

Ministry of Agriculture

2020/21 – 2022/23 SERVICE PLAN

February 2020



Minister Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Agriculture 2020/21 - 2022/23 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lana Popham".

Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture
February 1, 2020

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Agriculture (the Ministry) is responsible for the production, marketing, processing and merchandising of agriculture and seafood products; the institution and carrying out of advisory, research, promotional, sustainability and adaptation, food safety and plant and animal health programs, projects and undertakings relating to agriculture and seafood; and the collection of information and preparation and dissemination of statistics relating to agriculture and seafood.

Agriculture is a key contributor to economic development and diversification across the Province, and is a main contributor to rural economic development and province-wide job creation, particularly for small businesses. The agriculture, seafood and food and beverage sector creates economic and social benefits for Indigenous groups and other underrepresented groups has the potential to attract provincial investment and contributes to workforce development and skills training.

The legal and regulatory environment that guides the work of the Ministry includes 30 statutes which relate wholly or primarily to the Ministry. A [complete list of legislation for which the Ministry is responsible](#) is available online.

Strategic Direction

The Government of British Columbia remains focused on its three strategic priorities: making life more affordable, delivering better services, and investing in a sustainable economy.

Ministries are actively working to provide quality, cost-effective services to British Columbia families and businesses. By adopting the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens and Business and Economic Implications Framework to budgeting and policy development, Ministries will ensure that equity is reflected in budgets, policies and programs.

Additional key initiatives underpinning lasting prosperity in 2020/21 and beyond are the implementation of:

- A Framework for Improving British Columbians' Standard of Living which will provide the foundation for quality economic growth in our province and a pathway to a more inclusive and prosperous society,
- The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, demonstrating support for true and lasting reconciliation, and
- The CleanBC plan, putting B.C. on the path to a cleaner, better future – with a low carbon economy that creates opportunities while protecting our clean air, land and water.

This 2020/21 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Agriculture will support the government's priorities, including selected action items identified in the [July 2017 Minister's Mandate Letter](#). Over the previous fiscal year, the Ministry of Agriculture made progress on these priorities by:

- Continuing to implement the *Grow BC*, *Feed BC*, and *Buy BC* framework.
- Supporting sustainable shared prosperity for a better B.C. by supporting B.C.'s agriculture, seafood and food and beverage processing sectors, encouraging consumption of B.C. products and building resiliency within the sector.

The following performance plan outlines how the Ministry of Agriculture will continue to track progress on key Mandate Letter commitments and other emerging government priorities.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Grow BC: Build sustainable production and help B.C. producers expand local food production

In 2020/21, the Ministry will deliver a wide variety of programs and services to support farmers and processors to increase their production while enhancing the sustainability of their operations.

Objective 1.1: Enhance services and supports to the agriculture, seafood and food and beverage sector

Sustainability depends on farmers' access to clean water, clean air, and healthy soils, as well as farmers' actions related to environmental stewardship. The Ministry will provide services to help farmers take action on climate change and demonstrate environmental sustainability. Specifically, the Ministry will continue to support the Environmental Farm Plan program, through which farmers receive on-farm risk assessments and access cost-share funding to mitigate environmental risks. The Ministry will also work with farmers on services to demonstrate nutrient management, secure water rights through licensing and improve water management (irrigation and drainage), and other services to help farmers demonstrate environmental stewardship with water, air, soil and biodiversity resources. Services supported by the Ministry include the development of emergency response plans by communities, including farmers, to address environmental emergencies such as floods and wildfires. Climate change adaptation services include support for the creation of Regional Adaptation Strategies and implementation of regional adaptation projects as well as supporting on farm research to focusing on resilience to climate-related risks. The Ministry will continue to collaborate with partners in industry, local governments, research organizations and other government agencies to deliver on this mandate, and to contribute to a provincial Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy.

Sustainable production also depends on having farmers actively managing the land, improving their efficiency and competitiveness, as well as increasing their resiliency and ability to adapt to change. The average age of British Columbia farmers is among the highest in Canada with only about seven percent of farms (1,179 out of 17,528) have a written succession plan. The Ministry's *New Entrant Strategy* addresses the significant barriers of entry to the sector, such as access to land, capital and knowledge. Specifically, the B.C. Land Matching program supports access to land through an online land listing, regional match making services and business readiness supports. Business and succession planning resources for existing producers planning their retirement or working to improve their efficiency and effectiveness is supported through webinars, workshops and cost-share funding for business coaching and planning.

Key Strategies:

- Support on-farm environmental risk assessments with the assistance of trained advisors.
- Provide funding to assist farmers changing farm practices to minimize environmental risks.
- Develop tools to help farmers and communities reserve or secure water, or to meet nutrient management requirements from government.
- Support climate adaptation and mitigation.
- Help new farmers access land and transitioning farms to the next generation.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.1a Cumulative Number of Environmental Farm Plans	5,400	5,600	5,800	6,000

Data source: B.C. Agricultural Research and Development Corporation.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.1b Number of attendees at succession planning events	212	250	250	250

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture.

