

# Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

## 2002/03 - 2004/05 Service Plan Summary

**Mission:** Provide the business climate for a competitive and profitable agri-food and fisheries sector, and safeguard the quality of British Columbia's agri-food products for consumers.

### Strategic Shifts

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant government involvement in industry development programming (research and market development).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government working with industry to manage and fund its own development.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum programs to protect the safety of our food, fish, animal and plant production base.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations that focus on what is required, not how to do it, and a government monitoring and audit (oversight) role in food safety to reflect higher consumer expectations, and higher risk resulting from global trade and travel.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prescriptive approaches to sustainable development and protection of the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations that focus on what is required, not how to do it, to improve farming practices, sustainable development and environmental protection.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal influence over management of fisheries resource.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased management of, and greater value from, our fisheries resources.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government funds major costs of risk management programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower public cost and increased use of private sector risk management tools.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government subsidies to business, including direct grant programs to businesses and organizations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminate all subsidies to business, including direct grant programs to businesses and organizations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct technical advisory services to agri-food sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with industry to deliver technical information via the internet, and then privatize.</li> </ul>

### Core Business Areas

- Food safety and quality (including animal, fish and plant health) – on-farm safety programs, performance-based regulations (regulations that focus on what is required, not how to do it), diagnostic laboratories.
- Environmental sustainability and resource development – farm environmental plans, supportive local government agriculture bylaws.
- Fisheries and aquaculture management – sustainable production practices, more BC control, industry development.
- Risk management – basic protection to farmers from uncontrollable market and weather risks.
- Industry competitiveness — advocacy role to ensure that farm and fisheries interests are considered in government programs, services and regulations; industry-led research and market development.
- Corporate services – fair share of federal funding; effective policy, human resource and financial management.

#### 1. Food safety and quality

**Context:** The ability of the industry and the province to address this issue depends on being able to implement improved product tracking and food safety programs throughout the food system, and make federal and provincial standards consistent.

**Goal:** Food safety and quality levels that meet public health objectives and standards and thereby secure access to national and international markets.

**Outcome:** Enhanced economic growth and consumer confidence through reliable food safety/quality programs.

FTE reduction: 0

<u>Continue</u>	<u>Deliver differently</u>	<u>Discontinue</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency preparedness.</li> <li>Grants to local government to control noxious weeds as scheduled in the Weed Control Act.</li> <li>Fish, animal and plant health (diagnostic laboratories).</li> <li>Compliance with food and safety standards (provincial, national and international) in co-operation with BC Ministry of Health Services and Canadian Food Inspection Agency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shift government role to oversight, monitoring and risk assessment by 2004/05.</li> <li>Shift regulations to be performance-based by 2003/04.</li> <li>Support industry-led programs for quality control, standardized on-farm food safety assurance systems and product identification and tracking programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prescriptive regulations such as those under Livestock Act, Milk Industry Act.</li> </ul>

## 2. Environmental sustainability and resource development

Context: Increased concern over water quality, management of wastes and ability of agriculture to operate effectively within municipal context.

Goal: Economic development in the agri-food and seafood sectors that maintains high environmental standards and respects the environmental concerns of all British Columbians.

Outcome: Job creation, higher productivity, fewer restrictions on development, fewer regulatory conflicts and good environmental management.

FTE reduction: 4

### Continue

- Increase environmental stewardship practices through the Agriculture Environment Partnership Initiative.
- Implement and enhance farm development and environmental plans including standards, operating procedures and audit processes.
- Support the development and implementation of local government agriculture plans.
- Maintain the Farm Practices Board and advisory committees to local governments.

### Deliver differently

- Identify needed land and water resources in conjunction with Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management by developing an agriculture sector strategy.
- Streamline and update regulations for aquaculture by 2002/03.
- By December 2002, review and update the "right-to-farm" legislation that allows responsible farmers to operate without restrictions from urban neighbours.

### Discontinue

- Discontinue Grazing Enhancement Fund program by March 31, 2002.

## 3. Fisheries and Aquaculture Management

Context: World competition increasing, increased concern over environmental issues and the ability of the industry to compete due to limited capacity for expansion, limited capacity to manage our own commercial resource

Goal: The most economic benefit possible from fisheries while protecting the resource.

Outcome: Competitive and self-reliant seafood industry.

FTE reduction: 0

### Continue

- Finfish aquaculture development.
- Shellfish aquaculture development.
- Represent and incorporate provincial interests in federal fisheries management decision-making processes.
- Streamline how government reviews and approves access to Crown land and security of access to fish stocks.

### Deliver differently

- Establish a better working relationship with the federal government on fisheries management.
- Develop new performance-based regulations for aquaculture by 2002/03.
- Complete the review of fish management and service delivery by 2002/03.
- Support industry-led development and diversification projects such as: growing new species for commercial use, processing that adds value to the raw product, commercial use of the by-products of the current industry, selling into more markets, and research and development.

### Discontinue

- Eliminate development grants by 2002/03.
- Eliminate Shellfish Aquaculture Working Capital Fund by 2002/03.
- Wind up Fisheries Renewal BC by March 31, 2002.

#### 4. Risk Management

**Context:** Governments in other provinces and other jurisdictions world-wide provide greater levels of support to farmers to mitigate weather, market, disease and pest related risks, thus adversely affecting the competitive position of British Columbia farmers.

The federal and provincial governments share responsibility for agriculture under the Constitution. Therefore, the ability for British Columbia to maintain a level playing field for industry relative to other jurisdictions is affected by federal-provincial agreements, international trade agreements and the willingness of our trading partners to adhere to the trade agreements.

