

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

2024/25
Annual Service Plan Report

August 2025



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Agriculture and Food 2024/25 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2024/25 – 2026/27 Service Plan published in 2024. 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 and Food
August 12, 2025

Table of Contents

Minister's Accountability Statement	3
Letter from the Minister	5
Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report	6
Strategic Direction.....	6
Purpose of the Ministry.....	6
Operating Environment.....	7
Economic Statement	7
Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results	9
Financial Report	22
Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations.....	23
Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities.....	25

Letter from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's 2024/25 Annual Service Plan Report summarizing our performance measures, key priorities, and achievements from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Over the past year, British Columbia's agriculture and food sector has demonstrated remarkable resilience and innovation in the face of ongoing challenges. Our government continues to support farmers, ranchers, producers and processors throughout the province with new and ongoing programs and are deeply committed to being the wind at their back so they can prosper and grow their businesses.

In the past fiscal year, we continued to deliver programs that help increase local food production, including investments in technology adoption, on-farm infrastructure and Indigenous food sovereignty.

We also took action to address the impacts of climate change including support for farmers in adapting to extreme weather events, improving water management, and enhancing soil health. The tree fruit sector faced significant climate-related pressures, and we responded with tailored support to help growers recover and replant for the future.

The poultry industry was hit hard by avian influenza outbreaks. In response, we worked closely with industry partners to strengthen biosecurity and prevention measures, as well as offer mental health support for producers dealing with such an emotional experience.

Looking ahead, we know how important it is to continue supporting our local producers and processors as economic threats from the United States pose real challenges. That is why we will work hard to diversify trade opportunities, open new markets and build a strong, sustainable local food system.

At the heart of it all, we will continue to champion local food through initiatives like Grow BC, Buy BC and Feed BC. Our focus remains on supporting made-in-B.C. products, strengthening food security and ensuring British Columbians have access to safe, healthy and locally grown food.

Together, we are building a future where B.C.'s agriculture and food sector continues to thrive—no matter what challenges lie ahead.



Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture and Food
August 12, 2025

Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2020 and Minister Alexis's [2022 Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Agriculture and Food 2024/25 – 2026/27 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food (the Ministry) is responsible for the production, marketing, processing and merchandising of agriculture and seafood products; the implementation and carrying out of 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 agriculture and seafood, supporting the province's food security and developing a resilient food system and economy.

The Ministry 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](#) for is available online.

As of July 17, 2025, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food is responsible for the [Liquor Distribution Branch](#) (LDB) and the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) which oversee provincial [liquor](#) and non-medical [cannabis](#) (cannabis) regulations, licensing, inspections, service and sales.

The LDB is responsible for the wholesale distribution and retail sale of beverage alcohol and cannabis. The [Liquor Distribution Act](#) (LDA) gives the LDB the sole right to purchase beverage alcohol both within B.C. and from outside the province, in accordance to the federal [Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act](#). The [Cannabis Distribution Act](#) (CDA) establishes a

government wholesale distribution model for cannabis, private cannabis retail stores, and a public run e-commerce retail channel.

The Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) regulates British Columbia's liquor industries and private retail non-medical cannabis industries, which include restaurants, bars and pubs serving liquor, liquor manufacturers, liquor retail stores, special events involving liquor, private cannabis retail stores, and cannabis marketing. The Cannabis secretariat focuses on the interests of federally regulated producers, and coordinates government's efforts to promote the success of the legal cannabis market over the illicit market.

Operating Environment

Building a resilient food system and increasing food security is of key importance to the Ministry. In recent years, British Columbians have experienced the full spectrum of climate-related events – including heat, frost, fire, flood and drought. These climate-related disruptions highlight the importance of B.C.'s food supply chain. The Ministry continues to respond to these climate-related disruptions and evolving needs of the industry by taking meaningful actions to improve the resilience of B.C.'s food supply through new and enhanced programs, increasing access to AgriStability funding, as well as scaling up agritech and innovation efforts, and leading preparedness and response activities for anticipated emergency events.

In 2024/25 the sector faced rising costs, trade uncertainty, the closure of the BC Tree Fruit Coop, and federal changes to the Temporary Foreign Workers program. Plant and animal health and welfare were also affected by a growing number of threats ranging from climate-related phenomena to infectious disease. The Ministry continues to respond these threats, such as the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza, to limit the spread of disease, protect livestock and safeguard public health.

Economic Statement

After several years of strong growth, economic activity in British Columbia moderated in 2024 amid high interest rates, persistent price pressures, and ongoing global economic uncertainty. B.C.'s real GDP increased by 1.2 per cent in 2024 and ranked 8th (tied with Ontario) among the provinces following growth of 2.4 per cent in 2023. Last year, economic growth was driven by B.C.'s service-producing industries such as real estate, rental and leasing; health care and social assistance services; transportation and warehousing; public administration; and educational services. Output for goods-producing industries declined in 2024 due to lower construction and manufacturing activity, which was partly offset by growth in the mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction; utilities; and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sectors.

