

**BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION
FOR MEETING WITH PREMIER'S OFFICE AND MINISTER WHITESIDE**

Ref: 194712

Date: May 6, 2021

Title: Joint meeting of Minister Popham and Minister Whiteside with Premier's Office

Issue: Minister update on Feed BC to support discussion on the direction for the Province's school meals mandate (Ministry of Education lead with support from Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Background:

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (AFF) staff are working with staff of the Ministry of Education (EDU) to explore how AFF's Feed BC program can support the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) school meals mandate commitment which is described as: *Support the work of the Minister of Education to help make sure students are properly fed for learning, working with school districts to create more local school meal programs based on district data and priorities, by integrating Feed BC into this plan so that districts can include locally grown food.*

Feed BC Program

The Feed BC program offers a range of supports including training, technology and product sourcing to help grow jobs, businesses and B.C.'s food system resilience in communities and regions throughout the province. Feed BC is a 'whole supply chain' approach to increasing the amount of B.C. foods in government facilities. At over \$415M per year, B.C.'s non-commercial food service market is a significant opportunity for B.C. producers and processors. Feed BC works with stakeholders and partners to increase demand and purchase of B.C. foods, build the agriculture and food sector's capacity to meet the demand, and stimulate new business to business value chains and opportunities in the public sector market and beyond. Since 2018, Feed BC has been advancing comprehensive efforts to shift to more B.C. food in hospitals, residential care facilities, public post-secondary institutions, and other public sector procurement.

Feed BC Active Partnerships

The Feed BC Program has been rolled out with all six, health authorities (HAs) and in the post-secondary sector. The Feed BC Program is working closely with cross-government procurement leaders and program areas in other sectors including corrections and after school sport and activity programming, and in other strategic government initiatives including the Indigenous Procurement Strategy.

Feed BC Program in Healthcare:

Under Feed BC the HAs made impressive gains in their use of B.C. foods. Between 2018/19 and 2019/20, the provincial average across all six HAs for B.C. food expenditures increased by 3.5%, from 27.3% to 30.8%, an additional \$3.5M spent on B.C. food. Numbers for 2020-21 are available in late fall 2021.

Feed BC Program in Post-Secondary Sector:

Feed BC announced its first nine post-secondary institution (PSI) partners in February 2021. Since then, eight more partners have joined Feed BC, with four additionally confirming interest to join in spring 2021 for a total of 21 of 25 post-secondary institutions (PSIs) to date (for a full list of identified PSI Partners, please see Appendix D). All PSI partners commit to working towards a minimum 30% B.C. food expenditures plus other local food initiatives that bring more B.C. products and opportunities to campus. PSIs are planning for this work and adjusting practices to include more local foods when they are back to expected full scale foodservices in fall 2021.

Discussion:

Feed BC partnerships and foundational initiatives over the past three years have established a strong, cost-effective Feed BC Program that can ensure B.C. food producers and processors participate in and benefit from government's K-12 school meals mandate.

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Contact: Martha Anslow, Director, Food System Partnerships and Feed BC, 778-974-3831

Appendix A: Feed BC in K-12 Key Messages

Appendix B: EDU Materials School Food Briefing PO May 6, 2021

Appendix C: EDU Materials OL Premier Office May Briefing

Appendix D: Feed BC PSI active partnerships

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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 196430

Date: May 13, 2021

Title: Request from BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation (BCAIRC) to Confirm Status of BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program (BCSFVNP) for 2021/2022 School Year

Issue: Ministry of Health has not responded to BCAIRC request to confirm funding for the BCSFVNP in the 2021/2022 School Year

Background:

- In operation since 2004, the BCSFVNP (delivered by BCAIRC in partnership with producers, distributors and other partners) provides fresh fruits and vegetables 12 times throughout the school year to over 500,000 students across B.C., with objectives that are shared by the Ministries of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Health, and Education (see Appendix A).
- The BCSFVNP is funded by the Ministry of Health through end-of-year funds. The cost of the program is typically more than \$4.5 million per year, \$3.7 million of which is used to purchase fruit, vegetables, and milk from B.C. farmers.