Linking Performance Measures to Objective:

Written succession plans identify family and/or non-family members as successors, support business continuity and the stability of the farm during transition, and increase the availability of opportunities to farms for new farmers entering the sector. The Ministry will present succession planning workshops, short courses, webinars in order to encourage and support producers as they plan for transition as well as create and connect new farmers to opportunities across the province.

Objective 1.2: Protect the land base, animal, plant and human health through the agriculture and seafood sector

Preservation of agricultural land is a provincial priority overseen by the Agricultural Land Commission. The Ministry of Agriculture is mandated with revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). In 2018, the Minister established an independent Advisory Committee to engage with stakeholders and the general public to provide Government with advice and guidance to support regulatory and administrative improvements. The first legislative changes were announced in 2018 and the Minister continues to benefit from the Advisory Committee’s work.

The Ministry, in partnership with federal, provincial and local government agencies, delivers services and initiatives to manage food safety, and risks to plant and animal health. These services protect public health, contribute to maintaining public trust and support consumer confidence domestically and internationally in BC agriculture and seafood products.

Key Strategies:

- Revitalize the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission.
- Complete the Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) process for the ALR by 2022.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target ¹
1.2 Cumulative hectares (ha) of Agricultural Land Use Inventory	3.7M	3.9M	4.2M	4.6M	4.75M

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture.

¹ Target for 2022/23 includes resurveys.

Linking Performance Measures to Objectives:

The Ministry supports the ALR and preservation of farm land by promoting a positive urban/agriculture environment, along with working to keep ALR land in production and supporting farmers looking to expand or improve their operations.

ALUIs collect comprehensive data about land use and land cover. These inventories generate information that facilitates support for the sector, informs land use planning, and measures change in land use patterns and practices over time. ALUIs also help advise emergency response for environmental disasters and animal health events.

The Food Safety Modernization Program will focus on outreach and oversight related to seafood and meat inspection, consolidating slaughter administration, and deploying technology for high performing clients and low-risk activities while maintaining B.C.’s high standards.

Goal 2: Feed BC: Build the availability, value and variety of B.C. food

Objective 2.1: Increase the use of B.C. grown and processed foods by B.C. government facilities.

The Ministry is working to deliver on Government’s commitment to increase the purchase and use of B.C. grown and processed foods in B.C. government facilities such as hospitals, residential care facilities, public post-secondary institutions and others. The Ministry is actively working with government and industry partners to match the food needs and market opportunities of these facilities with B.C. food production and supply and production.

Key Strategies:

- Build demand in B.C. government facilities for more B.C. food.
- Build capacity of B.C. producers and processors to supply B.C. food to government facilities.
- Coordinate value chains to connect and match B.C. producers, processors and government facilities.
- Design, measure and report on performance.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.1 Number of B.C. government facilities that have increased their purchase of B.C. produced and/or processed foods.	55	114	165	195	215

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture.

Linking Performance Measures to Objectives:

Tracking the number of B.C. government facilities that are increasing the purchase and use of B.C. grown and processed foods will allow the Ministry to track and report on the success of the range of Feed BC initiatives underway with industry and public sector stakeholders and partners.

Objective 2.2: Foster innovation in the agriculture, seafood and food and beverage sector

The Ministry encourages growth in the agriculture, seafood and food and beverage sector through programs that foster innovation, including the development of new products, processes or technologies. Innovation projects are designed to: enhance the ability of the sector to research, develop, pilot, commercialize and adopt technologies to enhance competitiveness, sustainability and profitability; accelerate business development; and provide access to participate in knowledge-transfer activities. The Ministry is leading developing of the BC Food Hub Network, in collaboration with industry, communities and post-secondary institutions, which aims to offer farmers and processors access to shared food innovation and processing facilities, including equipment and business support services.

Key Strategies:

- Support the development and commercialization of new products, practices, processes and technologies.
- Create a BC Food Hub Network to better support food processing and development and commercialization of new products throughout B.C.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast²	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.2 Cumulative number of regional Food Hubs established ¹	0	1	4	6	6

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture.

¹ Established means launched/operational.

² Forecast for 2019/20 includes Commissary Connect, and future targets include Quesnel, Port Alberni, Surrey, and two additional hubs to be determined in 2020/21.

Linking Performance Measures to Objectives:

Monitoring the cumulative number of regional Food Hubs established will help the Ministry track progress and demonstrate momentum on the BC Food Hub Network – a commitment that will increase the processing and innovation capacity of the province.