B.C.'s labour market continued to expand in 2024. Employment in B.C. increased by 66,100 jobs (+2.3 per cent), supported by high immigration, and wages and salaries rose by 6.3 per cent. B.C.'s unemployment rate averaged 5.6 per cent in 2024, up from 5.2 per cent in 2023 as strong population and labour force growth outpaced job gains. Elevated interest rates, rising

construction costs, and ongoing labour shortages weighed on the construction sector last year. Housing starts totaled 45,828 units in 2024, down 9.2 per cent from the record high in 2023, but remained above the ten-year historical average. B.C. home sales increased by 2.1 per cent and the average home sale price increased by 1.0 per cent compared to 2023. Price pressures in B.C. continued to broadly moderate last year, but shelter price growth remained elevated. Overall, B.C.'s inflation rate averaged 2.6 per cent in 2024, down from 3.9 per cent in 2023. Despite strong population growth, nominal retail sales increased by just 0.6 per cent in 2024, following a 0.1 per cent decline in 2023. On the trade front, weak global demand and lower commodity prices (primarily natural gas and coal prices) last year contributed to a 2.7 per cent decline in B.C.'s merchandise exports relative to 2023 despite increased exports to non-U.S. destinations including China, South Korea, and Australia.

Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

The following goals, objectives and performance measures have been restated from the 2024/25 – 2026/27 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2025/26 – 2026/27, please see the [2025/26 – 2027/28 service plan](#).

Goal 1: Strengthen B.C.'s food security and provincial food systems

Objective 1.1: Ensure the provincial food system has the capacity to increase the availability of B.C. foods

Enhancing the [Grow BC, Feed BC and Buy BC](#) suite of programs will drive economic and job growth across the sector, increase the safety and availability of local food, and build the sustainability and reliability of the provincial food system. Integrated programs targeting industry renewal and competitiveness, sustainability, and capacity will address gaps in food supply resilience.

Key results

- Grow BC included support for the participation of new entrants to the sector with 60 new farmland matches through the [BC Land Matching Program](#) and supported 53 new entrant farmers with funding to advance their growth strategy through the [New Entrant Farm Business Accelerator Program](#).
- Developed a new three-year [Buy BC strategy](#) to expand the program's reach by increasing the availability and visibility of B.C. products in grocery stores, strengthening consumer preference for local goods, and supporting B.C. food and beverage businesses to grow retail sales and revenue.
- In 2024/25, 648 new products incorporated the Buy BC logo into their product packaging as a result of project funding. Through the Buy BC Partnership Program (BBCPP), 122 BC companies received funding to execute more than 122 industry-led promotional activities, which collectively generated \$1.76 million in sales.
- Developed a three-year Feed BC Strategy to encourage more institutions to use B.C. foods, increase readiness of food businesses for the institutional food service market and better connect businesses and buyers.
- Launched resources and supports to introduce Feed BC in K-12 schools and increase local food use and opportunities within K-12 school system through the province's school food program Feeding Futures.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

The Ministry continues to support the establishment and growth of new entrants into the agriculture sector through the BC Land Matching Program and the New Entrant Farm Business Accelerator Program. These programs help new farmers navigate two of the most significant barriers to starting a new farm business – access to land and access to capital. The BC Land Matching Program started in 2016 and in 2024/25 land matchers completed 60 new matches, connecting farmers seeking land with leases on available farmland. The New Entrant Farm Business Accelerator program launched in FY23/24 and provides funding and resources to support new farmers with business planning and cost-shared funding for infrastructure to help new businesses grow. In 2024/25, 53 new entrants were supported through the program.

Buy BC played a key role in strengthening the capacity of the provincial food system. A new three-year Buy BC strategy was launched to expand the program's reach by increasing the visibility of B.C. products in grocery stores and fostering consumer demand for local goods. This effort directly supported food supply resilience and sector growth.

2024/25 was the second year of incorporating Feed BC into the provincial [Feeding Futures](#) initiative, led by Ministry of Education and Childcare, to ensure students across the province are properly fed for learning. To help school districts incorporate B.C. food and food and agriculture education, Feed BC introduced new B.C. food tracking and sourcing resources, educational materials and peer networks for school districts. For existing partner facilities in healthcare and post-secondary, Feed BC continued on-going supports for business-to-business events, market readiness and Indigenous food sourcing. Over the last year, Feed BC services and supports has engaged with 540 food businesses to help increase their market readiness, develop business-to-business connection and/or initiate new sourcing opportunities with public sector institutions.

Business plans for 12 Ministry-funded food hubs were completed in 2024/25, and procurement was launched to retain a new external operator for the [B.C. Food Hub Network](#), to sustain the network of small processing incubators in communities across the province.

Objective 1.2: Working with Indigenous people on agricultural economic development and food security

Working in cooperation and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples to support meaningful reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination is a priority for the Ministry. This includes understanding the historic and systemic barriers to Indigenous participation in the sector, their agriculture economic development and food security interests, and developing distinction-based approaches that enable capacity building, improve social, cultural and economic well-being, and lead to the equitable participation for Indigenous peoples in the sector.