First Nations Considerations:

- 85 B.C. First Nations schools are enrolled in the BCSFVNP. The First Nations Health Authority provides additional funding to the BCSFVNP so that First Nations students receive an extra serving of B.C. produce with each delivery.

Discussion:

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Contact: Lindsay Bisschop, Director, Indigenous and Entrepreneur Services, 778-666-0563

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NOTES: *Appendix A – BCSFVNP Objectives, Appendix B - Product Value and Suppliers 2021*

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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 194627

Date: May 19, 2021

Title: Animal care issues in B.C.

Issue: Multiple non-veterinary animal health care practitioners with interests in self-regulation are operating in B.C., while the number of veterinarians in B.C. are decreasing thus creating challenges in ensuring animal welfare and protecting the public interest for qualified animal care services

Background:

- Veterinarians are valued professionals who play a critical role in B.C.'s agriculture and aquaculture industries and protect the health and welfare of B.C.'s domestic animals.
- The Ministry is aware of the current veterinary challenges in B.C. and the implications this brings to animal owners.
- The B.C. Animal Owners Association (BCAOA) has been in the process of developing the code of ethics, standards of practice, standards of education, certification, approved training programs and forming the bylaws and constitution for a college model since December 2017.

Discussion:

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Summary/ Conclusion/ Next Steps/ Suggested Response:

Ministry staff are in dialogue with Ministry of Advanced Education Skills and Training, WCVN, industry, and other partners to explore ways to address the shortage of veterinarians in B.C. and encourage veterinary graduates to practice in high-demand regions and specialties. Ministry staff have met with the BCAOA and 4 of the 8 practice groups, the College of Veterinarians of BC and Society of British Columbia Veterinarians to explore the issues facing non-veterinary animal health care practitioners and to discuss possible solutions. Ongoing meetings are planned for the Spring/Summer 2021 to continue this discussion.

Contact: Ursula Viney, Executive Director, Plant & Animal Health Branch, 778-666-0546

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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 194600

Date: May 10, 2021

Title: Minister meeting with Craft Cannabis Association of B.C. (CCAOBC)

Issue: May 27, 2021 Meeting with Sarah Campbell, and CCAOBC representatives to discuss the future of craft cannabis in the province.

Background: CCAOBC is a not-for-profit association that was established in 2016. Their organizational mandate is to support small-scale, independent cannabis businesses and to provide a resource for information, education, and guidance for the industry in B.C., as well as to support the development of standards, regulations, and policy for the sector. CCAOBC is also committed to ensuring that the cannabis sector is developed to be especially inclusive of women, as well as the Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) communities. The organization has held consistent representation at the Union of B.C. Municipalities conferences, and the Vancouver Island Agricultural show, where they have shared educational resources, and built relationships with local governments and the public. Their membership currently includes 11 registered members, with nine more members to be registered shortly. The organization has significant positioning within the industry, with up to 3,500 cannabis-affiliated businesses and producers reachable through its network, where CCAOBC will be launching a new membership program in June. CCAOBC has been encouraged and supported in the past by AFF-staff, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations (FLNR), Community Futures Organizations, and the Cannabis Legalization Secretariat to apply for grant-funding opportunities such as the B.C. Local Labour Market Partnerships, StrongerBC, and the Island Coastal Trust Rural Business Recovery programs, where they have had minimal to no success.

Discussion:

It is anticipated that CCAOBC may discuss the following issues with Minister Popham:

1. Establishment of a craft-cannabis designation in the province.
2. Supporting CCAOBC to deliver production-related, and educational resources for small-scale producers of cannabis, or how CCAOBC may partner with AFF to deliver such programming.
3. Supporting women in cannabis by providing funding for a CCAOBC partner, Back to the Garden, to conduct a study of women in the cannabis sector that would help guide government in future policy development for the sector.
4. Supporting Rural Economic Development through the cannabis sector in B.C.
5. Supporting Agri-Tourism initiatives related to cannabis in B.C.
6. Lobbying for insurance and funding-providers to support legal cannabis producers in the province.

