of 2016, the 67 farms in the Slocan Valley that participated in the Canadian Agriculture Census had, between them, invested in excess of \$56M into their farms. Much of that investment, and their ongoing investments in farm equipment, supplies and labour, cycle around our communities, helping to contribute not just food but a stronger place-based economy. The agricultural economy of these farmers is inevitably linked to the activities of the many homesteaders that call the Slocan Valley home. Together, they enable sufficient volume of demand to support the provision of goods and services that benefit both, such as fencing equipment and installation.

The Council works across food systems, integrating work on food literacy, food economies and food access, because we understand that the synergies and feedback loops between each contribute to a stronger food economy for our region. These synergies play out in the Slocan Valley through the activities of organizations like

Kootenay Food, which builds food literacy through many of their programs. Businesses like The Valley Kitchen incubate fledgling entrepreneurs through access to their equipment and sales in their café. And organizations like The Healthy Community Society of the North Slokan Valley bridge healthy food access with community wellbeing. And all of them, along with many other organizations, businesses and individuals contribute to the vibrant culture of the Slokan Valley.

Where the Food Policy Council can help

The preceding report documented the importance of land access and reliable and safe water supplies as key elements for successful farming. The Council launched the *Evidence-based Food Policy Development Project* in January 2019 that will run through 2020. The key research question for this project is to determine what helps or hinders the viability and resiliency of the food systems of the Central Kootenay. The Council is partnering with the Institute for Sustainable Food Systems at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, the Selkirk Geospatial Research Centre and the Rural Development Institute at Selkirk College. Together with these academic partners, the Council is leading the analysis of geospatial data available from the RDCK and the province of British Columbia to identify factors, trends and areas of concern for the long-term viability of the food systems in our region. High on the research agenda is a better understanding of factors that affect land values and farm viability as well as the impacts of climate change on water systems and crop selection. The insights provided by the research will then be applied to a review of the policies and planning tools of the RDCK, including the 2011 Agriculture Plan, to identify amendments that could be made to better support our area's food economy and entrepreneurs.

Appendix 4



Kootenay and Boundary Farm Advisors Perspective
Appendix for the Slocan Valley Agriculture Report
By: Rachael Roussin, Coordinator - KBFA

About Kootenay and Boundary Farm Advisors

KBFA supports producers to improve agricultural production and efficiency by helping to find solutions to farms' production issues, coordinating educational events, and connecting producers to information. Technical expertise and support are provided from a network of specialized resources, including independent consultants, academics, and the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

Funding for KBFA is a four-way partnership between the RDCK, RDKB, RDEK and Columbia Basin Trust and is currently in its third year of a three-year pilot project. Future funding and program structure are undetermined at this point but there is strong incentive to continue from the project partners.

KBFA is well situated to support the delivery of select recommendations in this report, such as disseminating information to producers related to water conservation and efficiency through field days and one-on-one support, and through information from the RDCK and Climate Adaptation reports.

The comments below reiterate many of the points highlighted in this report and are included to create an emphasis on the contribution of local agriculture to economic development.

Supporting small scale, diversified agriculture by increasing the bottom line

Although KBFA's mandate is to provide technical support for production issues, it is the *economic* viability of small-scale agriculture that continues to be the primary threat to existing farms and the growth of the sector. Actions that increase the bottom line for commercial farmers such as wage subsidies, capital infrastructure grants, or zero-interest loans will decrease overhead expense and increase return on investment. These actions will increase the likelihood that producers can continue to "afford to farm" and invest back into their local economy.

From an economic development perspective, local agricultural is a strong economic driver. On average, a one or two-acre commercial market garden requires three or four full time workers. This often includes the farm owners plus up to three seasonal employees. As a result, over half a farm's gross revenue is allocated to farm labour, besides many other expenses and infrastructure investments that typically consume up to 70% of total income. These expenses are disproportionally high compared to other industries and leaves little capital at the end of a growing season for a farmer

to invest back into the business or to pay themselves. Increasing the bottom line for farmers will grow the sector and cycle money within the local economy.

As mentioned in this report, attracting a skilled work force and affordable housing are equally important for the agricultural sector. Farmers would be better prepared to provide housing and training if they had more dollars in their pockets.

Diversified markets & market opportunities

Opportunities may exist for farms to increase profits by growing specialty crops with higher returns on investment. Cost of production information and support provided by KBFA and BBA has already been helpful for farmers to determine which staple crops may be more profitable than others. Alys Ford highlights in Appendix A key reasons why it is challenging to charge more for traditional crops that are currently grown in the region due to our globalized food system.

An analysis of additional specialty crops that could be grown within the same farm footprint, in conjunction with a gaps analysis with local buyers, could serve to increase potential gross revenues and help farmers to diversify and expand their markets. Examples of such specialty crops include saffron, herbs, artichokes, berries, cultural (or ethnic) crops. This type of market analysis would need to include several components including analyses of product demand, marketing, and agronomic suitability.

Appendix 5

BASIN BUSINESS
ADVISORS PROGRAM

A PROGRAM OF
Columbia Basin **trust**

ADMINISTERED & MANAGED BY
Community Futures 

Basin Business Advisors (Agriculture) Program Perspective

Appendix for the Slocan Valley Agriculture Report

By: Tracey Fredrickson, Basin Business Advisor Program - Agriculture Specialist

How the Basin Business Advisor Agriculture Program Can Support Agriculture Development in the Slocan Valley

The Basin Business Advisors program, which is funded by Columbia Basin Trust and administered by Community Futures, has, since February, 2018 offered an Agriculture Advisement program. The program is available to farms throughout the Kootenays, with the full-time BBA Agriculture Specialist facilitating advisement on many areas of farm management where many farmers do not have formal training or experience. This ranges from assistance with market research and business plan development, to cost of production analysis, financial analysis, farm succession planning and many others areas, at no cost.

Given the large size of the Kootenays and the distance between farming hubs and business centres, the Agriculture Specialist travels extensively throughout the region to meet with one-to-one with farm operators and industry stakeholders to ensure the program is known and accessed. To this end, she is available to come to the Slocan Valley as needed to work with farmers one-to-one and to do presentations/workshops in the community that address local needs.

Supporting farms in their research and strategic planning is the cornerstone of the BBA Agriculture program. Target clients are established, revenue-generating farm businesses of which several have been identified in the Slocan Valley. In addition to one-on-one work that is immediately available to farmers, all the initiatives identified in Alys Ford's report require strategic planning and development, from labour recruitment initiatives to agri-tourism branding, and the Agriculture Specialist can provide input and guidance to the development of these initiatives.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Peace River Regional District

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Farmer's Advocacy Office

REQUEST: That the Ministry of Agriculture in partnership with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources (EMPR), commit full funding for the Farmers' Advocacy Office (FAO).

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: The Peace River Regional District (PRRD), in partnership with the Province, has funded the FAO since its establishment in 2009. The agreement with the FAO contractor expired on July 31, 2018 and the Regional Board resolved to extend the contract until March 31, 2019. On March 28, 2019, EMPR committed to funding the FAO for a three-month period while a working group drafted a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the service. The FAO Working Group has drafted a new MOU which has been distributed to executives at AGRI, EMPR and the PRRD for review, comment and consideration of future funding commitment. The PRRD is looking to the Ministry to commit to full funding as the PRRD does not have a function to do so. The FAO has been renamed the Farmers' Information Service (FIS) to clarify that it is an information service and does not advocate on behalf of producers.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- AGRI has committed to holding the administrative function of FIS office including coordinating the RFP process to solicit a contractor and subsequently holding the contract with the successful candidate.
- AGRI and EMPR have committed funding to the FIS at least in part
- DM Shoemaker sent a letter to the PRRD requesting that the PRRD:
 - o Remain engaged in supporting FIS and commit to the updated MOU.
 - o Continue to contribute financially to the office – AGRI has suggested EMPR, AGRI and PRRD cost share FIS in an equal allocation not to exceed \$60,000 per organization (total FIS cost not to exceed \$180,000 annually).
 - o The PRRD continue to provide administrative support to the Management Committee.
- Once FIS has been re-launched, AGRI and EMPR are committed to working in conjunction with PRRD to continue to explore a long-term model for FIS.

