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**Birds of a feather**

BC continues to lead the country in the proportion of farm operators identifying as female, according to the agriculture census released last month. Women make up 40% of farm operators, up from 38% five years ago. In this issue, Kieran McKeown of Daybreak Farms in Terrace has big plans to diversify her already thriving poultry operation, and we take a look at the women making their mark in the meat processing sector. *DAYBREAK FARMS*

Bird flu in FV

H5N1 confirmed in Abbotsford

PETER MITHAM

ABBOTSFORD – A control zone was imposed on more than 50 commercial poultry farms in West Abbotsford last month following the discovery of highly pathogenic avian influenza at a local turkey farm, complicating the outlook for producers already under pressure from multiple supply chain issues.

"We've been meeting our chicken numbers so far as allocation and utilization numbers, and turkey and eggs are as well," says Ray

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BC farm count shrinks

PETER MITHAM

VICTORIA – BC reported fewer farms in latest census of agriculture, with losses outpacing the national average.

The province was home to 15,481 farms last year, a decline of 10% since the last census in 2016. This follows an 11% decline in 2016 versus 2011. Nationally, the number of farms fell by 2%.

But the BC Agriculture Council urged caution regarding the numbers, saying a change in the

definition of a farm for census purposes may be to blame.

"Comparisons with earlier census results should be interpreted with caution," says BCAC policy director Paul Pryce. "It's possible that BC was disproportionately affected compared to other provinces because our farms are typically smaller and can rely on direct sales."

Smaller farms may not be captured in the new definition of a census farm, which now refers to a unit that reports revenues or expenses on agricultural

production to the Canada Revenue Agency. Previously, a farm was defined as any operation that produced at least one agricultural product for sale.

Small farms – those reporting revenues below \$10,000 a year – decreased 26% in the latest census to 5,423 or 34% of all farms in the province. This is down from 42% of farms in 2016.

The latest census indicates that large farms – those with \$1 million in revenues and up –

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