



Delta Agricultural Plan

Phase 3 Report: Agricultural Plan

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Executive Summary

Agriculture is vitally important to Delta's economic, environmental and social sustainability. Delta's current agricultural policies reflect strong support for productive agriculture, protection of the Agricultural Land Reserve, conservation of land for soil-based agriculture, and an integrated approach to managing the needs of agriculture, the environment and non-farming stakeholders. This Agricultural Plan augments policies contained in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and contains strategies to assist in pursuing the long term viability of farming in the community.

The successful future of Delta agriculture will depend on several factors, including the ability to: attract complementary agri-industry, reduce costs, diversify, add economic value, attract new entrants, mitigate and or offset impacts from projects, comply with regulatory processes, and meaningfully engage the public in support of agriculture.

The planning process includes the articulation of a 20 year vision for agriculture in Delta. In the vision:

"Delta is a place where the business of farming can prosper while contributing vitally to the community's ecological attributes and social, cultural, and economic well-being "

Delta agriculture will thrive if:

- *The agricultural sector is highly productive, creating efficient production systems and significant value added activity, assisted by well functioning infrastructure*
- *Local agriculture effectively services local and non-local markets*
- *Agriculture's ecological and social attributes are recognized by and cost-shared with society*
- *Farming is attractive and accessible, providing a successful alternative career for younger people and new entrants*
- *Agriculture will have successfully adapted into the future by adopting new technology, embracing innovation, adjusting to climate change, and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.*

Key Recommendations

Based on the Vision, the Agricultural Plan focuses on strategies in several key areas. The key recommendations, below, list those actions that Delta should undertake to promote and enhance its agricultural sector. Detailed discussion of recommendations is presented in Section 5 of this report. It should be noted that implementation of some of the recommendations is a shared responsibility between local, regional and senior levels of government, as well as farmers themselves, and not solely the Corporation of Delta. Highest priority recommendations are:

Improving the Economic Sustainability of Delta Agriculture

1. Participate in implementing the Regional Food Systems Strategy by working with the Metro Vancouver Agricultural Advisory Committee regionally and coordinating with the Delta Agricultural Advisory Committee locally (section 5.1.1, p. 6).
2. Create an economic development initiative for agriculture in Delta, tasked with finding and promoting opportunities for agricultural processing in Delta, identifying new crop opportunities, liaising with agricultural researchers and technology providers, attracting business, and identifying funding and programs (section 5.1.1, p. 6).
3. Investigate the feasibility of attracting processors for local crops by providing financial incentives and serviced locations. Identify and target appropriate scale niche and value chain opportunities presented by the Delta agricultural sector (section 5.1.1, p. 6).
4. Advocate with Metro Vancouver for regional bulk water rates for agriculture or otherwise reduce the cost of municipal water to farmers (section 5.1.2, p. 6).
5. Assist farmers to navigate the regulatory requirements in pursuing innovative projects (e.g., energy and waste management technologies), on-farm value added and diversification (section 5.1.4, p. 7).
6. Work with farmers to develop technological and land based solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agricultural practices and to make farm business more resilient to future impacts of climate change by investing in adaptation strategies for agriculture. (section 5.1.4, p. 7).
7. Support farmers in dealings with federal and provincial agencies, such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment, to ensure that conditions for efficient agriculture are enhanced, and specifically work toward “agriculture-friendly” protocols for ditch and dike maintenance that protect the environment and are timely, reasonable and feasible from an agricultural perspective (section 5.1.5, p. 8).
8. Regularly review and update checklists and guidelines to assist farmers with municipal regulatory processes, encourage pre-application meetings, and conduct site visits to gain understanding of proposed farm improvements where appropriate (section 5.1.5, p. 8).

Enhancing Agricultural Resource Use

9. Monitor and report on water quality related to agricultural water needs and use (section 5.2.1, p. 8).
10. Ensure municipal water is accessible to support high valued crops production and on-farm processing (section 5.2.1, p. 8).
11. Continue to improve agricultural drainage and irrigation (section 5.2.1, p. 8).
12. Update irrigation information to identify other areas where water-related factors continue to be a production constraint and lobby for financial programs to improve and extend irrigation improvements, to areas such as southeast Delta and Westham Island (section 5.2.1, p. 9)
13. Update the Delta Strategic Transportation Plan by taking into account the effects of commuters and population growth on rural traffic congestion, providing continued farmer access to dikes, and including identification of, and strategies to improve accessibility to, hard-to-reach farmland in Delta (section 5.2.2, p. 9).

Creating Opportunities for Efficiency, Competitiveness, Diversification and New Entrants

14. In collaboration with Metro Vancouver, neighbouring municipalities and BC Ministry of Agriculture, investigate options for providing agrologist services to assist start up farmers and identify funding sources to pursue new business ideas (section 5.3.1, p. 9).
15. Enhance relationships with Delta farmers, secondary and post-secondary education institutions, agricultural academies, ministries and associations to facilitate events and initiatives to provide new/young farmers with training, mentoring, technical expertise, production knowledge, and access to agricultural programs that would promote knowledge transfer and build capacity in smaller scale farming (section 5.3.1, p. 9).
16. Explore and support farming models that develop stronger connections between the farming community and the local marketplace and encourage new agricultural enterprise, such as community supported agriculture, cooperatives, local food alliances, and community networks (section 5.3.1, p. 10).
17. Investigate incentives to encourage active farmland use, by improving access by aspiring and landless farmers, spurring existing non-farming farmland owners to lease out their land, discouraging non-farm use, exploring agricultural trusts, and encouraging longer lease terms (section 5.3.2, p. 10).
18. Improve enforcement of existing regulations in farming areas including soil filling, storage, waste dumping, and maintenance of agricultural properties, engaging the Agricultural Advisory Committee to assist in spotting violations and problem areas (section 5.3.3, p. 11).
19. Explore financial mechanisms to address farmland speculation and deter non-agricultural development on farmland (section 5.3.3, p. 11).

Increasing Public Support for Agriculture

20. Build on existing farmer supported agricultural awareness events such as “Farm Hike by Bike” or “A Day at the Farm”, Delta Farm Tours, and “Meet Your Maker” events, work with local tourism/hospitality industry to initiate ‘taste of Delta’ food promotions at Delta restaurants and hotels, and other opportunities for the public to experience local food and agriculture (section 5.4.1, p. 12).
21. Expand the agriculture webpage on Delta’s website, with ‘operation/farmer of the month’ features, ‘fact sheets’, seasonal updates, and provide links to resources for residents who want to connect to local agriculture, such as the seasonal Farm Fresh Guide (section 5.4.1, p. 12).
22. Develop a multi-partner communication plan to engage farm groups, e.g., by creating contact lists of farmers willing to educate the public, distributing a “Champions of Farming” speakers list to the Rotary Club, Delta Chamber of Commerce and other groups, and encouraging presentations on agricultural issues, and to engage the public, (e.g., including agricultural awareness events, newspaper coverage, crop information, and farm field identification) (section 5.4.1, p. 12).
23. Support and expand opportunities for community gardens/urban agriculture demonstrations to promote agricultural awareness, through additional funding, supportive bylaws and provision of land (section 5.4.1, p. 12)
24. Support educational initiatives including agriculture in the secondary school curriculum (agriculture in the classroom), SRD 4-H and agriculture forums for municipal staff and politicians, engaging the Delta School District, Fraser Health Authority, and Metro Vancouver to host (section 5.4.1, p. 12).
25. Create an annual municipal bursary fund to support a student studying agriculture or agrology (section 5.4.1, p. 12)
26. Encourage reports and research that show what the returns to farmers are on agricultural products, where the food dollar goes in the food chain, and the cost of food in relation to other staples in the community (section 5.4.1, p. 12).
27. Engage with the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust (DFWT) to promote initiatives to foster public awareness of how farmland sustains wildlife and habitat and to build support for more equitable sharing of the costs of providing ecological goods and services (section 5.4.2, p. 13).
28. Lobby the ALC, provincial ministries, BC Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to develop a better accounting perspective for agencies to protect farmland and avert the loss of agricultural land base to public infrastructure works, transportation projects, land claims, wildlife and fisheries policy, incorporating as a last resort enhancement, compensation and mitigation to offset negative impacts on agriculture (section 5.4.2, p. 13).
29. Work with Metro Vancouver and other Lower Mainland municipalities to investigate the feasibility of regional branding for agricultural products, developing a “buy regional” policy for

local governments, and engaging businesses, schools, government agencies, and institutions to participate (section 5.4.3, p. 13).

Glossary of Terms¹

Agricultural enterprise zone - refers to designated area where a planning authority uses zoning, tax exemptions and other programs to stimulate the location of agriculture-related businesses, such as feed stores or veterinarians, and the development of new enterprises, such as food processing and storage facilities.

Agricultural Trust – a non-profit organization that either owns land or holds certain property rights with a commitment to ensure that farmland is managed, preserved, restored and stewarded for the long-term benefit of agriculture and to provide affordable land to beginning farmers.²

Agricultural Sector - includes the production and consumption of food and consists of all businesses involved in producing, harvesting, distribution and retailing of food products.

Agri-tourism - involves any agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch including buying produce direct from a farm stand, navigating a corn maze, picking fruit, feeding animals, or staying at a bed and breakfast on a farm.

Bona fide farmer - is a farm operator who uses farmland to produce agricultural products with the expectation of profit.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) - Members of CSAs provide farmers a set fee at the beginning of the growing season and then receive proportional shares in the annual output of the participating farm or farms.

Food processing - is the transformation of food from its raw state into something that can be stored or eaten. It ranges from basic processing like grading and bagging fresh foods to developing highly refined and packaged foods.

Food system - is the sequence of activities linking food production, processing, distribution and access, consumption and waste management as well as all the associated supporting and regulatory institutions and activities.

Local food - is food produced or processed within a particular geographic boundary. In this report, local food refers to food grown and harvested in the Lower Mainland region.

Revitalization tax exemption program bylaw - a provision of the Community Charter permitting municipalities to exempt property from property tax to encourage various types of revitalization to achieve a range of environmental, economic or social objectives.³

¹ Some of these terms are taken from Metro Vancouver. 2011. Regional Food System Strategy.

<http://www.metrvancouver.org/planning/development/RegionalFoodSystems/Documents/RegionalFoodSystemStrategy.pdf>

² See Hamilton, B. 2004. Agricultural Land Trust Research Project. Prepared for the Triple R Community Futures Development Corporation. <http://www.manitobaresearchallianceced.ca/Documents/44-AgriculturalLandTrust.pdf>

³ Ministry of Community Services. 2008. Revitalization Tax Exemptions: A Primer on the Provisions in the Community Charter.

http://www.brownfieldrenewal.gov.bc.ca/docs/community_charter_revital_tax_exemptions.pdf

Urban agriculture - is the practice of producing food within cities that encompasses a broad range of initiatives and production models that share the objective of providing urban residents access to fresh food grown in backyard gardens, roof top gardens, community gardens and urban farms.