TOPIC TWO: ALC/OGC Delegation Agreement

REQUEST: That the Provincial Government discuss the OGC ALC Delegation Agreement.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: The delegation agreement between the ALC and the BC Oil and Gas Commission must be revamped to protect agricultural interests and farm land. There is no agency that singularly represents farmers and ranchers in the region as they struggle to maintain their agricultural businesses in the face of a rapidly growing energy sector. Farmers in the region are not opposed to oil and gas activity, rather the intensity at which it takes places, and the removal of large amounts of farm land from production. The pace of development has eliminated the insurance that damage to the land base is not permanent.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The current delegation agreement between ALC and OGC was updated in 2017 is applicable to ALR lands located within PRRD and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. It outlines that:
 - o Oil and gas facilities less than 20 ha per section are permitted without application;
 - o BC OGC decision is required on facilities greater than 20 ha per section;
 - o Criteria for siting facilities based on soil capability, level of agricultural development, etc. is provided in the agreement;
 - o OGC responsibility for Compliance and Enforcement;
- In addition, the 2018-2019 OGC Annual Report to the ALC (from ALC presentation) states:
 - o 25,965 ha of ALR land in PRRD are affected by oil and gas (1.95% of local ALR land)
 - o 1250 ha of new surface land clearing in 2018/2019
 - o 71.1% of oil and gas activity in NE BC is within the ALR
- DM Shoemaker (AGRI), Jennifer Dyson (ALC Chair) and Kim Grout (ALC CEO) have all recently toured the Farmington area to get an appreciation of the land use conflicts,
- In addition, local government officials toured ALC delegates and AGRI staff through the Farmington area in June 2019 to demonstrate some of the land use conflicts and challenges landowners are facing with the oil and gas industry, including large scale land disturbances, noise pollution, light pollution, soil erosion and abandoned infrastructure,
- EMPR, OGC, PRRD regularly meet with landowners in the Farmington area to discuss concerns from industry through the “Farmington Area Community Group”,
- *“Revitalizing the ALR and the ALC Final Committee Report to the Minister of Agriculture: Recommendations for Revitalization”* recommendation #25 states: immediately work to address the imbalance between oil and gas development and agriculture in BC Northeast ALR.
- There is interest between multiple Deputy Ministers to coordinate on resource issues in the Northeast.

TOPIC THREE: Access to rail cars for farmers

REQUEST: That the Provincial Government ensure that CN Rail complies with their legal obligation to provide farmers and communities with adequate, consistent service and timely access to rail cars.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: In the past five years, grain producers have been hit with two severe rail-service backlogs. The 2013-14 backlog is estimated to have cost more than \$8 billion. In 2017, millions of tonnes of prairie grain were left stranded across Western Canada for weeks. The backlog was blamed on poor weather, a shortage of locomotive power and crews and inaccurate demand forecasts. The economic impact of unreliable access to rail cars, goes beyond grain producers. In 2018, Canada's forestry industry lost \$500 million due to delays with rail cars. Companies looking to invest in northern BC are discouraged from doing so because of the risk and uncertainty caused by CN Rail's unreliable service.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

Recent metrics and impacts:

- BC produces approximately 336,000 tonnes of grain/oilseed annually
- Combined, the elevators in the BC Peace are allocated approximately 118 rail car spots per week,
- From January to March 2019 grain elevators in the BC Peace had extreme challenges in obtaining allocated CN railcars,
- From January to March 2019, elevators went anywhere from 4-12 weeks without receiving rail cars; it is estimated that the region was shorted 712 rail cars which equates to approximately 64,000 tonnes of grain,
 - o The rail shortage during the winter of 2019 impacted the marketing of just under 20% of the region's crops
- When rail cars are not delivered elevators cannot meet demands of their customers meaning that contracts are not fulfilled/ customers seek alternate products,
- Update:
 - o The Minister met with the BC Grain Producers Association (BC GPA) on May 14, 2019
 - o BC GPA expressed their concerns with unreliable rail car delivery from January to March and the impact that has on their business (forward contracts in place, cash flow)
 - o Challenges in rail car deliveries was not unique to this year; it has occurred previous winters as well
 - o The Minister has semi regular interactions with CN rail and indicated that from CN perspective things are good, but local experience contradicts this.
 - o Coordination is underway to plan a call between the Minister, BC GPA, BC Feed mill and the BC Chicken Growers to discuss the use of BC grain in poultry rations

**MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Lake Country

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Agricultural Land Reserve Application Fees

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

The District requests local governments be permitted to set fees for Agricultural Land Reserve Applications in accordance with section 462 of the Local Government Act and that the relevant sections of the Agricultural Land Commission Act restricting local governments ability to set fees, be amended.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

In 2016 the ALC increased their Land Reserve Application Fees from \$300 to \$1200. Section 33 and 35 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* says a local government may only retain \$300 for these application fees. This is contrary to Local Governments authority to charge fees in relation to land use and applications under section 462 of the LGA. The lack of ability for any local government to establish a fee that provides adequate cost recovery for a service may results in additional costs born by the public through general taxation. In 2016 the average costs for processing Agricultural Land Reserve applications was \$2700.

Information provided by the Ministry

- In 2016, when the ALC increased its application fees from \$600 to \$1,500 in Zone 1, the District of Lake Country increased the portion of their fees as well, overcharging applicants.
- The District has only recently repaid applicants suggesting the District has recently experienced an unexpected financial loss.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.

Drafted By: Gregory Bartle
Date: August 27, 2019

- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Northern Rockies Regional Municipality

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Economic renewal in the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM) by growing the agricultural sector.

REQUEST: That the Ministry support the growth of NRRM's agricultural sector and the related actions identified within the Regional Economic Strategy, including the future development of an NRRM Agriculture Area Strategy.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: A traditionally resource-dependent community and considering the last decade of local economic decline, NRRM has put considerable focus on economic renewal. Within the recently completed Regional Economic Strategy, there are several actions initiated to realize opportunities for growth, economic stabilization, and food security through the agricultural sector. NRRM's Agriculture Committee, with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture (AGRI) and Agricultural Land Commission (through funding programs, policy development, resources etc.), aims to increase the long-term competitive viability of the region's farms.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Fort Nelson Arability Mapping Project was completed in 2007 and identified approximately 18,000 ha of arable land, much of it considered high capacity (Capability Classes 1-4)
- AGRI is committed to working with our ministry partners, BC Cattlemen Association (BCCA) and local governments to improve access to land and the forage resource.
 - o DM Shoemaker has met with the BCCA late July in Kamloops to discuss access to Crown Land for agriculture expansion,
 - o AGRI is a participant in a working group with both FLNRO Land Tenure and Range Branch,
- Access to land for new entrants is a priority within the GROW FEED BUY BC initiatives. Many parts of the province can consider private land leasing as an option, but I do recognize the limited private agriculture land available in the Fort Nelson area.
- AGRI has numerous new entrant programs that may be of interest to new and potential farmers.
- Recommend that NRRM discuss opportunities with the Regional Agrologist in Fort St. John, including:
 - o Agriculture Area Plan - would focus on a community's agricultural area to discover practical solutions to issues and identify opportunities to strengthen farming and ultimately to contribute to agriculture and the community's long-term sustainability

TOPIC TWO: BC Timber Sales Stumpage Rates on Agricultural Lands

REQUEST: That the Minister partner with the Minister of FLNRO to address the barrier of stumpage to the agriculture development of unimproved, greenfield agricultural land in NRRM.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

BACKGROUND: Given the majority of designated agricultural land in NRRM is greenfield Crown land, the costs to simply develop arable property in NRRM is prohibitive based on the Provincially appraised valuation of timber. The value is unrealistic in the absence of any local market for wood fibre.