Suggested Response:

1. AFF is interested in supporting the establishment of a craft-cannabis designation in the province. AFF is currently investigating and developing a framework for how this may be implemented. It is expected that external stakeholders, such as CCAOBC, will be engaged to provide input on this initiative, and will be involved in exploring options for its delivery.
2. AFF is currently developing a 'Cannabis Micro-Cultivation Licensing Guide', which will greatly enhance the licensing resources that are available to illicit-market producers seeking to obtain a cultivation license with Health Canada. CCAOBC has been invited to provide input on the final draft of the document. AFF is interested in partnering with external stakeholders, such as producers or producer-groups, in the future delivery of similar production-related, best-management resources to support cannabis producers in the Province.
3. AFF is committed to using Gender Based + Analysis as a method to understand the needs of diverse populations within the province's agricultural sectors. AFF has committed funding to support the Cannabis Legalization Secretariat's 'Indigenous Cannabis Market Access Project'. These works will

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seek to further enhance the supports that are available for indigenous and indigenous-affiliated cannabis producers and retailers in establishing themselves as long-term, successful business in the province.

4. The Cannabis Legalization Secretariat has undertaken a project on engaging Local Governments (LGs) in B.C. that are interested in pursuing cannabis as an economic driver in their communities. The project has started with sharing information to LGs where other jurisdictions, such as the Kootenay-Columbia region, have embraced legal cannabis production, and where regulatory processes have been eased to allow for its development in an economic sense. AFF-staff are in support of these works, by sharing similar information with LGs on an ad-hoc basis.
5. AFF is supporting the Liquor, Cannabis, and Regulation Branch, and Liquor Distribution Branch in development of the regulatory policies related to allowing the farm-gate sale and direct-delivery of cannabis in the province. This, in addition to studies being conducted by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to investigate what the policy framework for the on-site consumption of cannabis may resemble, could lead to Agri-Tourism related opportunities for the cannabis sector in the province in the near future. AFF has provided input as to how the regulatory changes to include the farm-gate sales of cannabis may be best structured to reflect how similar industries such as wineries and breweries are able to effectively operate their businesses, while maintaining accordance with Agricultural Land Reserve and Use regulations. Until these changes are enacted, it is difficult to foresee what opportunities will be available to the cannabis industry for agri-tourism. AFF is committed to supporting all agricultural commodities and producers in the province.
6. AFF is aware of the issue of legal-market cannabis producers having their primary residence, home insurance revoked, as well as farm-insurance where such policies are located on the same premises as legal cannabis production. AFF and the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation are investigating the issue. The issue comes as insurance-providers and financial institutions still associate a high-degree of risk with legal-cannabis businesses, both in market validity and security. AFF is aware that some institutions, such as the Royal Bank of Canada, and HUB International, as well as local providers, may re-assess their risk assessment of the sector in the near future.

Contact: Rajiv Dasanjh, Emerging Markets Specialist, Rajiv.Dasanjh@gov.bc.ca

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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 194860

Date: May 21, 2021

Title: Meeting scheduled with the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) on Tuesday, May 25, 2021

Issue: Vancouver property project, farm inspections, financial contributions and information sharing

Background:

The BCSPCA is a not-for-profit charitable organization, funded primarily by public donations, with a mission to protect and enhance the quality of life for domestic, farm, and wild animals in British Columbia (B.C.). The role of the BCSPCA includes enforcement and community outreach. The BCSPCA was created in 1895, and it has authority under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCA Act)*. The *PCA Act* creates a legislative framework to prevent cruelty to animals in B.C., including family pets (companion animals), livestock, and working animals, but excluding wildlife. The BCSPCA is empowered under the *PCA Act* to ensure animal welfare through inspection and enforcement of the regulations under this *Act*.