**Goal:** Provide basic protection to farmers for uncontrollable and unpredictable disasters such as weather hazards, natural disasters, disease, pests and erratic markets consistent with trade obligations.

**Outcome:** Increased private sector responsibility for management of farming risks, and a more level playing field for industry relative to other jurisdictions to effectively mitigate unpredictable, uncontrollable risks.

FTEs affected: 9.5

##### Continue

- Continue delivering crop insurance program.
- Continue to be an active participant in the federal/provincial negotiations.
- Continue to ensure that the province receives a fair share of federal funding for risk management programs offered to Canadian farmers.

##### Deliver differently

- Negotiate with federal government for new national farm insurance programs by March 31, 2003.
- Complete the review of regulated marketing by June 2002 and immediately begin implementing recommendations coming out of the review.
- Privatize marketing of crop insurance by 2004/05.
- Re-profile federal funding to be able to address a broader range of risks, i.e. food safety and environment

##### Discontinue

- Discontinue NISA (Net Income Stabilization Account) Interest Bonus by 2002/03.
- Discontinue provincial participation in NISA or WFIP (Whole Farm Insurance Program) by 2004/05.

#### 5. Industry Competitiveness

**Context:** The general business climate in the province is not generally conducive to competitiveness of the agriculture, food and fisheries sectors in British Columbia. Some of the business climate issues are within the control of the provincial government.

**Goal:** An agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and food sector that is competitive in a global economy and provides economic benefit and stability to British Columbia's rural and coastal communities.

**Outcome:** More profitable and growing sector.

FTE reduction: 31

<u>Continue</u>	<u>Deliver differently</u>	<u>Discontinue</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advocate for farm and fisheries interests on issues such as labour issues, agricultural trade negotiations, fair share of federal funding, and technical support on trade rules and disputes.</li> <li>▪ Help industry set up self-funding systems to finance their own research and market development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stop direct advisory services and in partnership with industry shift to electronic information delivery, then privatize.</li> <li>▪ Reduced focus on production research and development to becoming an advocate for changes in provincial regulations that adversely affect the business climate for the agriculture, food and fisheries sectors in British Columbia, i.e. labour regulation, Workers Compensation Board regulations, energy costs, etc.</li> <li>▪ Accelerate contributions to the Okanagan Valley Tree Fruit Authority to enable meeting of the government's commitment to support the tree replant program by 2003/04 instead of 2005/06.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discontinue technical advisory services by March 31, 2003.</li> <li>▪ Wind up the Rural Development Office.</li> <li>▪ Eliminate grants in support of BUY BC, BC wine industry, Women's Institutes, B.C. Agriculture Council, and BC fairs &amp; exhibitions (2003/04)</li> <li>▪ Close six district offices by March 31, 2003 (Courtenay, Creston, Dawson Creek, Vanderhoof, Sidney, Smithers) and the Vancouver office</li> </ul>

## 6. Corporate Services

Context: Increased need to be cost-effective in program and service delivery, reduce regulation and red tape, as well as advocate for B.C. interests at the federal and international levels.

Goal: Effective policy, legislation and trade programs, and measurable objectives and performance.

Outcome: Modern, service-oriented policies and legislation, significantly reduced government regulation, a fair share of federal expenditures, enhanced trade access and an efficient, accountable administrative operation.

FTEs affected: 10

### Continue

- Influence the policies and regulations of other governments to support agri-food and fisheries development.
- Represent the Province on federal/provincial committees (trade, safety net agreement, etc).
- Build strategic alliances and advocate for reduced subsidies, investment rules and effective dispute settlement in domestic and international trade agreements.

### Deliver differently

- Participate in implementing administrative efficiency processes (e.g.: electronic purchasing) identified by the Best Practices Initiative.
- Develop a comprehensive human resource management plan for ministry staff related to succession planning, recruitment, performance measurement and training in order to accommodate the new mandate.

### Discontinue

- Prescriptive regulation: reduce legislation and regulations in line with the new mandate and the deregulation initiative. (reduce to 3,025 total regulatory requirements in current legislation from current 4,538)

## Ministry Resources

### *Ministry Operations (excluding Fisheries Renewal B.C.)*

	FISCAL YEAR				Percentage Change from 2001/02 to 2004/05
	(restated estimates) 2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	
Operating Expenditures	66	64	58	45	(32.3%)
FTEs (Staffing)	381	360	338	327	(14.2%)

### *Fisheries Renewal BC*

Operating	15	0	0	0	(100%)
FTEs	14	0	0	0	(100%)

### *Total*

Operating	81	64	58	45	(44.8%)
FTEs	395	360	338	327	(17.2%)

**NOTE** Staffing reduction of 55 FTEs is due to office closures, and program reductions in technical advisory services, safety net program delivery and corporate services.

## **Government Priorities relating to Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries**

### New Era Commitments included in 2002/03 – 04/05 Service Plan

With the Minister of State for Intergovernmental Relations, negotiate with Ottawa for provincial control over the management and revenues of BC offshore fisheries to improve fisheries and protect jobs.

### **Key Projects included in 2002/03 – 04/05 Service Plan**

- Develop a strategic plan to renew the fisheries industry.
- Examine ways to improve the financial viability of the aquaculture sector.
- Examine the potential for growth of the aquaculture sector in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts.
- Review regulated marketing in the agriculture sector and make recommendations.
- Participate actively in supporting the success of the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.