Note: Information provided by Local Government

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- The determination of stumpage rates is a responsibility of FLNRORD and AGRI understand that stumpage is an concern
- AGRI Staff estimated a cost in excess of \$2,500 / acre to improve land from stumps to seed bed condition. Based on the crop produced, this value is prohibitive in some regions of the province.
- BC Cattlemen Association has engaged Deputy Ministry Shoemaker as an Executive Sponsor to address their concerns with access to crown land for agriculture development.
- AGRI is committed to working with both FLNRORD Land Tenure and FLNRORD Range Branch to update the current Agriculture Lease program to reflect the numerous concerns in obtaining an agriculture lease, which includes stumpage rates, clearing costs, survey requirements and archeological reports.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Impacts of Bill 52 and Bill 15 with respect to housing on farmland.

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

To amend the ALC regulations to allow second residences on ALR properties for farm operations and have meaningful consultation with the farming community and local governments.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Provincial regulations prohibit a 2nd residence in the ALR unless approved by the ALC and there is no right to replace an existing residential structure. If an existing second dwelling is destroyed, the farmer has no right to replace the dwelling. These changes were made with virtually no notice to local governments or the public.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The Bill 52 -2018 changes to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA), brought into law on February 22, 2019, include the requirement for Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) approval (rather than local governments) for any additional residence for farm-use through a non-adhering residential use application. ALC's stewardship over residential development on the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is critical to ensuring that this limited resource is available to farmers now and into the future.
- Government extended the grandfathering of manufactured homes for immediate family members if placement permits are obtained by February 22, 2020. Engagement with local government and the ALC continues to explore options to provide flexibility for additional residences for families.
- Under the changes, principal and additional residences existing on a parcel before February 22, 2019 are grandfathered if they were constructed with all required authorizations (i.e., permits). Repair and partial replacement of grandfathered residences are also permitted if certain conditions are met.
- If a parcel of ALR land had two residences before February 22, 2019 and were constructed with all required authorizations, these residences can continue to exist.
- The ALCA and its regulations do not:
 - prohibit the renting out of grandfathered residences;
 - require occupation of a residence by an owner for grandfathered residences to be rented out; or
 - require farming to occur on the parcel before the residences can be rented out.
 - However, local governments may have restrictions on the use of residences as rental properties and confirmation of their bylaws is recommended.

- If a parcel of land on the ALR has one residence that is grandfathered, it is considered the principal residence.
- The later construction of a residence over an existing structure would be considered an additional residence and must be necessary for farm use as determined by the ALC on application.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Secondary Housing)

- The new rules are meant to address speculation that inflates the cost of farmland in B.C. beyond what's attainable for B.C. farmers.
- The changes were made to meet the B.C. Government's commitment to revitalize the ALR and the ALC by reaffirming that the ALR is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use, farming is encouraged, and non-agricultural uses are managed carefully.
- The ALC oversight role for some residential use structures in the ALR addresses residential development pressures including mega-mansions and additional residences not related to farming.
- Government extended the grandfathering of manufactured homes for immediate family members if placement permits are obtained by February 22, 2020.
- The Ministry continues to explore options to provide flexibility for additional residences for families through engagement with local governments and the ALC.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of Fraser Valley

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Banning Glyphosate use

REQUEST:

Note: Information provided by Local Government

Ban Glyphosate use

BACKGROUND:

Note: Information provided by Local Government

Since the reissuing of Glyphosate there have been successful lawsuit cases against the company Bayer (parent company to Monsanto) that have shown that Monsanto knew for many years that Glyphosate could cause cancer. There are thousands of other lawsuits pending. While health concerns for plants and animals including humans are the biggest issue, there are also huge concerns around the spraying contributing to forest fire risks through the desiccation of underbrush creating ideal fire conditions. Added to the concern, is that Glyphosate kills top soils. In doing that it destroys abilities of the soil can have in carbon sequestration.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Glyphosate is a widely used herbicide that can kill certain weeds and grasses. The product is registered in Canada through the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and is used primarily in agriculture, but also in forestry and lawn and garden care. PMRA is part of Health Canada.
- PMRA is responsible for conducting scientific evaluations and re-examinations on all pesticides on the market. MAGRI supports the scientific conclusions from Health Canada and engages in the work of the PMRA in Canada.
- The overall finding of the 2017 re-examination of glyphosate by the PMRA are highlighted below:
 - Glyphosate is not genotoxic and is unlikely to pose a human cancer risk.
 - Dietary (food and drinking water) exposure associated with the use of glyphosate is not expected to pose a risk of concern to human health.
 - Occupational and residential risks associated with the use of glyphosate are not of concern, provided that updated label instructions are followed.
 - The environmental assessment concluded that spray buffer zones are necessary to mitigate potential risks to non-target species (for example, vegetation near treated areas, aquatic invertebrates and fish) from spray drift.
 - When used according to revised label directions, glyphosate products are not expected to pose risks of concern to the environment.
 - All registered glyphosate uses have value for weed control in agriculture and non-agricultural land management.

Drafted By: Ken Sapsford/Jane Pritchard

Date: August 30, 2019

Appendix A

- The attached briefing note #186965 that was issued October 11, 2017 is still accurate as of August 22, 2019 and as of today, no decision by an OECD member country to prohibit all uses of glyphosate for health or environmental reasons has been identified.
- On the issue of soil microbes the Re-evaluation decision on glyphosate states “Negative impacts have been observed on specific soil microbe strains, but overall, evidence suggests glyphosate end-use products have a low impact on deleterious and beneficial soil microbes following application. Glyphosate contributes to sustainable agricultural systems by reducing the need for cultivation (for example, no-till technique), increasing plant biomass on the ground, increasing the soil organic matter content, improving soil structure and reducing soil erosion and run-off”
- On the issue of court cases in the US: the following statement came from an article in the St. Louis Record dated August 15, 2019 "Richard AuBuchon, executive director of Missouri Justice Reform Coalition and also an attorney based in Jefferson City, says science presented during trials can sometimes be difficult for a jury. “I am unable to speak to the facts of these (California) cases because I was not involved in the litigation. Every trial is a game of what evidence is admitted and how it is presented,” AuBuchon said. “Focusing on the science can be difficult for a jury when presented with all the other items of fact during a trial.”
- The Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency, that is part of Health Canada, looks at all the data on a pesticide to determine if it is safe where as a jury is only presented the data that the lawyers and Judge decides that they can hear. The scientific conclusions from Health Canada are the accurate scientific assessment.

Ministry of Agriculture BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 186965

Date: October 11, 2017

Issue: Online petition to BC Minister of Agriculture, Lana Popham “**Ban Glyphosate in British Columbia**”

Background:

- [A petition on change.org](#) advocating for a ban on the herbicide glyphosate is targeted to Minister Popham.
- Glyphosate is a common target of environmental activists. It is the most widely used pesticide in Canada and the world. It is sold under many trade names (e.g. RoundUp) for agricultural, industrial and domestic (home garden) weed management.
- Glyphosate is an important and cost effective weed management tool in crop production in field crops, orchards, vineyards and berry crops. It is used for broad spectrum weed control, including perennial, invasive and noxious weeds.
- Pre-harvest application of glyphosate is used in some field crops to advance maturity and/or to uniformly desiccate crops, and to control late season weeds that can interfere with harvesting operations and reduce crop quality.
- Glyphosate remains an important tool for advancing conservation tillage, such as no-tillage and reduced tillage systems that reduce soil erosion and increase soil organic matter.
- It is used to control invasive plants to foster biodiversity by allowing native plant communities including those containing endangered or rare species, to be preserved or re-established.