Value adding - is a change in the physical state of a product, such as by food processing, drying, canning, juicing, handcrafting, unique packaging, labeling and marketing, that enhances its value by adding features that appeal to consumer needs and perceptions. Agribusinesses add value to acquire a greater portion of the value of that product at final sale.

Value chain - refers to a supply chain where a relationship is formed among firms based on cooperation and partnerships in responding to market demands or producing at a scale that is profitable.

Working agriculture - is defined as agricultural activity carried out as a business with an expectation of profit.

Acronyms Used in the Agricultural Plan and Appendix

- AAC – Agricultural Advisory Committee
- ALUI – Agricultural Land Use Inventory
- AAFC – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- ALC – Agricultural Land Commission
- ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve
- ARDCORP – Agricultural Research and Development Corporation
- BCAA – BC Assessment Authority
- BCAC – BC Agriculture Council
- BCAFM – BC Association of Farmers Markets
- BCATA – BA Agri-Tourism Association
- BCFPA – BC Food Processors Association
- BCMA – BC Ministry of Agriculture
- BMP – Beneficial Management Practice
- CEAA – Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
- CFBMC – Canadian Farm Business Management Council
- CFIA – Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- COABC – Certified Organic Associations of BC
- CRAFT – Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training in Ontario
- CWS – Canadian Wildlife Service
- DAS – Delta Agricultural Society
- DSD – Delta School District
- Delta – Corporation of Delta
- DCOC – Delta Chamber of Commerce
- DFO – Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- DPTLC – Delta Port Truck Liaison Committee
- DUC – Ducks Unlimited Canada
- DFWT – Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust
- EAO – BC Environmental Assessment Office
- EFP – Environmental Farm Plan
- EWS – Earthwise Society
- FCC – Farm Credit Canada
- FF/CF – Farm Folk/City Folk
- FHA - Fraser Health Authority
- FIRB – Farm Industry Relations Board
- FVFDMA – Fraser Valley Farm Direct Marketing Association
- FVREB – Fraser Valley Real Estate Board
- FVRD – Fraser Valley Regional District
- GHG – Greenhouse gases
- IAF – Investment Agriculture Foundation, BC
- KPU – Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- LFF – Local Food First
- LMHIA – Lower Mainland Horticultural Improvement Association
- MOED – Ministry of Education
- MOEN – Ministry of Environment

- MOTI – Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- NGO – Non-Government Agency
- NWSEP – National Water Supply Expansion Program
- OCP – Official Community Plan
- PIBC – Planning Institute of British Columbia
- RCA – Revenue Canada Agency
- REBGV – Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver
- RFSS – Metro Vancouver Food Systems Strategy
- SFCF – South Fraser Community Futures
- SRD4-HD - Surrey-Richmond-Delta 4-H District
- SSFPA – Small Scale Food Processor Association
- TLC – The Land Conservancy
- TSI – Terminal Systems Inc.
- UBCM – Union of BC Municipalities
- UBC University of British Columbia
- UFV – University of the Fraser Valley
- WWOOF – World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms

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Members of the Delta Agricultural Advisory Committee are recognized for their valuable contributions in the preparation of this Plan. They include:

- Mayor Lois Jackson, Chair
- Councilor Ian Paton, Vice Chair
- Oliver Busby
- Nancy Chong
- Clarence de Boer
- Peter Guichon
- Brent Kelly
- Jerry Keulen
- Lydia Ryall
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- Ms. Lisa King, Staff Liaison, Planning

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In addition, we are grateful to members of the community who made themselves available for interviews that provided insight into agricultural challenges and opportunities in Delta.

1.0 Introduction

The Corporation of Delta has commissioned this Agricultural Plan to assist with the implementation of agricultural policies contained in the municipality's Official Community Plan (OCP). The OCP identified a need to update the 1994 Delta Rural Land Use Study. The Agricultural Plan builds upon the Rural Land Use Study to respond to the current agricultural challenges and opportunities in Delta.

Recommendations and implementation strategies for pursuing actions explored in workshops held with agricultural producers and other stakeholders in 2010-2011 are included in the Agricultural Plan. The reports created in developing the Agricultural Plan and workshops are listed below.

- Stakeholder Workshop #1, October 2010
- Phase 1 Report: Delta Agricultural Profile, September, 2010 and finalized in June, 2011
- Stakeholder Workshop #2, February, 2011
- Phase 2 Report: Issues and Options, April, 2011, and finalized in June, 2011.

2.0 Purpose of the Agricultural Plan

The purpose of the Agricultural Plan is to develop a strategy that supports agriculture and integrates the sector more closely with the community. Farming is an integral part of Delta and considered essential to Delta's economy and residents' quality of life. At the same time, continued agricultural viability is recognized as a key consideration to ensure the long-term future of the sector.

The Agricultural Plan is consistent with the OCP objectives:⁴

- Protect the agricultural land base and lands included in the Agricultural Land Reserve
- Minimize conflicts at the urban-rural interface
- Diversify farm operations to support agricultural viability and sustainability
- Ensure the appropriate size and siting of farmhouses and additional farmhouses in agricultural areas
- Balance the interests of agriculture, the protection of the environment and the co-operative management of the Fraser River delta ecosystem
- Recognize recreational uses that are compatible with agriculture
- Continue to strategically plan for agricultural land use.

The Agricultural Plan articulates a strategy of actions to addresses issues with the continued strength of the sector in mind. Investigation and consultations during the Agricultural Plan process assisted in formulating goals to guide the plan and provide further context for the OCP objectives.

This Phase 3 Report: Draft Agricultural Plan transforms the vision for agriculture and the issues into:

- A statement of goals of the Agricultural Plan to address the key issues
- Recommended actions to achieve the goals
- A timeframe for implementing actions and their relative priority
- Agent(s) with responsibility to implement the actions
- Proposed performance indicators to measure progress of the Agricultural Plan.

3.0 Findings of Investigations

The information generated in the planning process has directed the content of the Agricultural Plan.

⁴ Delta Official Community Plan. http://www.corp.delta.bc.ca/assets/CPD/PDF/ocp_draft_20050901.pdf

3.1 Key Findings of the Phase 1 Report – Delta Agriculture Profile

The Phase 1 Report: Delta Agriculture Profile revealed that the Delta agricultural sector consists predominantly of large, well-established and efficient agricultural operations specialized in domestic and export markets. Delta's agricultural sector is unique in regard to the size of its farms. Its commercial farms are among the largest in size in the Lower Mainland and make use of a high level of land leasing in their operations.

The contribution of agriculture to the local economy and community is significant:

- Farming occurs on 42.5% (7,703 ha) of the land area of Delta
- The sector generated gross farm receipts(GFRs) of about \$190 million in 2005
- The sector spends over \$166 million annually in operating expenses
- At the provincial level, Delta represents almost 50% of the potato area, 50% of the greenhouse vegetable area and about 25% of the field vegetable acreage.
- Average GFRs in Delta, at \$25,000 per ha when greenhouse production is included, were the highest of any local jurisdiction in BC
- Agriculture employs the equivalent of 1,500 person years on farms in Delta
- Wages paid in 2005 totaled \$34.3 million.

Nonetheless, Delta agriculture is facing a combination of developments and trends that are challenging the sector:

- Regional loss of processing options threatens existing cropping options and rotations, with no alternatives readily available
- Infrastructure (e.g., irrigation, drainage and agricultural transportation network) is critical and needs to be continuously improved
- Farmers face provincial, national and international market competition while subject to local challenges of doing business with respect to regulatory compliances, input costs, taxes, labour and energy
- Public infrastructure projects and other competitors for the land base are taking farmland, disrupting agricultural operations, and exacerbating other issues in the area
- Wildlife are damaging field crops and jeopardizing the economic viability of established farms
- A growing non-farming population is competing with farmers for farmland, creating escalating land values in its wake.

3.2 Key Findings of the Phase 2 Report – Issues and Options

The Phase 2 Report: Issues and Options prioritizes the key issues identified in the Phase 1 report and development of a draft vision for Delta agriculture. Participants in the consultations also identified preferred options that were considered in preparing the Agricultural Plan.

3.2.1 Key Issues

The overriding concern of the agricultural sector is maintaining its viability in the face of numerous challenges. Various issues were grouped into four key issue areas with corresponding action areas.

1. Key Issue: Threatened Economic Sustainability of Delta Agriculture

Action Areas:

- Local Processing and Marketing Options
- High Input Costs

- Rural-Urban Interface
- Appropriate New Technology
- Regulatory Constraints and Compliance Costs.

2. Key Issue: Inadequate Agricultural Infrastructure

Action Areas:

- Drainage and Irrigation in the ALR
- Rural Roads, Transportation and Field Access.

3. Key Issue: Declining Ability to Stimulate Farming

Action Areas:

- Non-Farm Use in the ALR
- Lease Access to Farmland
- Smaller Scale Farming and Diversification.

4. Key Issue: Limited Public Appreciation of Agriculture

Action Areas:

- Public Awareness of Local Agriculture
- Public Responsibility for Induced Agricultural Impacts
- Local Institutional Support for Agriculture.

3.2.2 A Vision for Agriculture in Delta

A vision⁵ for agriculture in Delta in 2030 has been crafted.

Vision

“Delta is a place where the business of farming can prosper while contributing vitally to the community’s ecological attributes and social, cultural, and economic well-being”

Delta agriculture will thrive if:

- *The agricultural sector is highly productive, creating efficient production systems and significant value added activity, assisted by well functioning infrastructure*
- *Local agriculture effectively services local and non-local markets*
- *Agriculture’s ecological and social attributes are recognized by and cost-shared with society*

⁵ There is opportunity for this vision to be further crafted as the Agricultural Plan is finalized.

- *Farming is attractive and accessible, providing a successful alternative career for younger people and new entrants*
- *Agriculture will have successfully adapted into the future by adopting new technology, embracing innovation, adjusting to climate change, and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.*

3.2.3 Goals of the Agricultural Plan

The goals of the Agricultural Plan have been crafted to be consistent and supportive of the OCP policies and objectives and reflective of priority issues in the agricultural sector. These goals recognize that agriculture requires a favourable environment for investment and opportunity while providing environmental and social contributions in order to garner public support.

The goals of the Agricultural Plan are:

Goal #1: To Promote the Viability of Farming in Delta

This is the overarching goal of the Agricultural Plan, articulated in the OCP and verified in consultations. Without economic sustainability of farm operators, agriculture will not attract the interest or confidence required to support investment or renewal in the sector.

