



Supporting B.C. Farmers

Our government is committed to helping farmers farm so they can continue creating good jobs and growing the high-quality local food our communities depend on. We're putting our money where our mouth is – the Ministry of Agriculture's budget is the biggest ever at more than \$98 million this fiscal year, 15% higher than when we formed government in 2017.

In 2018, B.C.'s agriculture, seafood and food processing sectors hit record revenues of \$15 billion and farm cash receipts increased by 6% over the previous year. B.C. food products sales hit record-breaking highs in 2018, including \$4.5 billion in international exports and \$6.4 billion worth being bought right here at home. In addition, more than 2,000 new jobs were created, bringing the total number of people working in B.C.'s agriculture and seafood industries to more than 63,000.

Three exciting new initiatives are helping us reach our goals – **Buy BC**, **Feed BC** and **Grow BC**.



BUY BC

The revitalized Buy BC program helps farmers market their products and reach more people looking for made-in-B.C. foods. This simple yet extremely effective program makes it so easy for consumers to buy local. It's right there on the label!

- Our summer Buy BC ad campaign was viewed by consumers over 32 million times.
- Government has committed \$11.5 million over three years to promote the Buy BC brand which is now featured at all 26 Thrifty Foods locations, all 49 Safeway/Sobey's locations in B.C., and all 62 White Spot and 40 Triple O's locations featured products made from B.C. blueberries this past summer.
- Businesses are telling us Buy BC is making a big difference. For example, Anita's Organic Mill reports sales are up 36% and their new gluten-free line is available in 100 local stores.



FEED BC

Our new Feed BC program is increasing the amount of local food available in hospitals and care facilities which means new opportunities for producers. All regional health authorities are looking at how to offer patients more B.C. products – and we are already seeing amazing results!

- Interior Health has switched to B.C. shelled eggs – purchasing over 600,000 annually – and B.C. ground beef, and more health authorities and public institutions are coming on board.
- 38 B.C. businesses have participated in business development training offered through Feed BC aimed at building their capacity to access government facilities.
- We've also committed \$2.25 million for four regional food innovation hubs in Vancouver, Quesnel, Surrey and Port Alberni and expert support through UBC to help farms and food processing businesses grow and succeed here in B.C.



GROW BC

Through Grow BC, we're helping young farmers access land, and supporting fruit and nut growers and processors expand.

Through our new land matching program, 22 new farmers and landowners have reached agreements to bring or maintain 136.8 acres into production; an additional 22 matches are currently in progress.

- Our five-year \$5 million Tree Fruit Competitiveness Fund supports planting new in-demand varieties, updating equipment and expanding their marketing and research efforts.
- We're also providing \$300,000 for hazelnut growers who have been hit by disease to replant with more resilient trees to rebuild and expand their operations.

In support of our province's seafood sector, we've partnered with the federal government on the \$142.5 million BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund to restore fish habitat and protect wild Pacific salmon. To date, over \$53 million has been allocated to 23 projects throughout B.C. In addition, government provided \$1.3 million for the BC Oyster Recovery Fund to assist with re-seeding efforts & support research survey on marine norovirus travel patterns.

Our government knows British Columbians want to have their say on how we can best support farmers while protecting farmland in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). That's why we launched another engagement process this fall to ask for feedback on how we can best accomplish three important goals: support farmers expand and diversify their businesses; help new or young farmers become established on their land and in their business; and ensure there is more flexibility for housing on the ALR—while protecting farmland. Feedback is being accepted until Nov. 15, 2019. Our recent legislation made changes to keep farmland affordable for farmers, cracked down on illegal fill and construction waste dumping on farmland and is giving the Agricultural Land Commission the tools they need to support farmers and ranchers in every corner of B.C.



Ministry of
Agriculture