Key results

- The First Peoples' Food Sovereignty Table, in partnership with the [First Nations Health Authority](#) (FNHA), was formed to elevate Indigenous leadership and agency collaboration in support of food sovereignty initiatives.
- The [B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food](#) (IACAF) and the Ministry co-developed a second three-year strategic plan (2024-2027) that prioritizes working together to: champion economic revitalization, investment, and funding; address policy gaps impacting access to traditional foods; and, promote awareness, education and engagement related to Indigenous food systems.
- In 2024/25, Feed BC supported a Cooking in Two Worlds Gathering at the University of British Columbia, a new Cooking in Two Worlds resource with case study stories of Indigenous foods in B.C. institutions, and hosted a learning cohort journey for leaders in public institutions.
- The [Indigenous Food Security and Sovereignty Program](#), administered through [New Relationship Trust](#) (NRT), held a second intake in May 2024 that was fully subscribed. 46 projects were supported to a total of approximately \$9M.
- In fall 2024, the Ministry launched a new program ([Indigenous Food Pathways](#)) and service ([B.C. Indigenous Pathfinder Service](#)) to support Indigenous food systems funded through the [Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership](#).
 - The [B.C. Indigenous Pathfinder Service](#) connects Indigenous-led businesses and projects with relevant programs, services, and funding opportunities to strengthen food systems, sovereignty and security.
 - The [Indigenous Food Pathways Program](#) provides strategic capacity-building funding to enhance food security, sovereignty, and Indigenous participation in B.C.'s agriculture and food sectors and supported four two-year projects.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

Working with Indigenous advisors, experts, and Indigenous-led organizations, the Ministry has supported Nation- and community-driven Indigenous food and agriculture initiatives across B.C. through investments in Indigenous-led program design and delivery. In April 2024, the Ministry formed the Indigenous Partnerships and Reconciliation Branch to take and maintain the lead role in ongoing and new initiatives with Indigenous Peoples.

Guided by ongoing IACAF recommendations, the Ministry continues to align programs and policies with Indigenous food systems goals. The Indigenous Food Security and Sovereignty Program, administered by NRT, awarded approximately \$9M in 2024/25 (Year 2 of 3 for the \$30M program). New initiatives include the B.C. Indigenous Pathfinder Service, the Indigenous Food Pathways Program, and events like the Interior Indigenous Food Forum and Feed BC's Cooking in Two Worlds Gathering at UBC. The Ministry also continued to provide direct support to nations, communities and business and develop new tools and resources to support planning and successful operations, including a new toolkit for planning for controlled environment agriculture in Indigenous communities.

The Ministry also supported K-12 schools to build awareness and inclusion of Indigenous foods and food systems, including through printable posters and digital material and initiatives such as the Great B.C. Food Cookoff and Cookbook.

Objective 1.3: Expand the data available on the Agricultural Land Reserve

Ensuring the Ministry has data and information on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) usage is critical for making land use decisions, informing an array of Ministry and government priorities and supporting partnerships with farmers, industry and government in developing long-term planning and food security in the province.

Key results

- Metro Vancouver data has been uploaded to a newly updated hub site to serve as the data clearing house for all ALUI project data. 2023/2024 (6 ALUI project sites) data reached the final stages of quality control—the final stage before being uploaded to the hub site.
- 2024 Data collection: Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD) (Nicola Valley) and Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD).
- 2025 (Pre-Field Season planning/digitization): Data collection: Capital Regional District (CRD), Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), Regional District of Bulkley Nechako (RDBN).
- Final Data processing for: Abbotsford, Chilliwack; Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) (east), Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD), Regional District Central Okanagan (RDCO), Regional District of Fraser Fort George (RD FFG), Thompson Nicola Regional District (Nicola Valley (TNRD), Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD).

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

In 2024 the ALUI team met its goal to collect ALUI data from TNRD and CSRD, and completed quality control/quality assurance for Metro Vancouver data, clearing the way for it to be posted on a platform for utilization by stakeholders. The 2025 work included preparing to collect data for CRD, CVRD and RDBN, and preparing previously collected data for Abbotsford, Chilliwack, SLRD, FVRD, RDCO, RD FFG, TNRD, and CSRD for consumption on the existing platform.

The agreement with the Partnership for Water Sustainability was extended for one year. This followed an initial project in previous years to determine the feasibility of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the ALUI. As of March 31, 2025, AI is still adapting to process the wide variety of crop types varied terrain of B.C., and this approach was successful for flat monocrop environments but requires additional adaptation for B.C.'s diverse crops and dynamic landscape.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Target	2024/25 Actual
1a Number of government or other Feed BC partner facilities that have committed to working towards a minimum 30 percent B.C. food expenditures within total annual food expenditures ¹ .	199	211	211
1b Number of Buy BC logo licensed products ²	7,928	5,000	10,724

Data source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

¹PM 1a targets 2025/26 and 2026/27 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 219 and 227 respectively.

²PM 1b targets for 2025/26 and 2026/27 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 5,500 and 6,500 respectively.

1a In 2024/25, the number of Feed BC partner institutions committed to working towards 30 percent of B.C. food expenditures within their total annual food budget increased to a total of 211. Ten school districts joined the existing health facilities, post-secondary institutions and correctional facilities already committed to working towards this goal. This number of school district partners is anticipated to grow in future years as Feed BC help provides more resources and supports to help school districts build capacity for BC food tracking and sourcing, through ECC's Feeding Futures funding for school meal programs.