Goal #2: To Improve Farmland Capability

Enhancing agricultural resources and maintaining farmland in productive use are equally important in protecting the land base. Supporting working agriculture⁶ is the best way to achieve community objectives for farmland. Enhanced agricultural resources are vital to agricultural productivity and efficiency.

Goal #3: To Increase Agricultural Uses and Discourage Non-Agricultural Uses of Farmland

Agriculture is a business characterized by global competition, highly competitive pricing, and significant production risk. Operators have responded to these challenges through the pursuit of efficiency, economies of scale, intensification, diversification, growing new products and entering new markets. When opportunities to adapt and respond to change are present, new entrants and investment are attracted into the industry. Providing an attractive environment for productive agriculture is the most effective approach to mitigating threats to farmland from non-farm land use.

Goal #4: To Appreciate Delta Agriculture as a Vital Component of Community Well-Being

The agricultural sector needs to market itself to the public in order to receive the support it needs. Strategies to enhance support cover the spectrum ranging from marketing, services and infrastructure, to improving conditions that allow agriculture to thrive.

⁶ The term “working agriculture” is defined as agricultural activity carried out as a business with an expectation of profit.

4.0 Planning Framework

4.1 Agricultural Principles and Policies of the OCP

The policies for agriculture in Delta in the Official Community Plan (OCP)⁷ are presented in Appendix A to provide context for the Agricultural Plan.

4.2 The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)

The Agricultural Plan process has been guided by the Agricultural Advisory Committee. This Committee is appointed by Council for the purpose of advising Council on agricultural matters.

5.0 Agricultural Plan Recommendations – Action Framework

The sustainability and future viability of agriculture in The Corporation of Delta is a shared responsibility. The Corporation of Delta, through its Official Community Plan and various bylaws plays a strong role in some key areas related to the goals of the Agricultural Plan. In particular, through its OCP, Delta can help protect the resource base upon which agriculture depends. It can also assist with facilitating a “sustainable agriculture” culture that benefits the entire community by furthering economic development, creating employment, and enhancing the rural character and environmental attributes of the municipality.

While Delta plays an integral role in the sustainability of agriculture, the community also faces external factors over which it does not have control. These include pressures from regional population growth and projects, agricultural commodity markets, and policies of senior governments. Some issues that affect agriculture are a result of historical settlement patterns and land use – such as environmental reserves, First Nations land, small lots, ALR boundaries, water drainage and flood control patterns. In areas where The Corporation of Delta needs cooperation, it can act as a catalyst to initiate discussions, explore opportunities and work with other partners and interests in implementing the Agricultural Plan.

The following recommendations are meant to provide direction to the Corporation of Delta in implementing the Agricultural Plan. In some instances, Delta will play a lead role, in others a support role. The timeframe (immediate, short, medium and long term) for implementation is identified, along with the priority for action (high, medium, low) in Appendix B. Some recommendations apply to multiple objectives and are listed more than once.

5.1 Objective 1: Improve the Economic Sustainability of Delta Agriculture

By and large, Delta agricultural production has had to be sophisticated and well managed to maintain its financial viability in close proximity to urban areas, as well as respond positively to changing markets and global competition.

The sector faces ongoing change and needs conditions that would support adaptation to new challenges, creating the greatest opportunity to maintain its competitiveness. In Delta, key supportive measures include:

- Agri-industry in support of primary production
- Strategies to reduce costs – water, inputs, taxes
- Improved long term and mutually beneficial coexistence between farms and urban neighbours

⁷Delta Official Community Plan. http://www.corp.delta.bc.ca/assets/CPD/PDF/ocp_draft_20050901.pdf

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- Increased farming efficiencies – adoption of technology in energy, conservation, waste management
 - Streamlined regulatory processes that assist adaptation and innovation in ongoing operations.

5.1.1 Action Area #1: Local Processing and Marketing Options

The role of processing in agricultural food systems is critical to economic viability. Processing is the value-added activity needed to make beneficial use of lower grades of produce, extend the season of supply, and produce and supply healthy food in a less perishable form.

Recommendations

- Participate in implementing the Regional Food Systems Strategy⁸ by working with the Metro Vancouver Agricultural Advisory Committee regionally and coordinating with the Delta AAC locally
- Encourage and facilitate local on-farm processing opportunities with on-farm regulatory processes and requirements that encourage diversification
- Create an economic development initiative for agriculture in Delta, tasked with finding and promoting opportunities for agricultural processing in Delta, identifying new crop opportunities, liaising with agricultural researchers and technology providers, attracting business, and identifying funding and programs
- Investigate the feasibility of attracting processors for local crops by providing financial incentives and serviced locations. Identify and target appropriate scale niche and value chain opportunities presented by the Delta agricultural sector
- Investigate the feasibility of attracting processors using a revitalization tax exemption program bylaw⁹
- Lobby for the incorporation of on-farm value-added as eligible farm income for farm tax assessment purposes.

5.1.2 Action Area #2: High Input Costs

Cost of inputs, exacerbated by high property values and taxation, are one of the biggest concerns of Delta farmers.

Recommendations

- Advocate with Metro Vancouver for regional bulk water rates for agriculture (e.g., Capital Regional District) or otherwise reduce the cost of municipal water to farmers
- Investigate the feasibility of alternative fuel technologies (e.g., cogeneration) to support farm operations and reduce GHG emissions
- Encourage farmer buying groups for inputs (fertilizer, lime, feed, other inputs)
- Advocate for a regional agricultural trust to acquire agricultural land and provide affordable long term leases to farmers

⁸ See the Regional Food Systems Strategy.

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/RegionalFoodSystems/Pages/default.aspx>

⁹ See Ministry of Community Services (2008). Revitalization Tax Exemptions: A Primer on the Provisions of the Community Charter (Victoria: Ministry of Community Services)

www.brownfieldrenewal.gov.bc.ca/docs/community_charter_revital_tax_exemptions.pdf and discussion in Curran, D. and Dr. T. Stobbe. 2010. Local Government Policy Options to Protect Agricultural Land and Improve the Viability of Farming in Metro Vancouver.

http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/agriculture/AgricultureDocs/Local_Government_Policy_Options_to_Protect_Agricultural_Land.pdf

- Lobby senior governments to investigate and research opportunities and create incentives for farmers to reduce GHG emissions
- Lobby the Province to investigate farmstead provisions that would tax agricultural buildings and improvements of bona fide¹⁰ farmers at a lower agricultural rate or provide tax exemptions for farm improvements (e.g., New York State, North Dakota).

5.1.3 Action Area #3: Rural-Urban Interface

Rural-urban interface issues include harassment of normal farming activities, recreational impacts on farmland and farming operations, damages to farm property through theft, trespass and vandalism, and stress created by unwarranted claims by non-farmers against farming practices. These conditions can increase the cost of farming and discourage confidence in the future of the sector.

Recommendations

- Implement OCP policy to adopt BCMA edge planning guidelines for land use planning adjacent to agriculturally zoned lands
- Identify areas where dumping of waste on agricultural lands is occurring, improve frequency of clean-up, and increase bylaw enforcement
- Enforce parking regulations on farm roads (e.g., 88th Street), littering regulations on trails adjacent to farmland (better signage), and traffic regulations, especially speeding on rural roads
- Review and maintain signage and provide education material to recreational users that they are in an agricultural area and that agricultural activities are acceptable
- Require notification/disclosure on property transactions adjacent to agricultural lands that purchasers may expect normal farm practices,¹¹ possibly through a covenant¹²
- Periodically review noise and hunting bylaws to ensure they are not constraining farming

5.1.4 Action Area #4: Appropriate New Technology

Energy generation and waste management are likely to be the two main areas of technology adoption on farms in the near future. Farmers need to be able to take advantage of new opportunities to reduce costs and environmental risks in order to maintain viability.

Recommendations

- Encourage technological solutions that support farms and provide opportunities to locate them on industrial lands near farms to protect farmland
- Assist farmers to navigate the regulatory requirements in pursuing innovative projects (e.g., energy and waste management technologies), on-farm value added and diversification
- Work with farmers to develop technological and land based solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agricultural practices and to make farm business more resilient to future impacts of climate change by investing in adaptation strategies for agriculture.¹³

¹⁰ While there is no current definition of “bona fide farming”, a bona fide farmer would be a farm operator who uses farmland to produce agricultural products with the expectation of profit.

¹¹ In the City of Surrey, for example, at time of development Restrictive Covenants are registered on lots adjacent to the properties designated agricultural to ensure that landscape buffers are completed and maintained. City of Surrey. Residential Buffering Adjacent to the ALR/Agricultural Boundary. <http://www.surrey.ca/files/O23.pdf>

¹² See discussion on disclosure statements or section 219 covenant under the Land Title Act. BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. 2009. Guide to Edge planning: Promoting Compatibility Along Urban-Agricultural Edges. http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/publications/823100-2_Guide_to_Edge_Planning.pdf

¹³ The BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative is a joint project of the BC Agriculture Council and the Investment Agriculture Foundation created to increase industry understanding of the implications of climate

5.1.5 Action Areas #5: Regulatory Constraints and Compliance Costs

Although Delta has a good working relationship with the agricultural sector, nonetheless, regulatory processes for farm-related activities can be complex, daunting and frustrating for farmers. The impact of provincial and federal regulations can limit the full potential of working farms and can be considered by farmers to be excessive constraints on farming.¹⁴

Recommendations

- Support farmers in dealings with federal and provincial agencies, such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment, to ensure that conditions for efficient agriculture are enhanced, and specifically work toward “agriculture-friendly” protocols for ditch and dike maintenance that protect the environment and are timely, reasonable and feasible from an agricultural perspective
- Build agricultural understanding in municipal Hall with agriculturally qualified staff (e.g., professional agrologist), information sessions, tours and dialogue
- Improve enforcement of existing regulations in farming areas including soil filling, storage, waste dumping, and maintenance of agricultural properties, engaging the AAC to assist in spotting violations and problem areas
- Encourage environmental farm planning, the adoption of beneficial management practices, and other environmental initiatives to reduce environmental risks and regulatory compliance costs
- Regularly review and update checklists and guidelines to assist farmers with municipal regulatory processes, encourage pre-application meetings, and conduct site visits to gain understanding of proposed farm improvements where appropriate.

5.2 Objective 2: Enhance the Agricultural Resource Base

The agricultural resource base consists of the natural resources, improvements and infrastructure that allow agriculture to be productive and provide the tools to manage production risk on the farm. Farmers are keen to increase efficiency but without corresponding regional infrastructure, on-farm changes are less effective.