Updates on the following items have been requested for the May 25, 2021, meeting:

1. BCSPCA updates regarding the Vancouver property project and plans to inspect a small sub-set of farms.
2. Analysis of the financial contributions made by the provincial government to the BCSPCA
3. Sharing information with the BCSPCA on significant incidents of non-regular animal death or injury incidents.

Discussion:

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Past government funding received by the BCSPCA includes:

Fiscal Year	Amount (in millions)	Description
2020/21	1.463	Funding for Animal Care Facilities, pandemic response.
2019/20	0.0815	Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) funding used to improve BCSPCA enforcement knowledge with respect to farm animals. A credible farm animal welfare training program for BCSPCA inspectors and agents was identified as an essential component of an effective provincial farm animal welfare approach. The training course uses the current scientific approach to the assessment of farm animal welfare and involves classroom learning and practical field experience.
2016/17	5.000	Contribution to new facilities construction. The grant was allocated to two projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal care facility in Prince George, including community animal care centre with facilities for seized companion animals, and an emergency facility • Flagship BCSPCA campus in Vancouver which will include a large community animal centre, veterinary hospital and provincial office. <p>\$5 million grant will remain intact in a capital fund until construction on one or both projects begins, precise allocation of \$5 million to each project is currently unavailable.</p>
2014/15	5.000	To fund repairs and upgrades to several facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelowna – large animal recovery and adoption barn (\$100k) • Surrey – cat intake and seizure facility (\$400k) • Nanaimo – community animal centre (\$1.3M) • Castlegar – community animal centre (\$900k) • Dawson Creek – community animal centre (\$800k) • Kamloops – community animal centre and vet hospital (\$1.5M).
2010/11	0.100	To develop Standards of Care and a Code of Practice for the Sled Dog industry. Funding was given to support BCSPCA involvement in code development.

For more detailed information regarding BCSPCA capital project needs totaling \$8M, see Appendix 1.

3.) Sharing information with the BCSPCA on significant incidents of non-regular animal death or injury incidents

The inability for Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries employees to share information regarding non-regular animal deaths with the BCSPCA is set out in the *Animal Health Act* (AHA). Section 16 of the AHA limits the release of information in the possession of the Ministry related to animals. The classes of protected information in Section 16 include information which would disclose the location, species, or animal owner, whether or not there is a disease outbreak. The AHA does allow for the disclosure of this protected information in some cases under Section 17. Part of the rationale for this limitation in the AHA is to protect farmers from any fallout that may arise due to unfettered access to information about animals for which they are responsible.

Suggested Response:

- Thank the BCSPCA for their commitment and dedication to representing the collective interests of farm animals in B.C.
- The Ministry is interested in reviewing the farm inspection report once completed.
- The Ministry is bound by the requirements of the *Animal Health Act* regarding sharing of information. Should there be situations where sharing is possible, ministry staff will connect with the BCSPCA as appropriate.
- The Ministry looks forward to a continued positive and productive relationship with the BCSPCA.

Contact:

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Sandra Cavallin, Senior Policy Analyst, 778 698-9869