1b The Buy BC program has made strong progress in building a recognizable brand that encourages consumers to support locally made and grown products. The Ministry developed a new three-year Buy BC strategy focused on increasing the availability and visibility of B.C. products in grocery stores, strengthening consumer preference for local goods, and helping B.C. food and beverage businesses expand their presence in retail markets. By the end of 2024/25, 10,724 products were licensed to use the Buy BC logo, more than double the original target of 5,000. This growth was driven by the Ministry's strategic marketing and outreach efforts, including a government-led, province-wide advertising campaign and active industry engagement. Through the Buy BC Partnership Program, 61 B.C. companies carried out over 100 promotional activities, generating \$1.58 million in sales. The program also partnered with 63 retailers with 408 stores across the province, significantly expanding the visibility of B.C. products and supporting local business growth.

Goal 2: Support the B.C. agriculture and food sector to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate and an emerging low-carbon economy

Objective 2.1: Improve emergency preparedness and climate resilience

In recent years, British Columbians have experienced the full spectrum of climate-related events (e.g., extreme heat, drought, wildfires, floods), and few sectors have been hit as hard as agriculture. Climate science tells us that this trend is only going to intensify over the coming decades as we face increasingly frequent and damaging climate-related events. In addition to these events, climate driven emergence of pests and pathogens in animals and plants will also increase.

The Province of B.C. has adopted the [United Nations Sendai Framework](#), which outlines five key priorities that are guiding the Ministry's evolving approach to climate related events and the associated risk: (1) understanding risk; (2) strengthening risk governance to manage risk; (3) investing in mitigation for resilience and; (4) enhancing preparedness for effective response; (5) capacity building for resilience and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Key results

- The British Columbia Avian Influenza Prevention Partnership was formed by the Ministry in 2024/25. This partnership consists of the Ministry, and the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#), representation from poultry and dairy, and several additional government agencies. This partnership was created to improve collaboration and coordination between responders to the ongoing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak in B.C., and to explore methods of mitigating and preventing further infections.
- Through funding obtained from the \$20M [Food Security Emergency Planning and Preparedness Fund](#), the following projects have created resources to bolster emergency preparedness within the province:
 - British Columbia Agriculture Council obtained funding to recruit and train Agricultural Coordinators, in partnership with the Ministry, to be employed in the Emergency Operations Centres of local authorities throughout the province.
 - BC Cattlemen's Association's project to construct 7 additional Livestock Emergency Response Trailers has proceeded, with 3 additional trailers being deployed throughout the province (for a total of 6), and additional trailers planned. These trailers provide critical capacity for rapid response to livestock emergencies.

- The Ministry announced a \$5-million Tree Fruit Climate Resiliency program that approved cost-share funding for 67 projects in the Okanagan and the Kootenay regions. Tree-fruit growers are using the funding to buy equipment such as wind machines, energy-efficient heaters and cooling systems to protect orchards from extreme cold and heat.
- The Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program was reopened in June 2024 with \$80M added to the initial \$20M fund, which was fully spent in 2023/24. In 2024/25, the \$100M program approved \$26.7M for 303 projects to improve on-farm water supply systems, irrigation efficiency, and water storage; \$9M for 9 community level projects related to improved water management, conveyance, and storage; and \$3.9M for 245 projects to support engineering studies, water assessment, and management plans.
- The Extreme Weather Preparedness Program distributed \$1.5M to agriculture producers in 2024/25 to help them innovate and prepare for floods, wildfires, and extreme heat events. This included 51 on-farm projects related to extreme heat preparedness, 19 projects related to wildfire preparedness and 3 projects to support flood preparedness.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

The Ministry continued to strengthen its emergency management capacity and capabilities through the growth and development of the recently established Emergency Management Branch, expansion of the Ministry's Emergency Support Team, and ongoing work to define emergency management roles and responsibilities of Ministry business areas and subject matter experts. Coordination and collaboration with industry partners in the agriculture sector have resulted in significant new resources being brought into the field of emergency management to be employed in 2025/26.

The Ministry dedicated significant response efforts to support response and recovery to drought and wildfire in 2024 and moved immediately into preparing for drought in 2025. The Ministry also dedicated response efforts to the landslide on the Chilcotin River in the summer of 2024, supporting affected producers and conducting advanced planning in the event of further impacts.

On other hazards and long-range issues, there was a focus on the expansion and formalization of the Ministry's Emergency Support Team through identification of key roles within the Ministry that hold critical knowledge and skills for emergency response in the agriculture sector. Initial planning to meet the Ministry's legislated obligations under the [Emergency and Disaster Management Act](#) for hazard risk assessments and plans has been undertaken.

Objective 2.2: Increase uptake of regenerative practices and other on-farm and food processing innovations that support sustainability and reduce emissions

Regenerative agriculture practices offer producers the chance to play an active role to reduce threats to food production posed by climate change. These practices protect and regenerate soil, water, and air quality, improve biodiversity and protect sensitive habitats, and increase the productivity and profitability of farms. Farmers are also adopting technological innovations such as biodigesters to convert manure into renewable natural gas or the use of precision agriculture agritech solutions to reduce nitrogen fertilizer emissions, as part of the low carbon economy. Together, regenerative agriculture practices and agritech are addressing the need to proactively respond to climate change through practical mitigation and adaptation tactics.