5.2.1 Action Area #6: Drainage and Irrigation

Notwithstanding the benefits anticipated with improvements to irrigation infrastructure related to the Gateway project, significant areas of Delta (e.g., Westham Island) continue to be undersupplied with agricultural irrigation water while other areas are limited by drainage. Where surface irrigation water is available, water quality is a concern. Areas of Delta continue to be challenged by inadequate drainage that also compromises their ability to address salinity concerns.

Recommendations

- Ensure that irrigation works associated with the Gateway Project are fully implemented
- Monitor and report on water quality related to agricultural water needs and use
- Ensure municipal water is accessible to support high valued crops production and on-farm processing

change, respond to and address climate change issues and opportunities, strengthen agriculture’s climate change networks, act as a forum for sharing resources, information and tools, and communicate and collaborate with relevant BC government agencies. <http://www.bcagclimateaction.ca/wp/wp-content/media/BC-Agriculture-Climate-Change-Action-Plan.pdf>

¹⁴ For example, food processing rules and compliances can create excessive costs for small scale on-farm processors, while environmental regulations may constrain the use of farmland for farming purposes.

- Continue to improve agricultural drainage and irrigation
- Update irrigation information to identify other areas where water-related factors continue to be a production constraint and lobby senior governments for financial programs to improve and extend irrigation improvements, such as to southeast Delta and Westham Island.

5.2.2 Action Area #7: Rural Roads, Transportation and Field Access

The transportation system needs to be designed, constructed and managed with agricultural requirements in mind.

Recommendations

- Monitor how major projects such as the Roberts Bank Rail Corridor, Gateway, and the Deltaport affect farm access and address any problems
- Update the Delta Strategic Transportation Plan by taking into account the effects of commuters and population growth on rural traffic congestion, providing continued farmer access to dikes, and including identification of, and strategies to improve accessibility to, hard-to-reach farmland in Delta
- Continue to work with the farming community to explore options to improve agricultural vehicle movement (e.g., through the Highways Bylaw)
- Pursue senior governments for funding for transportation improvement projects in support of agricultural transportation
- Lobby for inter-agency and TSI collaboration to reduce traffic congestion and improve rail crossings affecting farming operations
- Lobby the province for upgrading of the Westham Island Bridge to accommodate increased traffic and larger implements.

5.3 Objective 3: Create Opportunities for Efficiency, Competitiveness, Diversification and New Entrants

A prime consideration in a successful strategy to retain farmland in agricultural uses stems from taking advantage of opportunities to attract innovation and new interest in agriculture. Adaptation of farmers can be supported by creating conditions that facilitate successful change. The farming sector can be assisted through:

- Exposure to new information, ideas and opportunities
- Business skills training in trending markets
- Development of new models for farmland access, new farmer entry, and transfer of agricultural intelligence.

5.3.1 Action Area #8: Smaller Scale Farming and Diversification

Demand for locally produced food has created marketing opportunities for farming enterprises.

Alternative production systems and agri-tourism opportunities are also emerging trends. Innovative farmers entering the local fresh food market may be generally characterized as smaller scale, highly entrepreneurial risk takers but may not be highly skilled in agricultural business or production per se.

Recommendations

- In collaboration with Metro Vancouver, neighbouring municipalities and BCMA, investigate options for providing agrologist services to assist start up farmers and identify funding sources to pursue new business ideas

-
- Undertake a needs assessment for local smaller scale farmers, including strategies for supporting alternative cropping and farming systems (e.g., organic, biodynamic, permaculture) that respond to local and regional niche markets¹⁵
 - Enhance relationships with Delta farmers, secondary and post-secondary education institutions, agricultural academies, ministries and associations to facilitate events and initiatives to provide new/young farmers with training, mentoring, technical expertise, production knowledge, and access to agricultural programs that would promote knowledge transfer and build capacity in smaller scale farming
 - Encourage seminars and workshops on production, niche markets, and business skills¹⁶
 - Explore and support farming models that develop stronger connections between the farming community and the local marketplace and encourage new types of agricultural enterprise, such as community supported agriculture,¹⁷ cooperatives, local food alliances,¹⁸ and community networks.¹⁹
 - Lobby Farm Credit Canada for the development of financial programs to assist low equity start-ups and encourage development of micro-loan programs for smaller scale farming (e.g., Van City Credit Union)
 - Continue to support the Ladner Village Farmers' Market and make it more accessible to farmers
 - Support on-farm internship programs (e.g., Canadian Farm Business Management Council, CRAFT²⁰ Ontario program, WWOOF Canada²¹)
 - Develop streamlined approval and taxation regimes in support of farms pursuing diversification²²
 - Lobby senior governments for the development of family trust legislation to facilitate transfer of farmland between generations.

¹⁵ Alternative farming systems are systems that integrate the beneficial aspects of biological interaction among crop, pests, and their predators into profitable agricultural systems. An example of alternative farming systems support is the US Department of Agriculture Alternative Farming Systems Information Center.

http://afsic.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?tax_level=1&info_center=2

¹⁶ The LMHIA, managed by the BCMA, conducts an annual Grower's Short Course and uses registration and membership funds to conduct research projects benefiting Lower Mainland farmers, publication of Production Guides, and management of the pesticide certificate re-certification program. This organization should be encouraged to develop programs to support innovative farmers.

<http://www.agricultureshow.net/pdf/2011LMHIA.pdf>

In addition, the BC Association of Farmers' Markets offers services to members.

<http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/index.htm>

¹⁷ For example, Intervale Center, Burlington, Vermont is a volunteer non-profit organization based on multi-farm community supported agriculture and various approaches toward mentorship and business incubation.

http://www.intervale.org/programs/agricultural_development/food_hub.shtml

¹⁸ For example, the Meet Your Maker event hosted by Farm Folk/City Folk and Local Food First is an initiative to connect local food producers with chefs, local processors and food buyers.

¹⁹ The Community Futures Network, established in 1986, is a federal program that supports local rural economic opportunities in Canadian communities. In BC, the program offers support to entrepreneurs and facilitates community approaches to economic development. <http://www.communityfutures.ca/index.html>

²⁰ C.R.A.F.T. is a Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training in Ontario focusing on farming internship as a vehicle for promoting ecological farming. <http://www.craftontario.ca/>

²¹ See <http://www.wwoof.ca/>

²² On-farm diversification refers to new enterprises or the addition of value to existing enterprises to create value to both the consumer and the farm business.

5.3.2 Action Area #9: Lease Access to Farmland

Leasing farmland from non-farming landowners is one of the more affordable ways to obtain access to land in high real estate value regions, of which Delta is one. A high proportion of Delta's commercial farming is conducted on rented land (approximately 50% of the farmland base). Leases on farmland are also attractive to new farmers who may not be in a position to tie up large amounts of capital in land assets.

Recommendations

- Investigate incentives to encourage active farmland use, by improving access by aspiring and landless farmers, spurring existing non-farming farmland owners to lease out their land, exploring agricultural trusts, and encouraging longer lease terms
- Assist in creating a website or farmland registry for linking a database of potential tenants to a database of potential landlords²³
- Make municipal and Crown land available for farming under lease to young farmers and new entrants
- Lobby BCMA to develop a clearing house of information on rental terms, leases, agreements and business arrangements, including cooperatives and farm equipment bank models
- Explore new relationships with existing land trusts (e.g., Ducks Unlimited, The Land Conservancy), to increase access to farmland by farmers.

5.3.3 Action Area #10: Non-Farm Use of the ALR

Agriculture competes for farmland with various non-farm uses looking for acreage, pastoral setting, profit on speculation, and spaces to carry on non-farming activities. ALR farmland is highly attractive for rural residential purposes and there is a market for storage of trucks, equipment, and recreational vehicles on farmland. Such uses subvert the intention of the ALR and reduce the area available for farming.

Recommendations

- Support Delta's Bylaw limiting the size of the footprint and siting of residential structures and access in the ALR to conserve farmland for agricultural production
- Improve enforcement of existing regulations in farming areas including soil filling, storage, waste dumping, and maintenance of agricultural properties, engaging the AAC to assist in spotting violations and problem areas
- Explore financial mechanisms to address farmland speculation and deter non-agricultural development on farmland
- Collaborate with the farming sector to develop a vehicle parking and storage policy in the ALR, including options respecting non-agricultural vehicles and enforcement
- Educate rural-residential property owners about normal impacts associated with adjacent agricultural operations and create awareness among realtors and non-agricultural property purchasers of farming activities in the ALR
- Encourage agricultural and other land trusts to make their farmland available to Delta famers without covenants²⁴ that restrict its agricultural use

²³ Several groups are currently working towards setting up a regional database of farmland available for lease, including Farm Folk/City Folk and South Fraser Community Futures.

²⁴ The ALC should be lobbied to provide the municipality with an opportunity to review and comment on any proposed restrictive covenants on ALR farmland in Delta.

- Initiate discussions with the Tsawwassen First Nation toward developing mutually beneficial and supportive agricultural strategies.

5.4 Objective #4: Increase Public Support for Agriculture

People are not always aware of the contribution that agriculture makes to the economy, the quality of life and the amenities that society enjoys. Public support has become increasingly important to agricultural sector objectives as the interests of community, farmland protection, and economic viability of farm operators have become more intertwined.

Agriculture stands to gain from a closer relationship with the public as the importance to community well-being of economically sustainable local food and fibre production becomes more appreciated. This engagement of the public needs to take the form of:

- Communicating the arguments for agricultural support
- Articulating ways the public and the agricultural sector can collaborate to pursue mutually beneficial agricultural objectives
- Identifying actions that stakeholders should take to assist the sector.

5.4.1 Action Area #11: Public Awareness of Local Agriculture

There is opportunity to enlist the support of non-farming residents to enhance the conditions necessary to support agricultural viability in Delta. This may be accomplished by taking steps to engage the public in connecting community welfare with local agriculture and by attuning residents to how the agricultural sector can be supported to achieve desired results

Recommendations

- Build on existing farmer-supported agricultural awareness events such as “Farm Hike by Bike” (Earthwise) or “A Day at the Farm”, Delta Farm Tours, and “Meet Your Maker” events²⁵, work with local tourism/hospitality industry to initiate ‘taste of Delta’ food promotions at Delta restaurants and hotels, and other opportunities for the public to experience local food and agriculture
- Expand the agriculture webpage on Delta’s website, with ‘operation/farmer of the month’ features, ‘fact sheets’, seasonal updates,²⁶ and provide links to resources for residents who want to connect to local agriculture, such as the seasonal Farm Fresh Guide
- Increase information dissemination and communications with the public about mutually beneficial agriculture/wildlife interactions in Delta
- Develop a multi-partner communications plan to engage farm groups e.g. by creating contact lists of farmers and farmers organizations²⁷ willing to educate the public, distributing a “Champions of Farming” speakers list to the Rotary Club, Delta Chamber of Commerce and other groups, encouraging presentations on agricultural issues and to engage the public, (e.g., agricultural awareness events, newspaper coverage, crop information, and farm field identification)

²⁵ This event is sponsored in the Metro Vancouver area by Farm Folk/City Folk and Local Food First.

