

Stronger Farms Means a Stronger BC

Not long ago, many Canadians had a personal connection to farming; whether they were a farmer themselves or knew someone who was. As our population has become increasingly urbanized, and the number of farms have declined, fewer people have direct connections to agriculture. For many consumers today, food is seen to begin at the grocery store shelf rather than on the farm.

Over the years, farmers, ranchers and agricultural organizations have worked to help bridge that gap by sharing recipes, farmer stories, or providing opportunities for people to connect with agriculture through fairs, farm tours, websites, or social media.



That changed significantly during the pandemic and again as supply chain disruptions and trade concerns drew attention to the importance of local food production. A broader public interest emerged with a growing curiosity of where their food comes from, how it is produced, and what challenges farmers face. In British Columbia (B.C.), agritourism grew in popularity and public interest in local agriculture reached new levels.

At the same time, British Columbia farmers and ranchers have faced a series of unprecedented challenges. Since 2020, the province has experienced devastating floods, severe wildfire seasons, extreme heat events, avian influenza outbreaks, and ongoing drought conditions. These events have not only affected food production but also highlighted how closely connected farming is to local economies, rural communities, and food security.

Summer in B.C. brings an abundance of locally grown agricultural products worth celebrating - few places in the world can offer the diversity of crops produced across our province. Yet continued drought reminds us that reliable access to water remains essential to keeping farms productive and resilient.



Farmers across B.C. are continually adopting new technologies and practices to conserve water, improve efficiency, and prepare for increasingly unpredictable weather. Supporting these efforts through practical

policies, streamlined processes, and long-term planning will help ensure agriculture can continue to thrive for future generations.



All members of our communities across the country have an important role to play in supporting our farmers and ranchers. Choosing local products, learning more about farming, supporting farmland protection, and engaging in conversations about conserving water and food security all contribute to a stronger agricultural future.

BC Agriculture Council's initiative, *Stronger Farms, Stronger BC* highlights the role that how strong and resilient agriculture sector supports not only our food supply, but also jobs, rural communities, and the social fabric of our province.

We are encouraged by the growing curiosity and interest British Columbians have shown in local agriculture and the people who work within it. By continuing to support our farmers and ranchers, we can help build a more resilient, sustainable, and food-secure future for our province.

To learn more about the *Stronger Farms, Stronger BC* initiative — and ways to support local agriculture and the people behind it — follow BC Agriculture Council on social media and stay tuned for future stories, resources, and opportunities to get involved.