Goal 3: Buy BC: Build consumer awareness and demand and help local producers market their products to grow their businesses

Objective 3.1: Build and leverage a strong, recognizable Buy BC brand to help producers and processors expand sales and ensure consumers can easily identify local food and beverages

The Ministry is committed to delivering an enhanced Buy BC marketing program to build consumer awareness and demand and help local producers market their products. A key component of the program is a strong Buy BC brand identifier that helps consumers recognize and seek out B.C. products. Making the choice to buy B.C. food and beverages directly supports local farmers, producers and processors, strengthens communities and ensures that future generations of British Columbians can depend on a safe, secure supply of local food.

Key Strategies:

- Enhance consumer recognition of the Buy BC brand.
- Deliver Buy BC programming including retail promotions, restaurant promotions and cost-shared partnership activities.
- Build the local food literacy of British Columbians.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline ¹	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.1 Annual value of domestic purchases of agriculture and seafood products (\$ billions)	6.4	6.9	7.1	7.4	7.7

Data Source: BC Stats Estimates

¹ The baseline figure has been adjusted based on updated data from BC Stats to more accurately reflect the state of the sector.

Linking Performance Measures to Objectives:

Buy BC is intended to encourage the purchase of B.C. agriculture and seafood commodities by British Columbians through enhanced communication, advertising and promotional activities, cost-shared funding programs and local food literacy initiatives. The Ministry continues to monitor the annual value of domestic products as one of many indicators that provide insight into purchasing behaviors that it looks to impact through programs such as BuyBC.

Objective 3.2: Help producers and processors expand sales in priority export markets

The Ministry supports the expansion of export sales through the delivery of a suite of market development programs and services aimed at ensuring the agriculture and seafood sector has the knowledge, skills and resources to effectively capitalize on emerging market opportunities. By expanding international markets, the Ministry contributes to sustainable, long-term growth for B.C.’s agriculture and seafood sector and economic growth and job creation across the province.

Key Strategies:

- Deliver market development initiatives to expand export sales.
- Deliver cost-shared programming to enhance the ability of the agriculture and seafood sector to access and expand international markets and build marketing skills capacity and market intelligence.

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline ¹	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.2 Annual value of international agriculture and seafood exports (\$ billions)	4.1	4.7	5.0	5.2	5.5

Data Source: Statistics Canada

¹ The baseline figure has been revised based on updated 2018 export data to more accurately reflect the sector.

Linking Performance Measures to Objectives:

This performance target demonstrates the value of B.C.'s international marketing strategy and ability of producers and processors to export to priority markets, by measuring the overall value of B.C.'s agriculture and seafood exports. This performance measure tracks approximately 700 B.C. agriculture and seafood product exports to 149 markets, including those destined for B.C.'s top five markets: the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. B.C.'s top ten exports include Atlantic salmon; food preparations for manufacturing and natural health products; baked goods and cereal products; blueberries; mushrooms; crab; alfalfa, grass seed, fodder and animal feeds; plants, bulbs and flowers; pork products; and chocolate and cocoa products.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2019/20 Restated Budget ¹	2020/21 Estimate	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Agriculture Science and Policy	18,919	16,634	16,861	16,861
Business Development	52,880	52,593	52,810	52,810
BC Farm Industry Review Board	1,348	1,364	1,378	1,378
Executive and Support Services	6,987	6,670	6,699	6,699
Sub-Total	80,134	77,261	77,748	77,748
Agricultural Land Commission	4,873	4,943	5,001	5,001
Production Insurance Special Account	13,200	13,200	13,200	13,200
Total	98,207	95,404	95,949	95,949
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	763	691	691	691
Total	763	691	691	691

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Appendix A: Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals

Agricultural Land Commission

The Provincial Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) is the independent administrative tribunal dedicated to preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming in BC. The ALC is responsible for administering the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), a provincial land use zone where agriculture is the primary land use taking place on the limited agricultural land base.

British Columbia Farm Industry Review Board

The British Columbia Farm Industry Review Board (the Board) is an independent administrative tribunal that operates at arm's-length from government. As the regulatory tribunal responsible for the general supervision of BC regulated marketing boards and commissions, the Board provides oversight, policy direction and decisions to ensure orderly marketing and to protect the public interest. In its adjudicative capacities, the Board provides a less formal system than the court for resolving disputes in a timely and cost-effective way.

The Marketing Boards and Commissions include:

[BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission](#)

[BC Chicken Marketing Board](#)

[BC Cranberry Marketing Commission](#)

[BC Egg Marketing Board](#)

[BC Farm Industry Review Board](#)

[BC Hog Marketing Commission](#)

[BC Milk Marketing Board](#)

[BC Turkey Marketing Board](#)

[BC Vegetable Marketing Commission](#)