<http://www.ffcf.bc.ca/meetyourmaker/index.html>

²⁶ Delta residents could be reminded to be patient with farm traffic, avoid parking on access roads to dikes, and to become more attuned to seasonal agricultural activities.

²⁷ These organizations include various associations ranging from commodity groups to COABC and BCAFIM.

- Support and expand opportunities for community gardens/urban agriculture demonstrations to promote agricultural awareness, through additional funding , supportive bylaws and provision of land
- Support educational initiatives including agriculture in the secondary school curriculum (agriculture in the classroom), SRD 4-HD and agriculture forums for municipal staff and politicians, engaging the Delta School District, Fraser Health Authority, and Metro Vancouver to host
- Create an annual municipal bursary fund to support a student studying agriculture or agrology²⁸
- Encourage reports and research that show what the returns to farmers are on agricultural products, where the food dollar goes in the food chain, and the cost of food in relation to other staples in the community
- Continue Delta's kids' garden contest
- Review and expand signage to identify agricultural areas, what is grown in those areas, and indicate respect for farm traffic.²⁹

5.4.2 Action Area #12: Public Awareness and Responsibility for Induced Agricultural Impacts

The demands placed on farmlands include transportation projects, crops as food for wildlife, access for recreational users, and open green space for social amenities. The public is not fully aware of how public initiatives affect agriculture or the impact of the incremental and cumulative effects on the ability to make a livelihood from farming.

Recommendations

- Engage with the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust (DFWT) to promote initiatives to foster public awareness of how farmland sustains wildlife and habitat and to build support for more equitable sharing of the costs of providing ecological goods and services³⁰
- Lobby senior governments for programs to compensate farmers for wildlife crop damage, through participation in federal –provincial waterfowl damage compensation programs
- Lobby the ALC, provincial ministries, BC EAO and CEEA to develop a better framework for addressing loss of land base due to public infrastructure works, transportation projects, land claims, wildlife and fisheries policy, incorporating compensation and mitigation to offset the negative impact on agriculture³¹
- Support research into integrated farm-level strategies to mitigate the potential for damages from waterfowl

²⁸ This bursary would complement scholarships offered by BC Youth in Agriculture and the Delta Agricultural Society.

²⁹ Since 2008, Delta has implemented a crop sign identification program

³⁰ For example, it is not widely known by the public that Delta has contributed \$308,000 to date towards the Delta Wildlife Forage Fund which has contributed to the Delta Wildlife Forage Compensation Program, Grassland Set-aside program and Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust.

³¹ An example for agriculture may be MOEN. 2010. Towards an Environmental Mitigation and Offsetting Policy for British Columbia: Discussion Paper. http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/emop/docs/EMOP_DiscussionPaper.pdf. This approach would provide expectations about how agricultural impacts are addressed.

- Advocate with Metro Vancouver to establish a program to compensate farmers for ecological goods and services that agricultural land provides (e.g. creating a regional levy)³²
- Work with environmental agencies to develop effective ways of managing agriculturally sustainable wildlife populations
- Lobby senior governments for waterfowl Beneficial Management Practices under the Environmental Farm Plan program.

5.4.3 Action Area #13: Institutional Support for Agriculture

More public participation is needed to change the current model of agricultural support from reactive crisis management approaches to pro-active actions involving the community in sustainable solutions. This would involve public recognition of local agriculture's beneficial role, understanding of the need for support to sustain these benefits, and acceptance that these values should be contributed to support agriculture.

Recommendations

- Work with Metro Vancouver and other lower Mainland municipalities to investigate the feasibility of regional branding for agricultural products, developing a “buy regional” policy for local governments, and engaging businesses, schools, government agencies, and institutions to participate
- Pursue opportunities to re-instate on-farm field trials function, specifically in relation to crops grown in Delta and responses to cope with impending climate change
- Lobby the province for a re-instatement of the “Buy BC” program
- Explore on-farm carbon tax and sequestration responses that would provide economic benefits to farming.

³² An example is the East Kootenay Conservation Program, where several conservation-minded agencies and the Regional District are funding environmental projects that assist agriculture in providing ecological goods and services. http://www.ekcp.ca/Downloads/eNews/EKCP_May2011.htm

6.0 Implementation Plan

The implementation of the Agricultural Plan will require the coordination of various agencies in order to address the key objectives. The recommended actions will be initiated through the actions of a lead implementing agency and support agencies, with jurisdiction, responsibility or interest in the relevant area. Each action is correlated with a suggested timeline and proposed actions. This information is presented in Table 1: Summary of Delta High Priority Recommended Actions and Timeline and Appendix B.

Table 1 summarizes actions considered to have the highest priority at the outset of the Plan. These priorities have been developed from consultations in the sector and in consultation with the AAC. The proposed initiatives could require different types of Corporation action depending on the jurisdiction, scope of the issue, and scale of the recommendations, as follows:

- Continuation of Delta-initiated ongoing actions that support the Agricultural Plan
- Recommendations to initiate actions in areas Delta is not currently or minimally involved in
- Recommendations to partner and collaborate with other agencies with respect to various initiatives, such as:
 - Metro Vancouver
 - Implementation of the Regional Food System Strategy
 - Regional Agricultural Trust
 - Ecological Goods and Services levy
 - Bulk agricultural water rates
 - Enforcement of recreation dike use in agricultural areas
 - Regional dialogue on agriculture
 - Agricultural Land Commission
 - Enforcement of land use regulations in the ALR
 - Delta School District
 - School programs engaging students and families in food knowledge and agricultural awareness
 - Delta Chamber of Commerce
 - Agricultural business attraction and retention
- Recommendations to support, lobby, advocate for, and encourage actions by other lead agencies, such as:
 - BC Government
 - Smaller scale farming needs assessment
 - Development of standards to limit non-farm use of the ALR (e.g., BCMA, ALC)
 - Buy BC program
 - Pilot projects to test alternative energy and waste management technologies on farms
 - Modification of farmland assessment to encourage farming and discourage rural estates and idle farmland
 - Developing greenhouse gas emission and carbon sequestration economic opportunities for agriculture
 - Development of provincial impact assessment guidelines and mitigations respecting farmland

- Federal Government
 - Collaboration on guidelines and regulatory processes affecting farmland use
 - Changes to inheritance rules to lessen tax implications of farm succession on sibling to sibling and extended family transfers
 - Development of federal impact assessment guidelines and mitigations respecting farmland

Appendix Table B presents a detailed description of all the recommended actions, implementing agencies, time lines and priorities for action. The time lines are suggestions for starting a recommended action. Section 5 provides additional context to the recommended actions.

Table 1: Highest Priority Recommended Actions for Implementing the Delta Agricultural Plan

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
Actions for Delta as Lead			
1	Lead: Delta Support: DCOC, DFI, BCMA, AAFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an economic development initiative for agriculture in Delta, tasked with finding and promoting opportunities for agricultural processing in Delta, identifying new crop opportunities, liaising with agricultural researchers and technology providers, attracting business, and identifying funding and programs (section 5.1.1, p. 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate discussions with the DCOC Meet with DFI to identify agricultural needs and identify potential opportunities
2	Lead: Delta Support: DFI, BC Fresh, DCOC, BCFPA, SSFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the feasibility of attracting processors for local crops by providing financial incentives and serviced locations. Identify and target appropriate scale niche and value chain opportunities presented by the Delta agricultural sector (section 5.1.1, p. 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with DFI, BC Fresh, to identify agricultural needs and opportunities Initiate discussions with the DCOC to identify constraints
3	Lead: Delta Support: DFI, Metro Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate with Metro Vancouver for regional bulk water rates for agriculture or otherwise reduce the cost of municipal water to farmers (section 5.1.2, p. 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate discussions with Metro Vancouver to set bulk water rates for agriculture Review municipal water delivery options Continue to work with farmers to identify opportunities for water conservation
4	Lead: Delta Support: DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support farmers in dealings with federal and provincial agencies, such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment, to ensure that conditions for efficient agriculture are enhanced, and specifically work toward “agriculture-friendly” protocols for ditch and dike maintenance that protect the environment and are timely, reasonable and feasible from an agricultural perspective (section 5.1.5, p. 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and collaborate with DFI to develop an understanding of local agricultural concerns relating to environmental agencies Work with the UBCM to represent agriculture and environment issues in Delta to the provincial Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
5	Lead: Delta Support: AAC, DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review and update checklists and guidelines to assist farmers with municipal regulatory processes, encourage pre-application meetings, and conduct site visits to gain understanding of proposed farm improvements where appropriate (section 5.1.5, p. 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with AAC to identify regulatory issues and potential solutions
6	Lead: Delta Support: AAC, DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and report on water quality related to agricultural water needs and use (section 5.2.1, p. 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create agricultural water quality monitoring and reporting program near industrial areas (Tilbury, TFN and airport) and perimeter ditches Continue to test salinity of irrigation water Identify with the AAC other contaminants of concern for testing
7	Lead: Delta Support: Metro Vancouver, BCMA, DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure municipal water is accessible to support high valued crops production and on-farm processing (section 5.2.1, p. 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Metro Vancouver and BCMA on the regional water model
8	Lead: Delta Support: DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve agricultural drainage and irrigation (section 5.2.1, p. 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate agricultural drainage and servicing issues
9	Lead: Delta Support: DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Delta Strategic Transportation Plan by taking into account the effects of commuters and population growth on rural traffic congestion, providing continued farmer access to dikes, and including identification of, and strategies to improve accessibility to, hard-to-reach farmland in Delta (section 5.2.2, p. 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate site-specific infrastructure gaps Plan to alleviate deficiencies
10	Lead: Delta Support: DFI, DFWT, BCMA, Metro Vancouver, BCAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the agriculture webpage on Delta's website, with 'farmer of the month' features, 'fact sheets', seasonal updates, and provide links to resources for residents who want to connect to local agriculture, such as the seasonal Farm Fresh Guide (section 5.4.1, p. 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage farm groups to gauge interest and to identify participants who will provide information Develop business plan to identify funding mechanism, target audience and system maintenance
11	Lead: Delta Support: NGOs, SFCF, KPU, AAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and expand opportunities for community gardens/urban agriculture demonstrations to promote agricultural awareness, through additional funding, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage community groups to determine needs Explore feasibility of encouraging community

