

# Ministry of Agriculture

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## 2017/18 Annual Service Plan Report

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## Minister's Message and Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Agriculture *2017/18 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the *2017/18 - 2019/20 Service Plan* created in September, 2017. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lana Popham". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honourable Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture  
June 22, 2018

It is my pleasure to present to you the Annual Service Plan Report, for the Annual Service Plan Budget Update 2017/18.

Upon my appointment as the Minister of Agriculture, through my mandate I committed to the citizens of beautiful British Columbia to create opportunities for B.C. farmers, seafood producers, food processors and those wishing to join the sector(s). Thoughtfully planning the initiatives for how the Ministry of Agriculture will accomplish this has been our primary focus over the last fiscal year.

Grow BC, Buy BC and Feed BC is our three-pillared approach to implementing our ministerial mandate, and through these three pillars we are acting on our commitment to supporting the full spectrum of B.C.'s agriculture, seafood and value-added processing. Recognizing the economic and social role that the agriculture sector has in our rural and urban communities, the good-paying jobs that the industry provides, and the fresh, healthy foods provided to us is the impetus for the Ministry of Agriculture to support these deserving contributors.

Grow BC is centered on policies that support the expansion of local food production and include programs that will encourage people who have the vision and passion to make agriculture their profession, including new entrants and young farmers. Experienced and new entrepreneurs in our province are choosing to grow traditional crops and experiment with new ones. We have positioned Grow BC to get behind those at all levels of experience to guide, support and help them be successful. As a foundational piece to Grow BC, we are revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve, to help strengthen the Agricultural Land Commission, so they are able to fulfill their mandate to protect farmland. This is the basis of our commitment to ensuring farmland is secure now and in the future.

B.C. products are some of the best in the world, and we recognize that more supports are needed to help British Columbians understand the impact their choice to support local food sources have in our province. Buy BC is a long-standing, recognizable brand, and after a 16 year hiatus, it is coming back stronger than ever. The renewed Buy BC brand, will provide the value of mass-marketing through a

sector-wide logo that consumers can identify when they are shopping at their local grocery store and dining at restaurants and food service establishments across the province.

Feed BC is designed to increase the use and availability of food to hospitals, long-term care facilities and other government facilities. Creating a market and demand for year-round B.C. food products in government facilities in communities around our province also supports opportunities to start or expand a farm or food processing business. Developing Feed BC will take some time and thoughtful planning, and must be done in periods of time that make sense to farmers and food producers beginning and expanding operations, as it involves planning for and growing crops. We are exploring opportunities and challenges with producers, processors and distributors to develop strategies that will ultimately strengthen the local food supply chain. The benefit and potential of Feed BC are obvious, not only are we working to increase the sale of B.C. food products and increasing production, we are also providing fresh, nutritious, locally sourced food to those that are in need and deserving of the best quality food we can offer.

Grow BC, Buy BC and Feed BC were in their early stages of development through fiscal year 2017/18, and we have already accomplished so much. We have developed a long-term comprehensive Buy BC Branding Strategy, launched the Buy BC: EAT, DRINK LOCAL campaign, initiated engagement and partnerships with industry, academia, local governments and other key stakeholders to advance the creation of Food Innovation Centres and regional food hubs, inventoried land use and land cover on 500,000 hectares of potential agricultural lands, completed export market how-to guides for priority markets, and launched a pilot agriculture land matching project for new farmers.

My mandate and my commitment to all British Columbians is to continue the advancement of the three key priorities I have described above. The ambition we have set out is driven by my love of agriculture; and I look forward to seeing the people who work in and are employed by British Columbia's agriculture sector continue to thrive and prosper.

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## Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Agriculture (the Ministry) is responsible for:

- The production, marketing, processing and merchandising of food and seafood products,
- providing advisory, research, promotional, sustainability and adaptation, food safety and plant and animal health programs; and
- the collection of information and preparation and dissemination of statistics relating to food and seafood.

The legal and regulatory environment that guides the work of the Ministry includes [30 statutes](#) which relate wholly or primarily to the Ministry.

## Strategic Direction

In September 2017, the new government announced its priorities with three key commitments to British Columbians:

- To make life more affordable.
- To deliver the services people count on.
- To build a strong, sustainable, innovative economy that works for everyone.