Drafted By: Ken Sapsford/Jane Pritchard

Date: August 30, 2019

- Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is the authority in Canada that regulates the registration of pesticides. Pesticides must go through rigorous science-based assessment before being approved for sale in Canada. In addition, all pesticides must be re-evaluated on a cyclical basis to make sure they continue to meet modern health and environment safety standards.
- On April 28, 2017 Health Canada published its comprehensive re-evaluation decision on glyphosate. The re-evaluation included an assessment of the potential human health risk of glyphosate from drinking water, food, occupational and bystander exposure, as well as the environmental risk to non-target organisms.

Discussion:

- The overall findings from PMRA's re-examination of glyphosate:
 - Glyphosate is not genotoxic and is unlikely to pose a human cancer risk.
 - Dietary exposure is not expected to pose a risk of concern to human health.
 - Occupational and residential risks associated with the use of glyphosate are not of concern, provided that updated label instructions are followed.
 - When used according to revised label directions, glyphosate products are not expected to pose risks of concern to the environment.
 - All registered glyphosate uses have value for weed control in agriculture and non-agricultural land management.
- The PMRA routinely works collaboratively with other member countries within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the regulation of pesticides.
- As of 8 March 2017, no decision by an OECD member country to prohibit all uses of glyphosate for health or environmental reasons has been identified.
- In March, 2015, the World Health Organization's (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) published a summary of results of their hazard classification of glyphosate. IARC classified glyphosate as probably carcinogenic to humans. It is important to note that the IARC classification is a hazard classification and not a health risk assessment. This means that the level of human exposure, which determines the actual risk, was not taken into account by IARC.
- In November, 2015, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) finalized their re-assessment of glyphosate, concluding that glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic hazard to humans.
- In May 2016, the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) concluded that glyphosate is unlikely to be genotoxic at anticipated dietary exposures and that it is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans from exposure through the diet.
- In March, 2017, the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) and the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) released their determination that glyphosate is not a carcinogen.
- Glyphosate has a very low mammalian toxicity, and is thus very safe for applicators to handle. If accidentally consumed, it is excreted mostly unchanged in feces and urine and does not stay in the body.
- Glyphosate is not likely to get into the groundwater because it binds tightly to soil and is then broken down by bacteria in the soil.
- In 2013 a now discredited paper was published that correlated glyphosate with all sorts of diseases including autism. Just because two things are happening at the same time does not mean that one of them caused the other. The rise in autism also correlates with the rise in organic food sales; this is correlation not causation.

Suggested Response:

- Currently, no pesticide regulatory authority, including Health Canada, considers glyphosate to be a carcinogenic risk of concern to humans.
- The recent re-evaluation of glyphosate by Health Canada and other international regulating agencies have stated that glyphosate is unlikely to pose any human health risk and approves all uses as described on the label.
- Glyphosate is a valuable herbicide that is used in many agriculture cropping systems and has helped reduce soil erosion with the advancement of no-till cropping systems.
- The Ministry of Environment has the provincial mandate to regulate pesticide application under the authority of the *Integrated Pest Management Act*.

Drafted By: Ken Sapsford/Jane Pritchard

Date: August 30, 2019

- AGRI has every confidence in the federal and provincial pesticide regulatory agencies and work with them to ensure legislation that results in safe and effective pesticide use;
- AGRI encourages the agricultural community to manage pesticides in an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible way through production guides, outreach programs, and web-based material.

Contact: Ken Sapsford, Pesticide Specialist
kenneth.sapsford@gov.bc.ca

EDIR JP ADM JM DM WS

Program Area: Ministry of Agriculture		2019 UBCM CONVENTION STAFF MEETING SCHEDULE			
Alternate Contact: Shawna Lyttle		Ministry of Agriculture			
Alt. Contact #: 250-213-6384					
TIME	MUNICIPALITY	ATTENDEES	TOPIC	REQUESTED	PHONE
8:30	Midway	Mayor Martin Fromme; Councillor Richard Dunsdon; Councillor Gary Schierbeck; Councillor Darrin Metcalf; Councillor Fred Grouette; Chief Administrative Officer Penny Feist	What criteria were the Village lands put into the ALR; What is Minister's strategy for encouraging agricultural development & diversification; What is Midway's role in this plan; How does the Ministry support marketing; What is being done to encourage BC products to be sold in BC stores; Should there be increasing global unrest what is being done to ensure that BC'ers will have food if imports are cut off; Newly acquired land and possible subdivision option, do we have any trade opportunities.	PENNY FEIST	250 528-0157
9:00	Alberni Clayquot RD	Bob Beckett, Director; Cindy Solda, Councillor; Diane Bodnar, Director; Douglas Holmes, CAO; John Jack, Chair; John McNabb, Director; Josie Osborne, Mayor; Kel Roberts, Director; Kirsten Johnson, Member of Council; Mayco Noel, Mayor; Penny Cote, Director; Sharie Minions, Mayor; Tanya Shannon, Director; Wilfred Cootes, Councillor	Impacts of Bill 52 and Bill 15 with respect to housing on farmland. Background: Provincial regulations prohibit a 2nd residence in the ALR unless approved by the ALC and there is no right to replace an existing residential structure. If an existing second dwelling is destroyed, the farmer has no right to replace the dwelling. Request: To amend the ALC regulations to allow second residences on ALR properties for farm operations, and have meaningful consultation with the farming community and LG.	JANICE HALL	250-720-2714
9:30	Clearwater	Mayor Merlin Blackwell Councillor Shelley Sim Councillor Bill Haring Councillor Lynne Frizzle Councillor Lyle Mackenzie	ALC changes to allow secondary dwellings on farm land. This is an issue in rural BC where farms / ranches need succession plan for a family member to be able to mentor and take on the farm/ranch. Food Security is a significant issue in BC and rural BC in particular - farms need	LESLIE GROULX	2506742257

10:00	Lake Country	Bill Scarrow, Councillor; Blair Ireland, Councillor; Cara Reed, Councillor; James Baker, Mayor; Jeremy Kozub, Councillor; Mark Koch, Director of Community Development; Penny Gambell, Councillor; Todd McKenzie, Councillor	The District of Lake Country requests the previous requirement for concrete based cannabis production in the ALR to receive Non-Farm Use Approval from the ALC be reinstated, and that local governments be meaningfully consulted prior to further such statutory changes that affect local communities.	WILLENE PEREZ	778-738-2722
10:30	Metro Vancouver RD	Carol Mason, Chief Administrative Officer; Neal Carley, General Manager, Environment & Planning	Cannabis Operations Regulations	AARON ROBINSON	6046559469
11:00	Langley (Township)	Mayor Jack Froese, Bill Storie, Ramin Seifi	Cannabis regulations	CINDY SAVOY	604-533-6065
11:30	Spallumcheen	Mayor Christine Fraser; Councillor John Bakker; Councillor Gerry Popoff; Councillor Joe Van Tienhoven; Doug Allin, Chief Administrative Officer	To discuss Spallumcheen's opportunity to provide feedback regarding agricultural regulations as well as input regarding dwellings within a home plate. With the Township being 50% Agricultural Land Reserve land we have many farming operations and so decisions ultimately impact our community in a major way. This is a high priority for the Council, community and residents and we have a lot of expertise within our	CINDY GRAVES	250-546-3013
12:00			LUNCH		
1:00					
1:30					
2:00					
2:30					
3:00					
3:30					
4:00					

Project Area: Ministry of Agriculture		Alternate Contact: Shawna Lyttle		2019 UBCM CONVENTION STAFF MEETING SCHEDULE		
		Alt. Contact #: 250-213-6384		Ministry of Agriculture		
TIME	MUNICIPALITY	ATTENDEES	TOPIC	REQUESTED	PHONE	
8:30						
9:00						
9:30						
10:00						
10:30						
11:00						
11:30						
12:00			LUNCH			
1:00						
1:30						
2:00						
2:30						
3:00						
3:30						

4:00					
------	--	--	--	--	--

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Village of Midway

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

REQUEST:

Information provided by Local Government

What criteria were the Village lands put into the ALR; What is Minister's strategy for encouraging agricultural development & diversification; What is Midway's role in this plan; How does the Ministry support marketing; What is being done to encourage BC products to be sold in BC stores; Should there be increasing global unrest what is being done to ensure that BC'ers will have food if imports are cut off; Newly acquired land and possible subdivision option, do we have any trade opportunities.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

History of the Agricultural Land Reserve

- In the late 1960's and early 1970's, nearly 6,000 hectares of prime agricultural land were being lost each year to urban and other uses. The provincial government responded to this erosion of the agricultural land base by introducing BC's *Land Commission Act* on April 18, 1973.
- The Commission, appointed by the Provincial government, established a special land-use zone – the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) – to protect BC's agricultural land.
- The 4.7 million hectares of the Reserve were identified between 1974 to 1976 through cooperative efforts with regional districts and member municipalities. Local input was gained through a public hearing process. Despite boundary changes over the decades, the Reserve remains approximately the same size (5% of the province).
- The ALR boundary is based on biophysical information related to the natural characteristics of the land and its climate.
- The intention was to set boundaries on objective technical characteristics, rather than on the variables of the market and other socioeconomic conditions.
- The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) used the Canada Land Inventory as a uniform, province-wide land classification to fairly and equitably identify the zone.
- Regional governments submitted Agricultural Land Reserve plans to the ALC based on ALC guidelines and on maps, provided by the BC Department of Agriculture, which identified lands that have the soil/climate combination to support agriculture, and that were not already urbanized or otherwise irreversibly alienated.

Encouraging development and diversification

- For individuals looking to start or grow their agrifoods business, AgriService BC is available, linking British Columbians to comprehensive and up-to-date information and tips to be a success in B.C.'s agrifoods sector.
- AgriService BC can quickly connect you to programs and information that includes:
 - Starting a new farm and effectively marketing your products.
 - Hiring and supervising workers.
 - Developing marketing plans and expanding your business.
 - Responding to risks – resources available to help protect your business.
 - Learning how to manage water and other resources effectively.
- AgriService BC is available online at: www.gov.bc.ca/agriservicebc, by phone (1-888-221-7141⁸) and email: AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca, or by visiting a Ministry of Agriculture office. If you contact AgriService BC, Ministry of Agriculture staff will either find the information you have requested right away or will put you in contact with the appropriate expert.
- There are 20,000 family farms in the provincial agrifoods sector providing a vital role in B.C.'s food security and economy.

Ministry Support for Marketing and Buy BC Program

- The Ministry delivers a suite of market development resources, cost-shared programs, events, activities and services to improve the competitiveness of B.C.'s agriculture and seafood sector and to increase sales within the domestic and international markets.
- In 2018, the Ministry brought back an enhanced Buy BC marketing program to increase consumer awareness, demand and sales of local agriculture and seafood products. Buy BC builds a strong, recognizable Buy BC brand and logo that helps consumers recognize and seek out British Columbia food products.
- The Buy BC program is supported by several components including a Buy BC brand and logo, a \$2 million-per-year cost-shared funding program, retail partnerships, website and social media, and a comprehensive province-wide advertising and promotional campaign driving consumers to look for the Buy BC logo on products in grocery stores across the province.
- Buy BC empowers retailers interested in supporting and promoting B.C. food products to use the Buy BC logo on point-of-sale promotional materials and signage to increase appreciation, awareness and support for B.C.'s agriculture and food products. In addition, through the Buy BC Partnership Program, the Ministry provides cost-shared funding to support industry-led Buy BC marketing campaigns, which

Drafted By: Heather Anderson, Willow Minaker, Eliane Verret-Fournier, Anna North and Kelly Rainforth

Date: August 30, 2019

include in-store demonstrations and other retail-focused promotions. Through this program, eligible B.C. food and beverage businesses and partners can apply for free to use the Buy BC logo and integrate it onto their product packaging and promotional materials. For more information visit <https://buybc.gov.bc.ca/> or contact BuyBC@gov.bc.ca.

Climate Change

- We are committed to working with the sector to improving the resilience of agricultural production in a changing climate.
- The B.C. government is working with industry to address climate change risks and has invested significantly in climate adaptation programming. Along with the federal government, funding and commitments of approximately \$12 million have been made for between 2013 to 2023 to help farmers and ranchers across the province prepare and adapt to changing climate and weather conditions (\$6.2M for the CAP period 2018-2023 and \$5.8M for the GF2 period 2013-2018).
- The Ministry's Climate Change Adaptation Program is industry-led and delivered by the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative. The initiative develops tools and resources to enhance the ability of the B.C. agriculture sector to adapt to climate change. This includes working with local governments, industry and others to develop and implement regional agricultural adaptation strategies.
- Regional adaptation strategies have been developed or are underway in eight key agricultural areas of the province: Delta, the Peace, the Cariboo, the Fraser Valley, the Okanagan, Kootenay & Boundary, Bulkley-Nechako & Fraser-Fort George, and Vancouver Island.
- Eighty projects have been funded since 2013, addressing climate related risks such as drought, excess moisture, flooding, pests, diseases, and wildfires.
- Over the next year, we will be actively participating in the development of the B.C. Adaptation Strategy by contributing to policy proposals that address provincial climate change adaptation priorities.

Trade Opportunities

- Recent trade agreements, such as the Canadian-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), have opened up new opportunities and market access for B.C.'s agriculture and agri-food sectors.
- BC companies should be encouraged to take advantage of our "first movers" status. For example, Canada's participation in agreements, such as the CPTPP, gives B.C. companies a competitive advantage over other countries that have not yet negotiated preferential treatment.
- B.C. supports agriculture and agri-food companies looking to export through a variety of programs and services, including market intelligence, market development support and funding opportunities, such as the BC Agrifood and Seafood Market Development Program.

- For additional information on these programs, I encourage you to reach out to the Ministry Trade Policy Analyst, Kelly Rainforth (Kelly.rainforth@gov.bc.ca) (250) 952-3266.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC TWO: Cannabis production on farmland

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

To clearly define the regulations for cannabis production on ALR lands.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

Bills 52 & 15 regulate cannabis production in the ALR. As of July 16/19, cannabis growing is considered a 'farm use'. Cannabis production within the ALR cannot be prohibited if grown outdoors in a field, inside a structure that has a base consisting entirely of soil, or inside a qualifying concrete-based structure built, or under construction, prior to July 13/18.

Information provided by the Ministry

- Cannabis production facilities are a contentious issue in Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD)
- The Strengthening Farming Team has responded to numerous letters from concerned citizens with regards to proposed large-scale cannabis production facilities in ACRD that have garnered significant media attention:
 - A 57,000 square foot facility is proposed at Beaver Creek Road. On February 27, 2019, the ACRD forwarded a non-farm use application for the construction of the facility to the ALC for decision.
 - Recently, a 377,000 square foot facility, called "Cannapark" is proposed near Sproat Lake, located north of Port Alberni, which also includes 50 acres of outdoor growing space for cannabis. A public meeting was held in July and was well attended by concerned residents. Ultimately, the ACRD publicly stated that if the company meets the zoning requirements and is compliant with the B.C. building code, the facility will be approved.
- Local residents are stridently opposed to both facilities.
- Under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA), the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a reserve for farm use. Farm use includes the farming of land, plants, mushrooms, truffles and animals.
- The legalization of cannabis means that cannabis production is the farming of a legal plant, and therefore a farm use.
- Local governments who are regulated under Section 918 of the Local Government Act can use Farm Bylaws to prohibit or restrict the use of land for agriculture in farming areas, subject to approval from the Minister of Agriculture.