Key results

The following on-farm projects were completed:

- The Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) program was the main program supporting agricultural producers directly. In 2024/25, producers completed 316 projects.
- In addition, the Ministry supported the Agri-Ecosystem Stewardship Initiative (AESI, part of the former Farmland Advantage program). Through this program, the Ministry supported riparian restoration and grassland habitat improvement on 62 sites across the province in ecologically sensitive areas.
- Also, the Ministry supported Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust (DFWT) programs in the Lower Fraser Valley, from Delta to Agassiz. This work included 61 projects such as cover cropping that provided multiple benefits (e.g., soil health, biodiversity, water quality).

In addition, the following knowledge transfer activities supported efforts to promote adoption of regenerative agriculture practices:

- The Ministry supported 36 regional extension projects related to environmental, climate and regenerative topics such as soil health, greenhouse gas emissions, waste management, water supply and management, riparian and habitat restoration, and extreme weather events.
- Further supporting agriculture extension in the province, the Knowledge and Technology program also funded our partners organizations in delivering 45 farmer focused knowledge development events with over 20 of those projects having a direct linkage to environment, climate and regenerative agriculture priorities.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

The Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) program continues to be the Ministry's flagship program for supporting regenerative agriculture and technologies. In 2024/25, the Ministry

complemented the cost-share funding provided by the BMP program, by funding programs that pay for ecological goods and services, such as the AESI and DFWT programs. In addition to direct support for farmers' costs of regenerative agriculture practices, the Ministry also worked with agricultural producers on a variety of knowledge transfer programs, increasing the understanding and motivation to adopt practices that are part of regenerative agriculture. The progress described in this section does not include the on-farm projects related to irrigation efficiency and water storage that are described under Objective 2.1, but many of these projects do contribute to regenerative agriculture goals by promoting water conservation.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Target	2024/25 Actual
2a Number of beneficial management practice projects completed by farmers which support regenerative agriculture practices and technologies ^{1,2}	302	700	741

Data source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

¹PM 2a targets for 2025/26 and 2026/27 were stated in the 2024/25 service plan as 850 and 1000, respectively.

²PM 2a the figures are cumulative totals from the start of the 2023/24 fiscal year.

The number of projects completed in 2024/25 exceeded the target for the cumulative total from the start of the 2023/24 fiscal year. As mentioned in the 2023/24 Service Plan report, there were projects that started in 2023/24 that were extended into 2024/25. The extension added 53 projects to the cumulative total for 2024/25.

These projects address issues ranging from soil health to biodiversity enhancements. Cumulative growth in the volume of beneficial management practice projects implemented over time indicates the prevalence of adoption, ongoing use, and rate of transition to beneficial management practices by farmers and ranchers.

Goal 3: Support the agriculture, food and beverage sector in growing and diversifying domestic and international markets

Objective 3.1: Increase the capacity of the B.C. agriculture, food and beverage sector to expand domestic and international competitiveness

Leveraging B.C.'s agriculture, food and beverage sector's competitive advantages, addressing barriers to growth and building capacity to capitalize on market opportunities will enable business and job growth.

Key results

- Successfully connected 15 B.C. companies with new market opportunities during a multi-day New Exporters to Border States (NEBS) trade mission to Washington State in January 2025 co-organized with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI)¹, the Government of Alberta, and Global Affairs Canada.
- Supported 20 B.C. companies at the Grocery & Specialty Food (GSF) West tradeshow through market readiness training and a dedicated Ministry pavilion, creating opportunities to connect with both domestic and international buyers and increase product exposure.
- Feed BC helped 351 food businesses learn about and diversify to the institutional food services market through business-to-business events, a refreshed BC Food Directory, and other readiness supports.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

Supporting trade diversification emerged as an important priority in 2024/25 due to growing trade uncertainty with the U.S., B.C.'s largest trading partner in food and agricultural exports. The Ministry continued its existing focus on building the capacity of B.C.'s agriculture, food and beverage sector to compete in both domestic and international markets by leveraging market opportunities. A key achievement was the New Exporters to Border States (NEBS) trade mission to Washington State, where 15 B.C. companies gained firsthand insights into U.S. retail, natural and specialty food markets and established valuable business connections. The mission, co-organized with provincial and federal partners, helped position B.C. businesses for export success in the strategically important Pacific Northwest region.

The Ministry also supported 20 B.C. companies at the Grocery & Specialty Food West tradeshow, providing market readiness training and hosting a dedicated B.C. pavilion that increased visibility and facilitated engagement with domestic and international buyers. These efforts reflect a continued focus on building market readiness and sector competitiveness by delivering targeted support and creating pathways to new markets.

Recognizing that the institutional food services market is largely unknown to many food businesses, Feed BC continued to focus on raising the general awareness and understanding of this sales channel, particularly in the face of uncertainty from U.S. trade threats. Feed BC held several business-to-business events this year to strengthen buyer connections, and refreshed and expanded learning resources for businesses to better prepare them for this market. Additional resources are planned for next year.

Objective 3.2: Increase and diversify B.C. agriculture, food and beverage export sales

B.C.'s broad array of products and strong international reputation for high food safety standards positions the sector to expand export opportunities. Increasing and diversifying

¹ Changed to Ministry of Jobs and Economic Growth (JEG) in July 2025.

export sales increases the long-term resiliency of the sector by reducing market risk and contributes to economic growth and job creation across the province.