Integrating with these priorities is government's commitment to true, lasting reconciliation Indigenous peoples in British Columbia, as we move towards fully adopting and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In the *2017/18 – 2019/20 Service Plan* the Ministry provided a series of objectives and performance targets from the Minister's [Mandate Letter](#) designed to further the key commitments of government.

## Operating Environment

The Ministry has experienced significant events over the 2017/18 fiscal years. These events presented considerations to be managed regarding staff resources as well as the Ministry budget. Despite these challenging events occurring outside the Ministers' Mandate, the Ministry prioritized accordingly and responded with meaningful action.

### Unprecedented Wildfire Season

Foremost, the 2017 wildfire season was unprecedented in its effect and aftermath. From July to September 2017, over 34 Ministry staff provided support to the Provincial Emergency Operation Centers in Kamloops and Prince George, in addition to the Cariboo Regional District Emergency Operations Center. The Ministry team with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR) Range Branch, in partnership with the BC Cattlemen's Association, were instrumental in facilitating reentry for ranchers, supporting livestock relocation and organizing the delivery of emergency feed (hay). Ministry staff facilitated the delivery of 7,615 tonnes of emergency hay to 76 ranches at a cost of \$1,441,260. This hay supply fed 17,773 animals. In addition, The Ministry supported and improved the re-entry process for farmers and ranchers through its geo-spatial mapping work and the use of premises identification.

As the active wildfire situation was managed, the Ministry shifted into recovery for ranchers and farmers impacted by the wildfires. The Ministry worked and continues to work collaboratively with FLNR, Emergency Management B.C. and industry associations (most notably the B.C. Cattlemen's Association) to address the recovery needs of ranchers and farmers. This support is just one aspect of our government's comprehensive wildfire recovery plan. Ministry support included:

- Delivery of the federally/provincially funded AgriRecovery program. This program was a key funding source for impacted agriculture operations.
- Delivery of the B.C. AgriStability Enhancement program that was available to help producers who suffered large income declines in 2017.
- Wildfire Farm Business Recovery Advisory Services to help impacted producers in understanding their financial situation and implement a recovery plan. \$50,000 was allocated to this business planning effort.
- Assistance from Regional Agrologists who are actively involved in the recovery planning process.

Recovery is focused on people and communities, economy, environment and infrastructure and reconstruction. Recovery will be a long-term process and the Ministry is committed to working with ranchers and farmers to help them rebuild their livelihoods.

### **Finfish Aquaculture**

The Ministry plays an integral role to the Aquaculture industry. In late summer/early Fall 2017, the finfish aquaculture industry became the focus of mounting activism and an associated growing media profile. A salmon farm failure in Washington State on August 22, 2017 resulted in the escape of thousands of Atlantic salmon into Pacific waters east of Victoria, increasing concerns regarding net pen finfish generally.

In August 2017, a peaceful occupation of two finfish farms in the Broughton Archipelago was initiated by Indigenous protestors, which include Hereditary Chiefs. Indigenous people are concerned about the health of the wild salmon stocks potentially being impacted by the fish farms, including concerns about sea lice and virus infections.

In January 2018, the Minister of Agriculture received a report and recommendations from the [Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Council on Finfish Aquaculture \(MAACFA\)](#). The report reflected three divergent opinions:

- The current risks are too great to allow the continuation of the marine net-pen industry.
- The current risks can be managed through best practices and more considerate siting guidelines.
- There is no evidence that serious risk to wild salmon populations exists or is greater than any number of other natural risk factors.

Despite differences in opinions, MAACFA reached consensus on six strategic themes and 29 related action items.

The Ministry reviewed the 29 MAACFA report recommendations with other provincial ministries and the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The moratorium on new tenures for finfish aquaculture remains in place while Government considers the report and recommendations.

## Report on Performance

The following table reports on the objectives and performance targets provided in the *2017/18 – 2019/20 Service Plan* along with the Ministry’s achievements.