- Farm Bylaws provide local governments with additional tools to regulate agriculture than are available in zoning bylaws.
- While zoning bylaws regulate land use, Farm Bylaws can deal with operational matters aimed at enhancing land use compatibility, promoting environmentally sound practices, or in some cases restricting agricultural uses.
- Authority for farm use decisions in the ALR resides with local governments further to their land use decision-making authority under the Local Government Act.
- Many local governments wrote to the Province requesting authority to limit cannabis production.
- In July 2018, Government announced a change to the policy framework regarding cannabis production on the ALR. This regulatory change ensured that, effective immediately, local and First Nation governments had the authority to prohibit cement-based cannabis-production facilities on ALR land within their communities, while clarifying that cannabis production in the ALR cannot be prohibited if grown lawfully:
 - In an open field;
 - 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.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

Cannabis Production

- This approach announced last summer clearly enabled local and First Nation governments to make decisions about cannabis production that align with local planning and community priorities.
- In 2015, the B.C. government of the day protected the production of medical cannabis by regulation, making it a farm use that in most circumstances could not be prohibited by local or First Nation governments.
- The regulatory changes that came into effect on February 22, 2019 had the purpose of bringing Bill 52 into force and providing legal clarification to the Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation. In doing so, the updated regulations removed the reference to cannabis production as a “designated farm use”.
- While the February 22, 2019 regulatory change did not reflect a change in Government policy, it impacted the Agricultural Land Commission’s (ALC) operational policy in relation to cannabis production applications in the ALR.
- It is unfortunate that this impact to ALC’s operational policy was not identified sooner and it is regrettable the information was not available to local governments earlier.

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Clearwater

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

ALC changes to allow secondary dwellings on farm land. This is an issue in rural BC where farms / ranches need succession plan for a family member to be able to mentor and take on the farm/ranch. Food Security is a significant issue in BC and rural BC in particular - farms need to have succession.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by the Ministry

- The District of Clearwater does not have an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC). Clearwater may benefit from establishing one or becoming more involved with the Thompson Nicola Regional District Agricultural Advisory Commission. Ministry staff have information resources available to support this process.
- Clearwater does not have an Agricultural Area Plan (AAP). AAPs can help identify a community's agricultural issues and opportunities, initiate actions to potentially reduce farm practice complaints, and propose policy to encourage improved land use compatibility. Ministry staff encourage Clearwater to consider the potential to develop an AAP.
- The Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD) performs planning services for the District of Clearwater. Ministry staff encourage Coldstream to send their bylaw referrals regarding agricultural land use planning in their community to the Ministry for review and feedback.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization – Secondary Dwellings

- The Bill 52 -2018 changes to the Act, brought into law on February 22, 2019, include the requirement for Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) approval (rather than local governments) for any additional residence for farm-use through a non-adhering residential use application. ALC's stewardship over residential development on the ALR is critical to ensuring that this limited resource is available to farmers now and into the future.
- Government extended the grandfathering of manufactured homes for immediate family members if placement permits are obtained by February 22, 2020.
- Engagement with local government and the ALC continues to explore options to provide flexibility for additional residences for families.

- The changes limiting allowable residences in the ALR were made to meet Government's commitment to revitalize the ALR and the ALC by recognizing that the ALR is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use, farming is encouraged and non-agricultural uses are managed carefully.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: District of Lake Country

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

TOPIC ONE: Cannabis Production in the ALR

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

The District of Lake Country requests the previous requirement for concrete based cannabis production in the ALR to receive Non-Farm Use Approval from the ALC be reinstated, and that local governments be meaningfully consulted prior to further such statutory changes that affect local communities.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by Local Government

In February local governments were informed of the changing policy regulating cannabis production in the ALR. This regulatory shift identified that all forms of cannabis production in the ALR are now a 'Farm Use' Prior to the changes concrete-based cannabis production in the ALR required Non-Farm Use Approval from the ALC. As an agricultural community, Lake Country is committed to the preservation of farmland for food production. Many communities relied on the Non-Farm Use Approval for regulating permanent, concrete based cannabis production facilities in the ALR. Lake Country is concerned with the potential loss of farmland from this amendment and the lack of consultation with the change.

Information provided by the Ministry

- The District of Lake Country has recently experienced the development of a large-scale cannabis facility in their community.
- During its development, strong concerns were raised about the diversion of a stream and the impact of construction on the surrounding natural habitat.
- The District of Lake Country has also specifically identified a lack of additional support that would have been beneficial to assist them during this provincial regulatory transition.
- Under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA), the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a reserve for farm use. Farm use includes the farming of land, plants, mushrooms, truffles and animals.
- The legalization of cannabis means that cannabis production is the farming of a legal plant, and therefore a farm use.
- Local governments who are regulated under Section 918 of the *Local Government Act* can use Farm Bylaws to prohibit or restrict the use of land for agriculture in farming areas, subject to approval from the Minister of Agriculture.

- Farm Bylaws provide local governments with additional tools to regulate agriculture than are available in zoning bylaws.
- While zoning bylaws regulate land use, Farm Bylaws can deal with operational matters aimed at enhancing land use compatibility, promoting environmentally sound practices, or in some cases restricting agricultural uses.
- Authority for farm use decisions in the ALR resides with local governments further to their land use decision-making authority under the *Local Government Act*.
- Many local governments wrote to the Province requesting authority to limit cannabis production.
- In July 2018, Government announced a change to the policy framework regarding cannabis production on the ALR. This regulatory change ensured that, effective immediately, local and First Nation governments had the authority to prohibit cement-based cannabis-production facilities on ALR land within their communities, while clarifying that cannabis production in the ALR cannot be prohibited if grown lawfully:
 - In an open field;
 - 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.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Food Security)

- With regards to food security, under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA) there are many agricultural sectors in B.C. that meet the definition of farm use that do not contribute to food security.
- Examples include floriculture, wineries, breweries and cideries, cat and dog breeding, and horse stables.
- Limiting production on the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to the agrifood sector would require an amendment to the definition of farm use in the ALCA. This is not being contemplated at this time.

ALR/ALC Revitalization (Cannabis)

- This approach announced last summer clearly enabled local and First Nation governments to make decisions about cannabis production that align with local planning and community priorities.
- In 2015, the B.C. government of the day protected the production of medical cannabis by regulation, making it a farm use that in most circumstances could not be prohibited by local or First Nation governments.
- The regulatory changes that came into effect on February 22, 2019 had the purpose of bringing Bill 52 into force and providing legal clarification to the Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation. In doing so, the updated regulations removed the reference to cannabis production as a “designated farm use”.
- While the February 22, 2019 regulatory change did not reflect a change in Government policy, it impacted the Agricultural Land Commission’s (ALC) operational policy in relation to cannabis production applications in the ALR.
- It is unfortunate that this impact to ALC’s operational policy was not identified sooner and it is regrettable the information was not available to local governments earlier.

Drafted By: Gregory Bartle, Anna North and Heather Anderson

Date: August 28, 2019

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
 - We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
 - We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
 - The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
 - The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
 - The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
 - You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.
-

UBCM STAFF/ADM MEETING INFORMATION NOTE

Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy

Date Prepared: September 10, 2019

Metro Vancouver

Air quality regulation for cannabis growers

UBCM HISTORY

- In 2018, discussed odour management in general with Metro Vancouver (MV) - “ENV and MV will continue to meet quarterly to share information, including MV developing a new odour management framework.”

ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION

- Proposed air quality regulation for cannabis growers

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

- MV has delegated authority under the provincial *Environmental Management Act* to manage air quality and pollution within its regional boundaries.
- In May 2019 MV issued a discussion paper proposing an *Emission Regulation for Cannabis Production and Processing Operations* to reduce air emissions from cannabis production (consultation closes October 31, 2019).
- The BC Cannabis Legalization and Regulation Secretariat (Policing and Security Branch of PSSG) is preparing a consolidated provincial response to the discussion paper incorporating feedback from multiple ministries, including ENV.
- ENV and MV should continue to meet regularly to discuss air quality issues and management including air emissions from cannabis production.