Key results

- Enabled nearly 50 B.C. companies to showcase their products on the global stage by supporting participation in five major international tradeshow, delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation.
- Supported 38 industry-led export market development activities through the B.C. Agriculture and Food Export Program, helping B.C. companies expand their international presence and grow export capacity.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

As part of ongoing efforts to address U.S. tariffs, the Ministry continued to strengthen and diversify B.C.'s agriculture, food, and beverage export sales through its collaborative approach with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI). Building on a strong foundation established through a Memorandum of Understanding with JEDI, the Ministry supported nearly 50 B.C. companies in showcasing their products at five major international tradeshow. These coordinated efforts provided companies with valuable exposure to new international buyers, helped develop export relationships, and supported entry into new global markets.

To enhance export capacity, the B.C. Agriculture and Food Export Program provided cost-shared funding to B.C. exporters, which supported 38 industry-led market development initiatives. These activities enabled B.C. producers and processors to undertake market development and promotional activities outside of BC to help boost company sales, reduce risk, and promote long-term sustainability.

Objective 3.3: Support market access through a high standard of animal and plant health programming and diagnostic services

Plant and animal health and welfare are key factors in increasing the production of a wide range of agricultural products for domestic consumption, for improving public perceptions of and confidence in those products, and for maintaining international trade. Strategies that enhance and protect plant and animal health and welfare in the province are critical to growing and diversifying domestic and export markets.

Key results

- In 2024/2025, the PAHC invested \$3.7 million in new laboratory equipment to expand internal capacity, enhance service delivery, and introduce new diagnostic offerings for the benefit of B.C. producers and the public.
- [The Animal Health Center](#) has performed over 80,252 animal health tests, including 15,440 for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza testing and 4,633 for Chronic Waste Disease in 2024/2025 alone.

- The Plant Health Laboratory processed over 3,767 plant cases in 2024/2025. Among the most commonly diagnosed diseases were Blueberry Scorch Virus and Little Cherry Disease; however, the laboratory supports the agriculture sector by diagnosing a wide range of plant diseases across various crops and responding to diseases regulated under the BC [Plant Protection Act](#). [Office of the Chief Veterinarian](#) (OCV) developed a new system for receiving reports of, and responding to, diseases regulated under the [Animal Health Act](#). Since December 2024, OCV has managed 121 regulated disease reports for pathogens such as Salmonella enteritidis, Salmonella dublin and Infectious laryngotracheitis.
- The OCV worked to support BC's animal and public health through participation in key national groups including the Council of Chief Veterinary Officers of Canada, Animal Health Canada and the FPT Senior Leaders Committee on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

Summary of progress made in 2024/25

The Plant and Animal Health Laboratories and the Office of the Chief Veterinarian continue to deliver key services to support consumer trust and market access for B.C. food producers. During 2024/25 the impact of disease, especially Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza had serious impacts, with the AHC delivering 15,440 tests (federally required) to allow producers to move healthy birds to markets. The OCV took a lead role in epidemiological and genomic analysis, public health, assessment of poultry vaccination, and search for novel tools and technology, all with a focus on reducing the risk of a severe 2025/26 autumn Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak.

The PAHC, in collaboration with the OCV, initiated efforts to enhance genomic service delivery, an essential component for timely, evidence-based outbreak detection and response. In late autumn 2024, the first genomics technical specialist dedicated to supporting agriculture and food sector priorities was contracted. This strategic step reduced the Ministry's reliance on the BC Centre for Disease Control (BC CDC), whose mandate does not encompass diagnostic services for animal and plant health.

In late 2023, the Ministry launched the Smallholder Disease Surveillance Program for swine and poultry, expanding to include goats and sheep in 2024. The program offers subsidized post-mortem examinations for premises with fewer than 100 animals, aiming to support small-scale producers and their veterinarians in disease detection and management. As of May 2025, the program has received 169 submissions from 151 clients and 66 referring clinics across British Columbia.

Finally, the Ministry launched several initiatives to combat global veterinary shortages and ensure veterinary professionals are available throughout B.C. to support farmers to produce healthy animals. These included the veterinary and technician summer student program, and the BC veterinary and technician locum program.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Target	2024/25 Actual
3a Number of B.C. agriculture and food businesses accessing Ministry business and market programs ²	705	814	895

Data source: Ministry of Agriculture and Food

¹PM 3a targets for 2025/26 and 2026/27 were stated in the 2024/25 service plan as 867 and 917, respectively.

The number of B.C. agriculture and food businesses that access business and market development programs demonstrate the growth of the sector's capacity to successfully expand and diversify markets. Increasing the number of businesses that access business and market development programs supports market growth and diversification by ensuring businesses are competitive and reducing market risk. This enhances the long-term sustainability of the B.C. agriculture and food sector and promotes economic growth.

The Ministry exceeded its target for the delivery of programs and services to support food and agriculture business and market programs. Overall participation in programs and services saw incremental, steady growth. The Ministry continued its offering of business and marketing programs to help businesses with a variety of business planning activities, such as business strategies and cash flow and financial analysis, and supported businesses to learn about, connect with, and diversify into new domestic and export market channels.