Objective	Actions Taken Up to March 31, 2018
Revitalize the Agriculture Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minister of Agriculture’s Advisory Committee for Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve and Agricultural Land Commission was created.</li> <li>• The Committee undertook a comprehensive stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>• In addition to online consultation; regional stakeholder meetings with invited representatives were held to hear directly from the local farming and ranching communities and organizations.</li> </ul>
Establish Grow B.C. to help young farmers access land, and support fruit and nut growers and processors to expand local food production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach to establish Grow BC was operationalized.</li> </ul>
Initiate Feed B.C. to increase the use of B.C.-grown and processed foods in hospitals, schools, and other government facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry consulted with the Ministry of Health to develop a phased approach to implementing Feed BC.</li> </ul>
Bring back an enhanced Buy BC marketing program to help local producers market their products, and work with local producers to expand market access in the rest of Canada and abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach to establish a renewed and enhanced Buy BC was operationalized.</li> </ul>
Work with growers, processors, colleges and universities, as well as the Minister of Advanced Education and the Minister of State for Trade, to develop a B.C. Food Innovation Centre to innovate in the processing, packaging and marketing of B.C. food products, linking local food producers with new technology, and expanding exports and access to world markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry partnered with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training to establish for a Food Innovation Centre /Food Hub.</li> </ul>

As committed to in the *2017/18 – 2019/20 Service Plan* tabled in September 2017, the Ministry released fully developed objectives and performance measures in the Ministry’s *2018/19 – 2020/21 Service Plan*, tabled in February 2018.



## **Financial Report**

### ***Discussion of Results***

Fiscal 2017/18 was the final year of programs under the five year Growing Forward 2 agreement with the Government of Canada which focused on innovation, competitiveness and market development to ensure Canadian producers and processors had the tools and resources they needed to innovate and capitalize on emerging market opportunities. This included the AgriRecovery program which provided made available \$10M of support to farmers and ranchers to recover from the unprecedented 2017 Wildfire season.

In support of the Finfish aquaculture industry, a \$0.5M in government transfers was spent towards providing for the development of a wild fisheries strategy. This transfer, along with further support for the tree fruit industry replant program, was funded by accessing the Contingencies and New Programs vote.

**Financial Report Summary Table**

	<b>2017/18 Estimates</b>	<b>Other Authorizations<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Total Estimates</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Operating Expenses (\$000)</b>					
<b>Agriculture Science and Policy .....</b>	16,343	0	16,343	15,209	(1,134)
<b>Business Development .....</b>	43,089	5,303	48,392	49,383	991
<b>BC Farm Industry Review Board .....</b>	1,214	0	1,214	1,393	179
<b>Executive and Support Services .....</b>	6,764	0	6,764	6,728	(36)
<b>Agricultural Land Commission .....</b>	4,549	0	4,549	4,362	(187)
<b>Production Insurance Special Account (Net) .....</b>	13,200	0	13,200	13,200	0
<b>Sub-Total .....</b>	<b>85,159</b>	<b>5,303</b>	<b>90,462</b>	<b>90,275</b>	<b>(187)</b>
<b>Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual<sup>2</sup></b>	0	0	0	(3,655)	(3,655)
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,159</b>	<b>5,303</b>	<b>90,462</b>	<b>86,620</b>	<b>(3,842)</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)</b>					
<b>Executive and Support Services .....</b>	540	0	540	523	(17)
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>(17)</b>

<sup>1</sup> "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the "estimated amount" under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

<sup>2</sup> The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$3.655 million relates to the expiration of an industry loan guarantee.

## **Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information and Hyperlinks**

### Ministry of Agriculture:

P.O. Box 9120 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria BC, V8W 9B4