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
		supportive bylaws and provision of land (section 5.4.1, p. 12)	gardens in BCH rights-of-way by providing access to water supply
12	Lead: Delta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an annual municipal bursary fund to support a student studying agriculture or agrology (section 5.4.1, p. 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the bursary

Actions for Delta with Partners

13	Lead: Delta, DFI Support: Metro Vancouver, AAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in implementing the Regional Food Systems Strategy by working with the Metro Vancouver Agricultural Advisory Committee regionally and coordinating with the Delta AAC locally (section 5.1.1, p. 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Delta farmers to champion Delta's Agricultural Plan at the regional level Identify actions in the RFSS that Delta can pursue at a local level
14	Lead: Delta, ALC Support: BCMA, Metro Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist farmers to navigate the regulatory requirements in pursuing innovative projects (e.g., energy and waste management technologies), on-farm value added and diversification (section 5.1.4, p. 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with AAC to identify technologies, regulatory issues and potential solutions
15	Lead: Delta, Province, Canada Support: DFI, AAC, BCMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update irrigation information to identify other areas where water-related factors continue to be a production constraint and lobby for financial programs to improve and extend irrigation improvements, to areas such as southeast Delta and Westham Island (section 5.2.1, p. 9). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate outstanding agricultural irrigation and servicing needs Review ALUI conducted in Delta by BCMA
16	Lead: Delta, Metro Vancouver, Other municipalities Support: BCMA, DFI, FVFDMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with Metro Vancouver, neighbouring municipalities and BC Ministry of Agriculture, investigate options for providing agrologist services to assist start up farmers and in identifying funding sources to pursue new business ideas (section 5.3.1, p. 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate to determine specific needs Coordinate delivery with Metro Vancouver, BCMA and neighbouring municipalities
17	Lead: Delta, ALC Support: DFI, AAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve enforcement of existing regulations in farming areas including soil filling, storage, waste dumping, and maintenance of agricultural properties, engaging the AAC to assist in spotting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue review with DFI and ALC Engage the AAC to assist in spotting violations and problem areas

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
		violations and problem areas (section 5.3.3, p. 11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicate staff to carry out functions
18	Lead: Delta, DFI, FVDFMA Support: BCMA, BCATA, COABC, BCAFAM, EWS, Commodity Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a multi-partner communication plan to engage farm groups, e.g., by creating contact lists of farmers willing to educate the public, distributing a “Champions of Farming” speakers list to the Rotary Club, Delta Chamber of Commerce and other groups, encouraging presentations on agricultural issues, and to engage the public (e.g., including agricultural awareness events, newspaper coverage, crop information, and farm field identification) (section 5.4.1, p. 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage partners to investigate and determine specific needs and delivery model Coordinate delivery with support groups Encourage newspapers to increase coverage of agricultural stories Consider putting local food supply information on the Delta website
19	Lead: Delta, Metro Vancouver, DSD, FHA Support: DFI, FVDFMA, BCAC, PIBC, Agriculture in the Classroom, SRD4-HD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support educational initiatives including agriculture in the secondary school curriculum (agriculture in the classroom), Surrey Richmond Delta 4-H District and agriculture forums for municipal staff and politicians, engaging the Delta School District, Fraser Health Authority, professional associations, and Metro Vancouver to host (section 5.4.1, p. 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with Metro Vancouver, municipalities, and institutions, deliver educational workshops Engage MOED and DSD to use current BCAC resources Work with Metro Vancouver to generate momentum for the RFSS
20	Lead: Delta, DFWT Support: DFI, AAC, DU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust to promote initiatives to foster public awareness of how farmland sustains wildlife and habitat and to build support for more equitable sharing of the costs of providing ecological goods and services (section 5.4.2, p 13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support agriculture municipally through DFWT, Ducks Unlimited, and DFI Support farmers by educating the public and fostering public awareness of the benefits of farming Advocate with Metro Vancouver to assess an agricultural levy on taxpayers to be used to support local farmers Apply for IAF funding to pursue a pilot project Investigate appropriate new initiatives

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
21	Lead: Delta, Metro Vancouver, Other municipalities Support: BCAC, BCMA, BCFPA, SSFPA, DCOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Metro Vancouver and other lower Mainland municipalities to investigate the feasibility of regional branding for agricultural products, developing a “buy regional” policy for local governments, engaging businesses, schools, government agencies, and institutions to participate (section 5.4.3, p. 13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under take feasibility study Engage farmers, government and industry to participate
Actions Lead by Other Agencies			
22	Lead: BCMA Support: Delta, BCAC, ALC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with farmers to develop technological and land based solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agricultural practices and to make farm business more resilient to future impacts of climate change by investing in adaptation strategies for agriculture.(section 5.1.4, p. 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate research to assess climate change issues and options for agriculture Identify ways agriculture can benefit from climate change solutions Support the Climate Change Initiative to promote on-farm adaptation
23	Lead: BCMA, BCATA, Community Futures, NGOs, KPU, UBC, COABC, BCAF Support: FVDFMA, DFI, Delta, LMHIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance relationships with Delta farmers, secondary and post-secondary education institutions, agricultural academies, ministries and associations to facilitate events and initiatives to provide new/young farmers with training, mentoring, technical expertise, production knowledge, and access to agricultural programs that would promote knowledge transfer and build capacity in smaller scale farming (section 5.3.1, p. 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby BCMA to investigate needs of new/young farmers Collaborate with stakeholders to provide venues for programs Access programs offering assistance in these areas Investigate opportunities to work with post secondary institutions
24	Lead: BCMA, FF/CF, NGOs, FVFDMA, BCAF, COABC, Commodity Associations Land Trusts Support: DFI, Delta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore and support farming models that develop stronger connections between the farming community and the local marketplace and encourage new agricultural enterprise, such as community supported agriculture, cooperatives, local food alliances, and community networks (section 5.3.1, p. 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage potential partners, such as NGOs, Land Trusts, community agriculture groups, and direct farm marketers to assess interest

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
25	Lead: BCAA Support: Delta, DFI, TLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate incentives to encourage active farmland use, by improving access by aspiring and landless farmers, spurring existing non-farming farmland owners to lease out their land, exploring agricultural trusts, and encouraging longer lease terms (section 5.3.2, p. 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby BCAA to develop assessment policy to encourage farming Collaborate with aspiring farmers to identify access issues
26	Lead: BCAA, BCMA, ALC Support: Delta, BCAC, UBCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore financial mechanisms to address farmland speculation and deter non-agricultural development on farmland (section 5.3.3, p. 11) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for an investigation of mechanisms for relieving speculative pressure on Delta farmland
27	Lead: FVFDMA, BCATA, BCAF M Support: Delta, Chef Associations, NGOs, FF/CF, LFF, EWS, COABC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on existing farmer supported agricultural awareness events such as “Farm Hike by Bike” or “A Day at the Farm”, Delta Farm Tours, and “Meet Your Maker” events, work with local tourism/hospitality industry to initiate ‘taste of Delta’ food promotions at Delta restaurants and hotels, and other opportunities for the public to experience local food and agriculture (section 5.4.1, p. 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage stakeholders to assess appetite for a coordinated public awareness initiative
28	Lead: BCMA, AAFC, Agricultural Academies Support: Delta, BCAC, Commodity Associations, DFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage reports and research that show what the returns to farmers are on agricultural products, where the food dollar goes in the food chain, and the cost of food in relation to other staples in the community (section 5.4.1, p. 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby BCMA, AAFC, and agricultural academies to conduct research on these topics

Item	Implementing Agency (1)	Recommended Action	How to Get Started
29	Lead: ALC Support: BCMA, BCAC, Delta, AAFC, Metro Vancouver, UBCM, AAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby the ALC, provincial ministries, BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) to develop a better accounting perspective for agencies to protect farmland and avert the loss of agricultural land base to public infrastructure works, transportation projects, land claims, wildlife and fisheries policy, incorporating as a last resort enhancement, compensation and mitigation to offset negative impacts on agriculture (section 5.4.2, p. 13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request ALC to undertake review of mechanisms, such as fish and wildlife mitigation, compensation and enhancement, to protect agriculture from project impacts • Initiate discussions with EAO and CEAA to develop appropriate agricultural compensation policies and review processes • Involve responsible ministries (e.g., MOEN) and agencies (e.g., DFO) whose interests are also affected by farmland impacts • Advocate with UBCM to make agriculture a provincial priority

(1) See List of Acronyms on page viii.

7.0 Agricultural Plan Performance Indicators

The number of high priority recommended action in the Agricultural plan indicates a busy slate of activities in support of agriculture. It is suggested that more specific performance indicators be selected once an implementation schedule has been decided. Clearly, performance indicators should be selected carefully for each action area to take advantage of data that is already collected or easily available. The following indicators are proposed as examples of ways to measure the progress of the implementation of the Agriculture Plan over the next five years.

7.1 Improve the Economic Sustainability of Delta Agriculture

- Agricultural economic initiative developed that promotes processing capacity as a component of agricultural viability in Delta
- Addition of local crop processors
- More enterprises doing on-farm value adding (number of business licenses and/or building permit applications)
- Farmers are provided tax relief through modifications in farm improvements taxation
- Farm water costs are moderated through targeted actions
- More acreage in DFWT programs
- More farmers are adopting alternative fuel technologies
- BCMA edge planning guidelines have been adopted.

7.2 Enhance the Agricultural Resource Base

- Drainage and irrigation improvements are underway
- Agricultural transportation addressed as part of the Strategic Transportation Plan update and implemented
- Transportation improvements for farmers are underway
- Change in the amount of land with farm tax assessment status in Delta.

7.3 Create Opportunities for Efficiency, Competitiveness, Diversification and New Entrants

- More idle agricultural land is leased to farmers
- Database of farm land leasing opportunities is operational
- More farmers in small farm categories
- Increasing gross farm receipts in small farm categories
- Delta has helped to facilitate workshops on branding, niche markets, local processing and mentoring opportunities for new farmers
- Farmers Market is functioning well, with an expanded season, more participants, and more marketing by local farmers.