Contact:

Laurel Nash
ADM-EPD

250 953-4004
laurel.nash@gov.bc.ca

Alternative Contact:

Tarek Ayache
Section Head
Environmental Protection
778 974-4918
tarek.ayache@gov.bc.ca

Prepared By:

Cindy Walsh
Air Quality Science Specialist
Environmental Protection
250-751-3174
cindy.walsh@gov.bc.ca

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Township of Langley

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government
Cannabis Regulations

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by the Ministry

- The Township passed third reading of Bylaw No 5496 (Township of Langley Cannabis Production Farm Bylaw 2019 No. 5496) on July 22, 2019 and subsequently forwarded it to the Ministry of Agriculture for Minister's approval. The Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development approved the bylaw on August 19, 2019. It is expected that the Township will adopt the bylaw at their first Council meeting in September.
- The Township is regulated under section 553 of the *Local Government Act*, and as a result all bylaws within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) that restrict the use of land for a farm business must be approved by the Minister of Agriculture.
- Township staff have indicated that this bylaw is a first step in getting regulations regarding cannabis in place and there is a high probability for Council to adopt stricter regulations in future, up to and including prohibition of all types of cannabis production in the ALR.
- The Township has been receiving numerous farm practice complaints about existing cannabis production facilities, primarily to do with odour. A formal complaint has been filed with BC FIRB regarding the odour from one facility (Canopy Growth). The newly approved bylaw will go some way towards mitigating odours from cannabis production facilities and in helping to address complaints, but these complaints may be what is prompting Township Council to seek further restrictions on cannabis production in the ALR.
- As a regulated community under section 553 of the *Local Government Act*, the Township is one of four communities in the province that has access to farm bylaw powers and could restrict or prohibit all types of cannabis production in the ALR with the approval of the Minister.
- The Township may be seeking an indication of how far the government and the Minister may be prepared to allow them to prohibit or restrict cannabis production in the ALR.
- If the Township is not allowed to prohibit or restrict cannabis production to a greater extent than what non-regulated communities are allowed to, this may result in the Township believing once again that there is no advantage to being regulated and may trigger further requests for deregulation.
- Under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA), the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a reserve for farm use. Farm use includes the farming of land, plants, mushrooms, truffles and animals.

- The legalization of cannabis means that cannabis production is the farming of a legal plant, and therefore a farm use.
- Local governments who are regulated under Section 918 of the *Local Government Act* can use Farm Bylaws to prohibit or restrict the use of land for agriculture in farming areas, subject to approval from the Minister of Agriculture.
- Farm Bylaws provide local governments with additional tools to regulate agriculture than are available in zoning bylaws.
- While zoning bylaws regulate land use, Farm Bylaws can deal with operational matters aimed at enhancing land use compatibility, promoting environmentally sound practices, or in some cases restricting agricultural uses.
- Authority for farm use decisions in the ALR resides with local governments further to their land use decision-making authority under the *Local Government Act*.
- Many local governments wrote to the Province requesting authority to limit cannabis production.
- In July 2018, Government announced a change to the policy framework regarding cannabis production on the ALR. This regulatory change ensured that, effective immediately, local and First Nation governments had the authority to prohibit cement-based cannabis-production facilities on ALR land within their communities, while clarifying that cannabis production in the ALR cannot be prohibited if grown lawfully:
 - In an open field;
 - 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.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

Cannabis Production

- This approach announced last summer clearly enabled local and First Nation governments to make decisions about cannabis production that align with local planning and community priorities.
- In 2015, the B.C. government of the day protected the production of medical cannabis by regulation, making it a farm use that in most circumstances could not be prohibited by local or First Nation governments.
- The regulatory changes that came into effect on February 22, 2019 had the purpose of bringing Bill 52 into force and providing legal clarification to the Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation. In doing so, the updated regulations removed the reference to cannabis production as a “designated farm use”.
- While the February 22, 2019 regulatory change did not reflect a change in Government policy, it impacted the Agricultural Land Commission’s (ALC) operational policy in relation to cannabis production applications in the ALR.
- It is unfortunate that this impact to ALC’s operational policy was not identified sooner and it is regrettable the information was not available to local governments earlier.
- With the change in ALC’s operational policy, most cannabis-related applications to the ALC have been cancelled.

- A few continue to come before the ALC as soil/fill applications, as the construction of some cannabis facilities is expected to exceed fill placement thresholds.
- The federal government issues the licenses on cannabis production facilities.
- Nuisance complaints for farming activity are adjudicated by the BC Farm Industry Review Board (BCFIRB). BCFIRB determines whether a farm activity is conducted within normal farm practices.

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
 - We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
 - We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.
 - The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
 - The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
 - The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
 - You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.
-

DEPUTY MINISTER INFORMATION NOTE
2019 UBCM CONVENTION

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Township of Spallumcheen

MINISTRY: Ministry of Agriculture

REQUEST: Information Provided by Local Government

To discuss Spallumcheen's opportunity to provide feedback regarding agricultural regulations as well as input regarding dwellings within a home plate. With the Township being 50% Agricultural Land Reserve land we have many farming operations and so decisions ultimately impact our community in a major way. This is a high priority for the Council, community and residents and we have a lot of expertise within our community.

BACKGROUND:

Information provided by the Ministry

- The District Spallumcheen Agricultural Area Plan (AAP) was adopted in 2006. There may be an interest in updating this local government document.
- Similar to the District of Coldstream and the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO), the Township of Spallumcheen has also raised concerns in the past regarding the *Farm Practices Protection Act* – likely related to the recent expansion of cherry production into the North Okanagan and associated farm practice concerns.
- Spallumcheen's Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) has also recently (2018) identified an interest in raising more awareness within their community concerning typical farm practices that might be expected in Spallumcheen's farming areas.
- Ministry staff have received eight Spallumcheen bylaw referrals so far in 2019 for review and comment.
- These include an Official Community Plan amendment, zoning bylaw amendments, and ALC subdivision, non-farm use, and non-adhering use application referrals. The RDNO provides land use planning services for the Township of Spallumcheen.
- Ministry staff encourage Spallumcheen to continue sending referrals to the Ministry.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

ALR Engagement

- The Ministry of Agriculture is working on ways to better engage with local governments on initiatives related to the agricultural land reserve.
- We are setting up an ALR governance structure that will provide an integrated approach to examining changes that could impact local governments.
- We are committed to providing opportunity for local governments to provide feedback and operational expertise on proposed changes.

- The priority policy initiative that will involve local government staff in the coming months is the home plate concept.
- The Ministry has launched an online public engagement which provides a short discussion paper and survey on topics that the Ministry is interested in exploring with all stakeholders.
- The discussion paper and survey contain some information about the concept of home plate.
- You are welcome to provide input through engage.bc.ca survey, but we are planning for deeper involvement with local governments on the concept of home plate and other topics that involve local governments.

Notes: Requested to meet with James Mack and Arlene Anderson

B32 Agricultural Support Services

Alberni-Clayoquot RD

Whereas agricultural extension services support government and community priorities around food security, economic development, climate change adaptation and water management;

And whereas agricultural producers and stakeholders in each Regional District are subject to unique challenges and opportunities that are difficult to address in the long-term or in a consistent manner without predictable, non-project-based funding:

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Agriculture provide funding to Regional Districts through a stable, annual and accountable framework to establish strategic and long-term regional agricultural extension supports.

Endorsed by the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities

UBCM Resolutions Committee recommendation: **Endorse with Proposed Amendment**

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Agriculture provide funding to Regional Districts local governments through a stable, annual and accountable framework to establish strategic and long-term regional agricultural extension supports.

UBCM Resolutions Committee comments:

The Resolutions Committee notes that the UBCM membership has endorsed other resolutions that call on the Province to support agricultural extension services such as public awareness and marketing programs, mentorship programs and to support knowledge enhancement for new, prospective and existing farmers (2016-B40, 2012-B34, 2011-B56).

The Committee would propose that the enactment clause be amended to refer to "local governments" not just "regional districts" to be inclusive of the broader UBCM membership.

Conference decision: _____

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture provides support to the agriculture sector through Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC, which is a three-pillared strategy to enable sustainable shared prosperity for a better B.C., by supporting B.C.'s agriculture, seafood and food processing sectors, encouraging consumption of B.C. products and building resiliency within the sector.