Ph.: (250) 387-5121

### Agriculture Science and Policy Division:

Ph.: (250) 356-1821, Fax (250) 356-7279

### Business Development Division:

Ph.: (250) 356-1122, Fax (250) 356-7279

### Ministry of Agriculture - Regional Offices:

#### Abbotsford

1767 Angus Campbell Road, V3G 2M3

Ph.: (604) 556-3001

Fax: (604) 556-3030

Toll free: 1-888-221-7141

Animal Health toll free: 1-800-661-9903

#### Courtenay

2500 Cliffe Avenue, V9N 5M6

Ph.: (250) 897-7540

Fax: (250) 334-1410

#### Cranbrook/Invermere

635 – 4th Street, Invermere, V0A 1K0

Ph.: (250) 342-4219

Fax: (250) 342-4262

#### Creston

1243 Northwest Boulevard, V0B 1G6

Ph.: (250) 402-6429

Fax: (250) 402-6497

#### Dawson Creek

4th Floor, 1201 103rd Avenue, V1G 4J2

Ph.: (250) 784-2601

Fax: (250) 784-2299

Toll free: 1-877-772-2200

#### Duncan

5785 Duncan Street, V9L 5G2

Ph.: (250) 746-1210

Fax: (250) 746-1292

Fort St. John

10043 100th Street, V1J 3Y5

Ph.: (250) 787-3240

Fax: (250) 787-3299

Toll free: 1-888-822-1345

Kamloops

2nd Floor, 441 Columbia Street, V2C 2T3

Ph.: (250) 828-4506

Fax: (250) 828-4154

Toll free: 1-888-823-3355

Kelowna

Unit 200 1690 Powick Road, V1X 7G5

Ph.: (250) 861-7211

Fax: (250) 861-7490

Toll free: 1-888-332-3352

Kelowna – Hardy Place

200 – 1500 Hardy Street, V1Y 8H2

Ph.: (250) 712-3797

Fax: (250) 712-3269

Toll free: 1-877-343-2767 (AgriStability)

Oliver

Suite 201 583 Fairview Road, V0H 1T0

Ph.: (250) 498-5250 or 5251

Fax: (250) 498-4952

Toll free: 1-888-812-8811

Prince George

2000 South Ospika Boulevard, V2N 4W5

Ph.: (250) 614-7400

Fax: (250) 614-7435

Toll free: 1-800-334-3011

Smithers

3333 Tatlow Road, V0J 2N0

Ph.: (250) 847-6379

Fax: (250) 847-6353

Toll free: 1-888-540-8611

Vernon

2501 – 14th Avenue, V1T 8Z1

Ph.: (250) 260-4610

Fax: (250) 260-4602

Toll free: 1-877-702-5585

Williams Lake

300 640 Borland Street, V2G 4T1

Ph.: (250) 398-4500

Fax: (250) 398-4688

Toll free: 1-800-474-6133

Agricultural Land Commission

133-4940 Canada Way, Burnaby BC, V5G 4K6

Ph.: (604) 660-7000

Fax: (604) 660-7033

Email: [ALCBurnaby@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALCBurnaby@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca)

Internet: <http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca>

BC Farm Industry Review Board

780 Blanshard Street, Victoria BC, V8W 9B5

Ph.: (250) 356-8945

Fax: (250) 356-5131

Email: [firb@gov.bc.ca](mailto:firb@gov.bc.ca)

Internet: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/bcfarmindustryreviewboardw>

For more information about the Ministry of Agriculture, including full contact information, visit our website at: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/agriw>

## **Appendix B: List of Crowns, Agencies, Boards and Commissions**

### ***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. The ALR is based on the biophysical resource base (soil and climate) where lands are capable of growing crops. As an administrative tribunal operating at arm's-length from government, the ALC is accountable to the legislature through the Minister of Agriculture. Its operations are funded by a vote of the legislature.

In general, an administrative tribunal is a specialized government agency established under provincial legislation to implement legislative policy. The ALC is expected to exercise its role in a non-partisan manner and Commission members must faithfully, honestly and impartially perform their duties.

The ALC's goals, objectives and strategies are guided by its legislative mandate as set out in s.6 and s.4.3 of the ALC Act as noted below.

The ALC's mandate as set out in s.6 of the Agricultural Land Commission Act is:

- To preserve agricultural land;
- To encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and
- To encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

### ***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 Board consists of a part-time board of up to ten members and nine full time equivalent staff positions and is accountable to government for its administrative operations.

The Board's statutorily mandated responsibilities are established in the *Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act*, the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*, the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*, and are supported by the *Administrative Tribunals Act*. They include:

- Supervising BC's regulated marketing boards and commissions;
- Being a signatory to formal federal-provincial cooperation agreements in regulated marketing;

- Hearing appeals of regulated marketing board and commission orders, decisions and determinations;
- Hearing appeals related to certain animal custody and cost decisions of the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals;
- Hearing farm practices complaints from persons disturbed by odour, noise, dust or other disturbances arising from agriculture or certain aquaculture operations; and,
- Conducting farm practices studies.

The Board has adjudicative independence in its decision-making, and through its strategic plan and other documents, establishes goals, objectives, strategies and performance measures necessary to achieve its administrative role as a public sector agency, including cost-consciousness, accountability, appropriate compensation, service, respect and integrity. Further information about the Board may be found at [www.gov.bc.ca/bcfarmindustryreviewboard](http://www.gov.bc.ca/bcfarmindustryreviewboard)