Financial Report

Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations ¹ (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Operating Expenses					
Science, Policy and Inspection	18,064	1,559	19,623	25,662	6,039
Agricultural Resources	68,425	104,232	172,657	163,329	(9,328)
BC Farm Industry Review Board	1,457	139	1,596	1,891	295
Executive and Support Services	7,058	20	7,078	10,072	2,994
Agricultural Land Commission	5,453	40	5,493	5,493	0
Production Insurance Special Account (Net)	29,679	91,914	121,593	121,593	0
Insurance for Crops Act	0	5,137	5,137	5,137	0
Sub-total	130,136	203,041	333,177	333,177	0
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual ²	0	0	0	(5,374)	(5,374)
Total	130,136	203,041	333,177	327,803	(5,374)
Ministry Capital Expenditures					
Executive and Support Services	853	1,534	2,387	2,387	0
Total	853	1,534	2,387	2,387	0

¹ "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations, Contingencies and Government Reorganization.

² The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$5.374 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of July 17, 2025 the Minister of Agriculture and Food is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

Agricultural Land Commission

The Provincial [Agricultural Land Commission](#) (ALC) is the independent administrative tribunal dedicated to preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming in B.C. 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 B.C. 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.

B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food

The [B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food \(IACAF\)](#) is a unique platform for collaboration between the Ministry and Indigenous Council Members to advance Indigenous priorities in food security, sovereignty, and economic development. It promotes Indigenous leadership and equitable participation in the agriculture and food sector, supporting the Ministry's reconciliation efforts under the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Marketing Boards and Commissions

The Marketing Boards and Commissions include:

[BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission](#)

[BC Chicken Marketing Board](#)

[BC Cranberry Marketing Commission](#)

[BC Egg Marketing Board](#)

[BC Hog Marketing Commission](#)

[BC Milk Marketing Board](#)

[BC Turkey Marketing Board](#)

[BC Vegetable Marketing Commission](#)

BC Liquor Distribution Branch

The [BC Liquor Distribution Branch](#) (LDB) is responsible for the wholesale distribution and retail sale of beverage alcohol and cannabis.

Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in Minister Alexis's 2022 Mandate Letter, and in Minister Popham's Mandate letter issued January 2025.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
Continue work on the recommendations of the Food Security Task Force and take steps to make B.C. a leader in agricultural innovation, resilience, and food security in the face of emerging challenges of supply chain disruption, global inflation, rising costs, and the impacts of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The B.C. On-Farm Technology Adoption Program, delivered through Innovate BC's Integrated Marketplace Initiative, supported 29 B.C. farms with \$2.2 million to purchase agritech solutions that enhance efficiency, productivity, and profitability. The Program has helped reduce producer costs by adopting innovative technologies that enhance operations by automating tasks, managing inputs to achieve improved outcomes, and mechanizing tasks to be more precise, safe, fast, and effective. To further advance the adoption of new agritech solutions, the Ministry worked with Innovate BC and the BC Centre for Agritech Innovation to deliver educational sessions at the 2025 Pacific Agricultural Show to showcase how artificial intelligence is being used in agriculture and share experiences from B.C. farmers who are early adopters of new technologies.
Work with Indigenous Peoples on agricultural initiatives identified by them to support their interests in economic development food security, and community building across the province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Goal 1, Objective 1.2
Work with the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, to support the resilience of B.C.'s food system through an emergency preparedness strategy for food security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the roll-out of 27 Industry-led initiatives under the \$20 million Emergency Planning and Preparedness for Food Security Fund, for example, training Agriculture Coordinators to support communities' Emergency Operations Centres when disasters impact farmers and ranchers. Continued support for implementation of the Emergency and Disaster Management Act by developing an Emergency Plan for the Ministry's legislated hazards and supporting cross-ministry risk assessment of food security and agricultural risks.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
Grow our economy, reduce costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase food security for British Columbians by working with partners to increase food processing in B.C. while increasing innovation in food processing in the province, and supporting export opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Goal 3, Objectives 3.1 and 3.2 • Assessed global best practices in processing innovation. Delivered productivity assessments to 13 processing businesses, and business skills training to 75 processors to support processing business growth.
Work with industry to identify agricultural best practices that reduce carbon pollution and support their adoption across the sector so that agricultural innovation can continue to be a key part of our province's efforts to reduce carbon pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed: Report, "Opportunity Assessment of BC's Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Reductions and Carbon Sinks". Included a tool to evaluate best management practices (BMPs) according to emissions reductions, adoptability (costs, regulatory barriers), and environmental co-benefits. The tool was integrated with a database of for a preliminary set of 11 BMPs. • In progress: an expansion of the database to include 50 BMPs and report on metrics to reduce carbon pollution. The work will include recommendations for research and help prioritize extension and funding initiatives to increase BMP adoption.
Ensure government has all of the information required about land use in the Agricultural Land Reserve to support partnerships with farmers, industry, and government in developing long-term planning and food security in the province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALUI (Agricultural Land Use Inventory) baseline's have been collected for 65% of the province. Pre-field digitization is complete for 70% of the province, of which 28% of the remainder is in the Peace River Regional District. • Started phase 1 of a three phase \$400k project to analyze the use of AI and machine learning to automate digitizing processes for ALUI updates. This process is being run via RFP through the Partnership for Water Sustainability (ALUI contractor). • Developed an online portal to ensure that all ALUI data is readily accessible with tools available to facilitate data-informed decisions on the land base. See Goal 1, Objective 1.3