The Ministry has a variety of programs and services to support B.C.'s farming communities, industry groups and aspiring new farmers. These programs are designed to promote local food products, support innovation, build capacity of B.C.'s existing producers and processors, assist new entrants looking to farm in B.C. and support farmers to adapt to a changing climate.

Currently, the Ministry provides direct service delivery to primary and value-added producers through a network of front-line staff and technical staff support capable of facilitating contacts between producers, industry associations, local governments, First Nations and other stakeholders and communities of interests. These interests are served with a broad range of modern tools, information and resources but support needs are increasing given a changing environment, pressures on the urban/rural interface and technological change. Examples of key activities include:

- Regional Agrologists (15 Agrologists) who deliver strategic outreach activities, facilitate strong agricultural land-use planning, coordinate agricultural emergency response, and address current and emerging issues facing agriculture within a specific region, in collaboration with local governments, regional producer organizations and local producers;
- Industry Specialists (11 Specialists) who drive agricultural competitiveness by delivering industry extension programming, research, and coordination to key agricultural commodities province-wide, in collaboration with producers, processors, provincial-federal organizations and governments, and;

- AgriServiceBC, which provides a single point of contact for producers, processors and citizens to access Ministry information, programs and services.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Agriculture

Date: Sept. 11, 2019

Minister Responsible: Lana Popham

UBCM Resolution: B32 – Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC and Agri Services

RESOLUTION or ISSUE SUMMARY:

Whereas agricultural extension services support government and community priorities around food security, economic development, climate change adaptation and water management;

And whereas agricultural producers and stakeholders in each Regional District are subject to unique challenges and opportunities that are difficult to address in the long-term or in a consistent manner without predictable, non-project-based funding:

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Agriculture provide funding to Regional Districts through a stable, annual and accountable framework to establish strategic and long-term regional agricultural extension supports.

The Ministry of Agriculture provides support to the agriculture sector through Grow BC, Feed BC and Buy BC by supporting B.C.'s agriculture, seafood and food processing sectors, encouraging consumption of B.C. products and building resiliency within the sector.

The Ministry has a variety of programs and services to support B.C.'s farming communities, industry groups and aspiring new farmers. These programs are designed to promote local food products, support innovation, build capacity of B.C.'s existing producers and processors, assist new entrants looking to farm in B.C. and support farmers to adapt to a changing climate.

The Ministry provides direct service delivery to primary and value-added producers through a network of support staff capable of facilitating contacts between producers, industry associations, local governments, First Nations and other stakeholders and communities of interests.

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- We are committed to creating opportunities for B.C. farmers, ranchers, seafood producers and food and beverage processors in B.C.
- We are doing this by encouraging new entrants, increasing production and promoting consumption of B.C. products through Grow BC, Feed BC and Buy BC.
- Grow BC is supporting new and young farmers entering the farming sector through the BC Land Matching program that connects farmers looking for land with landowners wanting to lease their land for farming.
- Feed BC is bringing more opportunities to the food and beverage processing industry by developing the B.C. Food Hub Network and helping producers to partner with food distributors to get their food in hospitals, schools and other government facilities.
- The Buy BC Program is providing over \$2 million a year in cost-shared support to the agricultural industry to help with marketing efforts, including using the Buy BC logo on products or promotional materials.
- The Ministry has a variety of services to support B.C.'s farming communities, industry groups and aspiring new farmers including regional agrologists, industry specialists and AgriServiceBC, which

provides a single point of contact for producers, processors and citizens to access Ministry information, programs and services.

Communications Contact:	Director & Manager names	Office: 250 XXX-XXXX Cell: 250 XXX-XXXX
Program Area Contact:	[Senior Program Staff]	Office: 250 XXX-XXXX Cell: 250 XXX-XXXX

B75 Ministry of Agriculture Moratorium on Legislative Changes Spallumcheen

Whereas the Ministry of Agriculture has made legislation changes in regards to Bill 15 and Bill 52 that impact the Agricultural Land Commission authority with regards to land use applications;

And whereas these changes are impacting local governments and how they review and potentially refer their residents' applications that are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve to the Agricultural Land Commission:

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Agriculture place a moratorium on the development of any new ALC regulations until such time as local governments understand the implications on their residents and have provided input in developing any new regulations.

Endorsed by the Southern Interior Local Government Association

UBCM Resolutions Committee recommendation: **Endorse**

UBCM Resolutions Committee comments:

The Resolutions Committee advises that the UBCM membership has not previously considered a resolution calling on the Province to place a moratorium on the development of any new ALC regulations, until local governments can understand their implications and provide input in developing any new regulations.

Numerous amendments have been made to the Agricultural Land Commission Act, and the ALR Use Regulation was created, in the first half of 2019. Significant changes have impacted cannabis production, placement and removal of fill, residential uses and the types of ALR landowners who may make an exclusion application. In each case, there are impacts to local governments and their residents.

Conference decision: _____

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

In Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, legislative amendments to B.C.'s *Agricultural Land Commission Act* were enacted to encourage farming and ranching in British Columbia and to strengthen the independence of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to better fulfill its mandate of preserving the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Bill 52 received Royal Assent November 27, 2018 and was brought into force on February 22, 2019 through regulation. Bill 15 received Royal Assent on May 30, 2019 and will be brought into force by regulation.

The legislative changes respond to several recommendations put forward by the Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee for Revitalizing the ALR/ALC and are part of Government's commitment to revitalizing the ALR and the ALC. They are designed to protect B.C.'s farmland so residents can access locally grown food, and communities and local economies can prosper through farming, ranching and agriculture businesses. These changes will help stop damaging practices such as dumping construction debris and other harmful fill in the ALR and make farmland more affordable for new farmers.

Changes to the exclusion application process in Bill 15-the *Agricultural Land Commission Amendment Act*, 2019 have not yet been brought into force. Government is working with the ALC and other stakeholders to outline a smooth implementation of Bill 15 and other legislative and regulatory changes.

Government is committed to providing local governments with guidance materials on the changes to the exclusion process and providing opportunities for local governments to provide feedback and understand these and other legislative and regulatory changes before they are made to the law.

ADVICE TO MINISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ISSUES NOTE Ministry of Agriculture Date: September 11, 2019 Minister Responsible: Lana Popham	UBCM Resolution: B75-Ministry of Agriculture Moratorium on Legislative Changes - Spallumcheen
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

RESOLUTION or ISSUE SUMMARY:

Whereas the Ministry of Agriculture has made legislation changes in regards to Bill 15 and Bill 52 that impact the Agricultural Land Commission authority with regards to land use applications;

And whereas these changes are impacting local governments and how they review and potentially refer their residents' applications that are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve to the Agricultural Land Commission:

Therefore be it resolved that the Ministry of Agriculture place a moratorium on the development of any new ALC regulations until such time as local governments understand the implications on their residents and have provided input in developing any new regulations.

Government is working with the ALC and other stakeholders to outline a smooth implementation of Bill 15 and other regulatory changes.

ADVICE AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

- Our government is working hard to help farmers, protect farmland and encourage farming throughout the province to help ensure British Columbians can access locally-grown and raised food now and in the future.
- We're committed to providing local governments with information on the changes to the exclusion process and regulatory changes before they become law, as well as creating opportunities for feedback.
- Bill 52 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 focuses on giving the Agricultural Land Commission the tools it needs to support farmers and ranchers in every part of B.C. It will come into force once regulations are published.
- We're focused on expanding B.C.'s agriculture industry so people can access more local food and products, help local economies thrive and create jobs.
- Farmers, ranchers and food processors have a big stake in what we do next, but in fact everyone who lives in this province will benefit from a productive and vibrant farming economy.

Communications Contact:	Chris Harbord	Office: 250 952-7302 Cell: 250 920-5079
Program Area Contact:	Martha Anslow	Office: 250 387-0357 Cell: 778 974-3831