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Appendix 1

Facility name	Region	Facility update/description	Provincial Government funding requested	Social Good (all locations)	Mental Health Supports (all locations)	Community benefits (all locations)
Vancouver	LM/FV/SC	New Vancouver community animal centre, full service veterinary hospital, humane education centre and provincial office + potential partnership with City of Vancouver on animal control. Facility rebuilt on existing location.	\$ 4,000,000	Significantly expand the number of volunteer opportunities. (Van specific) Operates 'Charlie's Foodbank' which provides direct, low barrier access to pet food and veterinary services for Downtown Eastside residents' pets including a significant urban Indigenous population		(Van specific) Shelter and hospital staff are CUPE 1622 and staffing will be increased with new facility; hospital to become a teaching facility accredited with the various veterinary colleges across Canada; in partnerships with post-secondary academic institutions such as UBC, SFU and Uvic for practicum and co-op student placement
Cowichan	Vancouver Island	Construction of Canada's first full service animal behaviour centre. Estimate for 7,040 sq. ft. facility to meet local and Vancouver Island community needs, along with facilities to support humane education activities	\$ 500,000	Community hub for animal welfare needs and inquiries		Access (or connection) to low- or no-cost veterinary services
North Cariboo (Prince George)	Cariboo & North	New facility critically needed to meet community need. Potential partnership with City of PG for animal control component. Assumes 8,000 sq. ft. community animal centre with animal transfer capacity + 2,500 sq. ft. emergency response facility	\$ 1,250,000	Increased space for Peace Officers to conduct Cruelty Investigation work and house increasing numbers of animals per seizure. Emergency Management system to assist the pets of those fleeing natural disaster.		(PG specific) Staff are CUPE 1048 and unionized staffing levels will increase for new facility
North Peace	Cariboo & North	Recently identified significant need for additional housing capacity in the north for seized animals and animals from more northern communities. Requires prioritization in order for Society to continue to seize animals in North. Proposed expansion of dog wing in North Peace to accommodate need. City of Fort St. John has donated land on which facility sits to BC SPCA.	\$ 350,000	Connection to accredited dog trainers that provide humane, science-based behavioural training. Incoming need due to influx of 'pandemic puppies' brought into homes and facing either major life change (return to work/school) or lack of training through pandemic	Partnerships with local agencies (police, social work etc.) around the 'Violence Link' related to training and recognition of violence towards animals	Local procurement: Attaining 10% procurement of materials, goods and services from companies located in British Columbia. These may or may not also be equity-seeking third party certified businesses

Facility name	Region	Facility update/description	Provincial Government funding requested	Social Good (all locations)	Mental Health Supports (all locations)	Community benefits (all locations)
Shuswap	Okanagan & Kootenay	5 acre parcel of land purchased for new facility at \$475k. Shuswap identified as location for second dedicated behaviour centre for the Okanagan. Revised estimate for 7,000 sq. ft. facility. Additionally, potential site for second wildlife rehab centre.	\$ 500,000	Opportunity to offer programs such as obedience training and pet first aid courses	Partnerships with social support services to 'compassionate board' animals of those entering addiction recovery and rehabilitation programs, or hospitalized due to mental health emergencies	Wage alignment to prevailing industry rates to promote good wages for all employees
Alberni-Clayoquot	Vancouver Island	Successfully concluded negotiations for transfer of title to land from City to BC SPCA in 2020 with caveat that BC SPCA will spend \$250k on improvement over 5 years period. Focus of improvements to be in area of humane education, increasing capacity to support/partner with Ahousat First Nation. and surrounding communities and general facility upgrades.	\$ 100,000	Humane education programs for youth and adults	Increased capacity for 'emergency boarding' animals of people leaving interpersonal violence situations	Focus on priority hiring and training of Indigenous peoples, and women
Campbell River	Vancouver Island	Moving towards finalization of land donation by City of Campbell River for construction of 4,500 sq. ft. community animal centre based on BC SPCA Technical guidelines document. Lease on adoption centre renewed for further period of 3 years until March 31, 2023, but not a long term solution. n Technical Guidelines, size of facility should be 4,500 sq. ft.	\$ 1,000,000	Partnerships with local First Nations communities for animal wellness bylaw development, humane education opportunities, and pet food and veterinary outreach.		Local, inclusive employment: Making 10% of new entry level jobs available to people in community first, specifically those who are equity-seeking. Pet foodbank outreach and local pick up

Facility name	Region	Facility update/description	Provincial Government funding requested	Social Good (all locations)	Mental Health Supports (all locations)	Community benefits (all locations)
Surrey	LM/FV/SC	Further analysis of Surrey property and Society wide trends identifies need for additional triage capacity for seized animals. Existing capacity in place for cats, but improvements required to accommodate dogs. Continued upgrades to large animal seizure and adoption barn. Projected \$2M cost.	\$ 300,000			