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
Continue to support the Grow BC, Feed BC, and Buy BC programs to encourage greater food security, regional business growth, and access to local food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Goal 1, Objective 1.1
Support the work of the Minister of Education and Child Care to integrate Feed BC into expanded school meal programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through Feeding Futures provincial school food program, launched new sources to support 60 school districts to source and track more B.C. foods, with a goal of working towards 30% B.C. food purchases, and new educational resources to support local food literacy.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
In order to protect key services that British Columbians rely on, work with the Minister of Finance to review all existing Ministry of Agriculture and Food programs and initiatives to ensure programs remain relevant, are efficient, and make life better for BC families by supporting BC farmers and food producers. This is important in the context of current Provincial budget constraints, market conditions, tariff threats, and the economic realities of farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ministry has developed guidance, tools and templates to enable staff to evaluate our programs and services. As of mid-2024, the Deputy Minister mandated the majority of our programs and services to evaluate their effectiveness. Approximately 13 programs have started using the evaluation tools, representing about 22% of the ministry's external-facing programs/services in progress.
Help grow the profitability and success of our agricultural sector by ensuring close connection between agricultural stakeholders and government policy makers through a Premier's Task Force with connections to relevant ministries across government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In February 2025, a new Premier's Task Force on the Agriculture and Food Economy was launched with membership from across the food value-chain, from production and processing to distribution and retail. The Task Force is co-chaired by leadership from the BC Agriculture Council, which advocates on behalf of 29 member associations and BC Food and Beverage which represents a diverse range of processors throughout the province, along with the deputy minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
<p>Support work led by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation by working with farmers and food producers, and customers of British Columbia's agricultural products in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocating against proposed tariffs from the United States and ensuring continued expansion of our agricultural export programs for the mutual success of British Columbians and our trading partners; • expanding global markets for our products to diversify and reduce trade risk; and, • preparing contingency plans in the event that tariffs are imposed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to support B.C.'s response to U.S. tariffs through a Team Canada approach with strengthened ties to federal-provincial-territorial governments, including increased engagement with provincial and national industry and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to better understand and address market access concerns. • Supported the diversification of B.C.'s agriculture, food, and beverage sector by collaborating with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation to help nearly 50 B.C. companies enter or expand into new international markets through participation in five major international tradeshow. • Supported 20 B.C. companies through a domestic tradeshow presence by providing market readiness training and hosting a dedicated B.C. pavilion, which enhanced product visibility and facilitated connections with domestic and international buyers, strengthening sector competitiveness and opening pathways to new markets.
<p>Assume the role of government's liaison to the restaurant industry. In partnership with the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, be innovative in finding ways to connect farmers, restaurants, and the tourism sector to grow all three sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumed the role of government's liaison to the restaurant industry to enhance cross-government coordination on restaurant industry issues and support sector growth through close collaboration with the Ministries of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport (TACS) and Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation (JEDI).
<p>In partnership with the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, support work led by that Ministry to reform B.C.'s liquor and cannabis rules in ways that support the restaurant and agricultural sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry, in association with the LCB and LCRB, supported policy work for B.C. liquor and cannabis and initiated work to support B.C. growers, producers and exporters.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
Ensure a continuation of public support for the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), including protection of BC families from food price shocks, promotion of financial success for farmers, access to farming as a career for aspiring farmers, and expanded economic growth in the province.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported 69 businesses with business advisory services through a qualified consultant to promote the financial success for farmers and food processors. Supported 60 farmland matches through the BC Land Matching Program and supported 53 new entrant businesses with implementation of their growth strategies through the New Entrant Farm Business Accelerator.
Ensure that ALR land use restrictions are consistent with the potential and available uses of the actual land in the reserve, and that provision is made to expand food processing in the province to grow our food processing sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced exemptions to the 50 percent rule for the tree fruit and wine sectors to respond to the closing of the BC Tree Fruit Co-op and deep freeze/heat events that impacted the wine grape sector. Worked with JEDI and the PO to bring forward proposals to revise the regulatory requirements around food processing on ALR land.
Expand affordability and food security in the province by working with farmers to find ways to control costs for them and for the BC families who rely on their products, and by advocating with the federal government for fair programs for British Columbia food producers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched a Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and the Food Economy to work with sector leaders on solutions to rising costs they face that are impacting affordability and food security.
Strengthen our regional food systems by supporting farming, expanding local food processing, identifying supply chain disruption vulnerabilities, and by increasing economic opportunities through Feed BC and Buy BC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened regional food systems by supporting local farmers and food processors through Buy BC initiatives, including retail partnerships to increase the visibility of B.C. products in grocery stores; a province-wide advertising campaign to foster consumer demand for local goods; and funding support for domestic marketing initiatives promoting local products. Delivered new events and resources for Feed BC in healthcare, post-secondary and now K-12 schools, including market readiness training and business-to-business events to connect B.C. food companies with potential business opportunities in the K-12 food market.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Completed updated businesses plans for all 13 Ministry funded food hubs, to strengthen their role as critical regional food processing infrastructure.