7.4 Increase Public Support for Agriculture

- Public land made available for community agricultural initiatives
- Community supported agricultural celebrations and festivals
- More residents involved in home gardening, allotment gardening
- More schools are incorporating agriculture in their curricula
- More land area used in allotment and community gardening in Delta

- Expanded web site promoting local agriculture
- More local products available in local food stores.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Delta Agricultural Policies in the Official Community Plan

Delta's OCP agricultural policies include:

- 2.5.1 Recognize farming as the primary use of agricultural land.
- 2.5.2 Maintain the parcel size of Delta's agricultural land and encourage consolidation of agricultural parcels to increase parcel size, rather than fragmentation of agricultural lands.
- 2.5.3 Support initiatives that reinforce farm use of agricultural land and the continued development of a viable agricultural industry.
- 2.5.4 Use Agriculture Impact Assessments to quantify the impacts of a proposed development, rezoning subdivision or non-farm use on the ALR, farmed lands or lands adjacent to farmed lands. Require mitigation for possible impacts.
- 2.5.5 Consider alternate nonagricultural sites when recreational, institutional, industrial, commercial uses or utility facilities are proposed for agricultural areas.
- 2.5.6 Continue to work with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and other appropriate stakeholders and organizations to determine the maximum threshold for greenhouses and other non-soil dependent farming operations that preserves a critical mass of land for soil-based agriculture.
- 2.5.7 Encourage non-soil dependent farm operations to locate in areas of poorer soils and minimize the impacts of these operations (e.g. air and light pollution).
- 2.5.8 Encourage farmers to undertake the highest standard of management practices for activities that may result in noise, dust, smell, light or other nuisances, particularly if located near the urban boundary.
- 2.5.9 Undertake a public awareness program to inform non-farm residents about normal farm practices and urban activities that may result in difficulties for farmers.
- 2.5.10 Consider urban-rural edge planning initiatives, such as Development Permit Guidelines for the urban side.
- 2.5.11 Support economic diversification initiatives accessory to and compatible with farming that add value to locally produced farm products.
- 2.5.12 Work with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and other farm stakeholders to determine and encourage appropriate economic diversification initiatives.
- 2.5.13 Ensure agricultural processing industries that locate in agricultural areas are consistent with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission legislation, regulations or policies.
- 2.5.14 Encourage businesses that support and service farming to locate in Delta
- 2.5.15 Develop zoning regulations that minimize the negative impacts of dwellings on farmland and locate them to minimize servicing costs and promote clustering.
- 2.5.16 Ensure additional farm houses are necessary for farm use or retired farmers, as permitted in Agricultural Land Commission legislation, regulations, or policies.
- 2.5.17 Consider incentives that encourage the preservation of heritage buildings on the same site.
- 2.5.18 Encourage cooperative decision making for agricultural-environmental issues. Encourage initiatives, including best management practices, which support both farming and wildlife, protect against soil erosion and degradation, and maintain water quality and hydrological functions on agricultural land.
- 2.5.19 Support and if appropriate participate in studies to determine the impacts of greenhouses and other agricultural and non-agricultural development on the Pacific Flyway, and study the impacts of waterfowl on agricultural lands

- 2.5.20 Recognize and protect environmentally significant areas of farmland, including hedgerows, stands of trees, old fields, watercourses and other sensitive areas.
- 2.5.21 Continue to support programs that mitigate and compensate for crop damage from migratory birds and on-farm stewardship activities such as set-asides, and hedgerows.
- 2.5.22 Minimize the negative impacts on farming and wildlife habitat when new agri-tourism, transportation and utility corridors, regional recreational opportunities and other economic initiatives are being developed.
- 2.5.23 Encourage farmers to prepare Best Management Practice Plans and Environmental Farm Plans.
- 2.5.24 Encourage other levels of government and non-government agencies to implement habitat initiatives on agricultural land in cooperation with farmers.
- 2.5.25 Work with the GVRD, user groups, and stakeholders to educate recreational users of private property rights, the implications of trespassing on farmland, nuisance activities for farming, and security concerns of the farm community.
- 2.5.26 Support planning initiatives that minimize conflicts between recreational and farm users.
- 2.5.27 Encourage the equestrian community and commercial stables to provide training and other initiatives for horse riders using public roads to reduce possible conflict with farm and non-farm vehicles.
- 2.5.28 Consider updating the Delta Rural Land Use Study (1994).
- 2.5.29 Continue efforts to provide up-to-date agricultural regulations that support farming in Delta.
- 2.5.30 Support efforts to coordinate federal, provincial and municipal agricultural regulations.

Appendix B: Summary of Recommended Actions, Implementing Agencies, Priority for Action, and Suggested Timeline

Timeline for Starting Action: Ongoing = continue; Immediate = within 1 year; Short = 1- 2 years; Medium = 2 – 5 years; Long = 5-10 years

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
Objective 1: Improve the Economic Sustainability of Delta Agriculture						
1.1 Local Processing and Marketing Options (section 5.1.1, p. 7)	Loss of local processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers are facing reduced cropping options • Cropping rotations are disrupted • Absence of a market for second quality produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in implementing the Regional Food Systems Strategy by working with the Metro Vancouver Agricultural Advisory Committee regionally and coordinating with the Delta AAC locally • Encourage and facilitate local on-farm processing opportunities with regulatory processes and requirements that encourage diversification • Create an economic development initiative for agriculture in Delta, tasked with finding and promoting opportunities for agricultural processing in Delta, identifying new crop opportunities, liaising with agricultural researchers and technology providers, attracting business, and identifying funding and programs • Investigate the feasibility of attracting processors for local crops by providing, financial incentives and serviced locations. Identify and target appropriate scale niche and value chain opportunities presented by the Delta agricultural sector • Investigate the feasibility of attracting processors using a revitalization tax exemption program bylaw • Lobby for the incorporation of on-farm value-added as eligible farm income for farm tax assessment purposes 	Lead: Delta, DFI Support: Metro Vancouver, AAC	High	Ongoing
				Lead: Delta, ALC Support: CFIA, BCFPA, SSFPA , BCMA	High	Ongoing
				Lead: Delta Support: DCOC, DFI, BCMA, AAFC	High	Immediate
				Lead: Delta Support: DFI, BC Fresh, DCOC, BCFPA, SSFPA	High	Medium
				Lead: Delta	High	Medium
				Lead: BCAA	Medium	Short
1.2 High Input Costs (section 5.1.2, p. 7)	Taxation and water are significant input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High land and building values are increasing fixed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate with Metro Vancouver for regional bulk water rates for agriculture (e.g., Capital Regional District) or otherwise reduce the cost of municipal water to farmers 	Lead: Delta Support: Metro Vancouver, DFI	High	Immediate

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
	costs	costs of farming • Delta farmers losing competitive position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the feasibility of alternative fuel technologies (e.g., cogeneration) to support farm operations and reduce GHG emissions • Encourage farmer buying groups for inputs (fertilizer, feed, other inputs) • Advocate for a regional agricultural trust to acquire farmland and provide affordable long term leases to farmers • Lobby senior governments to investigate and research opportunities and create incentives for farmers to reduce GHG emissions • Lobby the province to investigate farmstead provisions that would tax agricultural buildings and improvements of bona fide farmers at a lower agricultural rate or provide tax exemption (e.g., New York State, North Dakota) 	Lead: BCMA, AAFC Support: Delta, ALC	High	Short
				Lead: DFI	High	Short
				Lead: TLC Support: Delta, Metro Vancouver	Medium	Medium
				Lead: Province, Canada Support: Delta, Metro Vancouver, BCAC, BCMA, ALC	Medium	Medium
				Lead: BCAC, BCAA Support: Delta	Low	Long
1.3 Rural-Urban Interface (section 5.1.3, p. 8).	Rural activities are under constant scrutiny of the non-farming public The rural urban fringe can be a source of land use conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming activities need to be protected from unsubstantiated claims • Policies need to protect farmers from unwarranted conflicts with non-farming residents on the fringe and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement OCP policy to adopt BCMA edge planning guidelines for land use planning adjacent to agriculturally zoned lands • Identify areas where dumping of waste on agricultural lands is occurring, improve frequency of clean-up, and increase bylaw enforcement • Enforce parking regulations on farm roads (e.g., 88th Street), littering regulations on trails adjacent to farmland (better signage), and traffic regulations, especially speeding on rural roads • Review and maintain signage and provide education material to recreational users that they are in an agricultural area and that agricultural activities are acceptable 	Lead: Delta Lead: Delta Support: AAC, DFI Lead: Delta Lead: Delta, Metro Vancouver	High Medium Medium Medium	Ongoing Immediate Immediate Short

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
		within the ALR • Management of recreational conflicts	• Require notification/disclosure on property transactions adjacent to agricultural lands that purchasers may expect normal farm practices, ³³ possibly through a covenant • Periodically review noise and hunting bylaws to ensure they are not constraining farming	Lead: Delta	Medium	Short
1.4 Appropriate New Technology (section 5.1.4, p. 8).	Farm operators need to intensify operations and adopt technology innovations to stay competitive	• Policies to permit new on-farm technologies in support of viability are not developed • On-farm intensification may affect adjacent farms • Farmers must adapt practices to respond to climate change	• Encourage technological solutions that support farms to locate on industrial lands near farms to protect farmland • Assist farmers to navigate the regulatory requirements in pursuing innovative projects (e.g., energy and waste management technologies), on-farm value added and diversification • Work with farmers to develop technological and land based solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agricultural practices and to make farm business more resilient to future impacts of climate change by investing in adaptation strategies for agriculture	Lead: Delta Lead: ALC, Delta Support: BCMA, Metro Vancouver Lead: BCMA Support: Delta, BCAC, ALC	High High High	Short Long Long
1.5 Regulatory Constraints and Compliance Costs (section 5.1.5, p. 9).	Federal and provincial agencies (administrative tribunals) are making decisions about the use of the ALR Municipal and Provincial approval	• Approval processes can be lengthy and costly • Environmental regulations can affect farming operations • Administrative decisions (e.g., FIRB)	• Support farmers in dealings with federal and provincial agencies, such as Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment, to ensure that conditions for efficient agriculture are enhanced, and specifically work towards "agriculture-friendly" protocols for ditch and dike maintenance that protect the environment and are timely, reasonable and feasible from an agricultural perspective • Build agricultural understanding in City Hall with agriculturally qualified staff (e.g., professional agrologist), information sessions, tours and dialogue	Lead: Delta Support: DFI Lead: Delta Support: DFWT, AAC	High High	On-going Immediate

³³ In the City of Surrey, for example, at time of development Restrictive Covenants are registered on lots adjacent to the agricultural designation to ensure that landscape buffers are completed and maintained. City of Surrey. Residential Buffering Adjacent to the ALR/Agricultural Boundary. <http://www.surrey.ca/files/O23.pdf>

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
	processes for farm-related activities can be complex	can affect farmland use and impact future agricultural production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve enforcement of existing regulations in farming areas including soil filling, storage, waste dumping, and maintenance of agricultural properties, engaging the AAC to assist in spotting violations and problem areas • Encourage environmental planning, the adoption of beneficial management practices, and other environmental initiatives to reduce environmental risks and regulatory compliance costs • Regularly review and update checklists and guidelines to assist farmers with municipal regulatory processes, encourage pre-application meetings and conduct site visits to gain understanding of proposed farm improvements where appropriate. 	Lead: Delta, ALC Support: AAC, DFI	High	Immediate
				Lead: ARDCORP Support: Delta, BCAC	High	Immediate
				Lead: Delta Support: AAC, DFI	Medium	Ongoing

Objective 2: Enhance the Agricultural Resource Base

2.1 Drainage and Irrigation in the ALR (section 5.2.1, p. 10)	Improved agricultural irrigation works are being constructed as compensation to agriculture in association with the Gateway project Areas of Delta continue to be under supplied with agricultural irrigation water Irrigation ditches in some areas of Delta are also used as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of operating the improved irrigation project is not part of the compensation • Irrigation infrastructure does not meet irrigation demand in Westham Island and other pockets of farmland • Irrigation water salinity concerns • Quality of storm water from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that irrigation works associated with the Gateway Project are fully implemented • Monitor and report on water quality related to agricultural water needs and use • Ensure municipal water is accessible to support high valued crops production and on-farm processing • Continue to improve agricultural drainage and irrigation • Update irrigation information to identify other areas where water-related factors continue to be a production constraint and lobby for financial programs to improve and extend irrigation 	Lead: Delta Support: DFI, AAC	High	Ongoing
				Lead: Delta Support: AAC, DFI	High	Ongoing
				Lead: Delta Support: Metro Vancouver, BCMA, DFI	High	On-going
				Lead: Delta Support: DFI	High	Immediate
				Lead: Delta, Province, Canada Support: DFI, AAC, BCMA	High	Short

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
	drainage ditches for other uses	industrial areas (e.g., Tilbury, TFN, airport) • Agricultural waste and garbage in ditches	improvements, such as to southeast Delta and Westham Island			
2.2 Rural Roads, Transportation and Field Access (section 5.2.2, p. 10)	Traffic bottlenecks make agricultural movement difficult Corridors between farms are managed without agricultural access in mind	• Some Delta farmland is inaccessible to conventional agricultural machinery and equipment • Access to dikes and back roads by agricultural operators is limited by narrow gates • Road safety on many routes • Speed bumps creating damage to transported produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor how major projects such as the Roberts Bank Rail Corridor, Gateway, and the Deltaport affect farm access and address any problems • Update the Delta Strategic Transportation Plan by taking into account the effects of commuters and population growth on rural traffic congestion, providing continued farmer access to dikes, and including identification of, and strategies to improve accessibility to, hard-to-reach farmland in Delta • Continue to work with the farming community to explore options to improve agricultural vehicle movement (e.g., through the Highways Bylaw) • Pursue senior governments for funding for transportation improvement projects in support of agricultural transportation • Lobby for inter-agency and TSI collaboration to reduce traffic congestion and improve rail crossings affecting farming operations • Lobby the province for upgrading of the Westham Island Bridge to accommodate increased traffic and larger implements 	Lead: VPA, Province, Delta Support: AAC, BCMA, ALC	High	Ongoing
				Lead: Delta Support: DFI	High	Immediate
				Lead: Delta Support: DFI	High	Short
				Lead: BCMA, AAFC Support: Delta, UBCM	High	Long
				Lead : TSI, DPTLC, VPA, DFI, MOTI Support: Delta	Medium	Medium
				Lead: MOTI Support: Delta, DFI	Medium	Long
Objective 3: Create Opportunities for Efficiency, Competitiveness, Diversification and New Entrants						
3.1 Smaller Scale Farmers and Diversification (section 5.3.1, p. 1)	Smaller scale farmers are finding niche opportunities targeting local	• Difficulty in finding land to operate on • Land costs are	• In collaboration with Metro Vancouver, neighbouring municipalities and the BC Ministry of Agriculture, investigate options for providing agrologist services to assist start up farmers and in identifying funding sources to pursue new	Lead: Delta, Metro Vancouver, Other municipalities Support: BCMA, DFI,	High	Short

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
9)	produce and processing markets Diversification opportunities are arising	prohibitive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills of operators may be low• Marketing is challenging• Diversification should support local farming• Treatment of smaller scale, value-added, and agritourism operations may not be consistent with their status as accepted agricultural land uses	<p>business ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a needs assessment for local smaller scale farmers including strategies for supporting alternative cropping and farming systems (e.g. organic, biodynamic, permiculture) that respond to local and regional niche markets. • Enhance relationships with Delta farmers, secondary and post-secondary education institutions, agricultural academies, ministries and associations to facilitate events and initiatives to provide new/young farmers with training, mentoring, technical expertise, production knowledge, and access to agricultural programs that would promote knowledge transfer and build capacity in smaller scale farming • Encourage seminars and workshops on production, niche markets, business skills • Explore and support farming models that develop stronger connections between the farming community and the local marketplace and encourage new agricultural enterprise, such as community supported agriculture, cooperatives, local food alliances, and community networks • Lobby Farm Credit Canada for the development of financial programs to assist low equity start-ups and encourage development of micro-loan programs for smaller scale farming (e.g., Van City Credit Union) • Continue to support the Ladner Village Farmers' Market and make it more accessible to farmers • Support on-farm internship programs (e.g., Canadian Farm Business Management Council, Ontario CRAFT program, WWOOF Canada) • Develop a streamlined approval and taxation regimes in support 	FVFDMA Lead: BCMA Support: Delta Lead: BCMA, BCATA, NGOs, Community Futures, NGO's, KPU, UBC, COABC, BCAFAM Support: FVDFMA, DFI, Delta, LMHIA Lead: BCMA, SSFPA, BCFPA Support: Delta, DFI, FVFDMA Lead: BCMA, FF/CF, FVFDMA, BCAFAM, COABC, Commodity Associations, Land Trusts Support: DFI, Delta Lead: AAFC, FCC, BCMA, Support: Delta, Metro Vancouver Lead: Delta, DFI, Ladner Village Farmers' Market Lead: DFI Support: Delta Lead: ALC, BCAA,	High High High High High Medium Medium Medium	Short Short Short Short Short Ongoing Short Medium

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
			of farms pursuing diversification	Support: Delta, BCMA, BCAC		
			• Lobby senior governments for the development of family trust legislation to facilitate transfer of farmland between generations	Lead: CRA, AAFC Support: Delta, UBCM, BCAC	Medium	Long
3.2 Lease Access to Farmland (section 5.3.2, p. 11)	Land is not available for leases for farming Non-farmers are restricting land lease to low intensity agriculture uses Farmland is being maintained in an unimproved capability	• Farm tax status is not a sufficient inducement to allow farming • Non-farmers may be more interested in farm tax status than in facilitating agriculture • Farmers on short leases are discouraged from making improvements to the land	• Investigate incentives to encourage active farmland use, by improving access by aspiring and landless farmers, spurring existing non-farming farmland owners to lease out their land, exploring agricultural trusts, and encouraging longer term leases • Assist in creating a website or farmland registry for linking a database of potential tenants to a database of potential landlords • Make municipal and Crown land available for farming under lease to young farmers and new entrants • Lobby BCMA to develop a clearing house of information on rental terms, leases, agreements and business arrangements, including cooperatives and farm equipment bank models • Explore new relationships with existing land trusts (e.g., Ducks Unlimited, The Land Conservancy), to increase access to farmland by farmers	Lead: BCAA Support: Delta, DFI, TLC Lead: FVFDMA, BCATA, FF/CF, SFCF Support: BCMA, DFI, Delta Lead: Delta, MOEN, Metro Vancouver Lead: BCMA Support: Delta, BCAC, DFI Lead: DU, TLC, NGOs, Support: Delta	High High High Medium	Short Short Short Medium
3.3 Non-Farm Use of the ALR (section 5.3.3, p. 12)	Farmland in the ALR is used for rural residential purposes at the expense of viable agriculture Recreational vehicles and trucks being	• Fragmentation of the farmland base • Under-utilization of farmland • Activities occurring on farmland not related to farming • Potential environmental risks	• Support Delta's bylaw limiting the size of the footprint and siting of residential structures and access in the ALR to conserve farmland for agricultural production • Improve enforcement of existing regulations in farming areas including soil filling, storage, waste dumping, and maintenance of agricultural properties, engaging the AAC to assist in spotting violations and problem areas • Explore financial mechanisms to address farmland speculation and deter non-agricultural development on farmland	Lead: Delta Support: ALC, AAC, DFI, Metro Vancouver Lead: Delta, ALC Support: DFI, AAC Lead: BCAA, BCMA, ALC Support: Delta, BCAC,	High High High	Ongoing Ongoing Short

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
	stored on farmland			UBCM		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the farming sector to develop a more effective parking and storage policy in the ALR, including options respecting non-agricultural vehicles and enforcement • Educate rural-residential property owners about normal impacts associated with adjacent agricultural operations and create awareness among realtors and non-agricultural property purchasers of farming activities in the ALR • Encourage agricultural and other land trusts to make their farmland available to Delta farmers without covenants that restrict its agricultural use • Initiate discussions with the Tsawwassen First Nation toward developing mutually beneficial and supporting agricultural strategies in Delta 	Lead: ALC, Delta Support: DFI, AAC	High	Short
				Lead: Delta Support: FVREB, REBGV	Medium	On-going
				Lead: ALC Support: Delta	Medium	Short
				Lead: Delta	Medium	Short

Objective #4: Increase Public Support for Agriculture

4.1 Public Awareness of Local Agriculture (section 5.4.1, p. 13)	The public does not understand why it is important to support the local agricultural sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture cannot compete for land and resources without public support and consideration • The substantial benefits and intrinsic values that local agriculture provides need to be known 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on existing farmer supported agricultural awareness events such as "Farm Hike by Bike" or "A Day at the Farm", Delta Farm Tours, and "Meet Your Maker" events, work with local tourism/hospitality industry to initiate 'taste of Delta' food promotions at Delta restaurants and hotels, and other opportunities for the public to experience local food and agriculture 	Lead: FVFDMA, BCATA, BCAFIM Support: Delta, Chef Associations, NGOs, FF/CF, LFF, EWS, COABC	High	Ongoing
	The public does not know where its food comes from		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the agriculture webpage on Delta's website, with 'operation/farmer of the month' features, 'fact sheets', seasonal updates, and provide links to resources for residents who want to connect to local agriculture, such as the seasonal Farm Fresh Guide 	Lead: Delta Support: DFI, DFWT, BCMA, Metro Vancouver, BCAC	High	Ongoing
	The public is not aware of farming		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase information dissemination and communications with the public about mutually beneficial agriculture/wildlife 	Lead: DFWT, DFI Support: Delta	High	Ongoing

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
	systems promoting diversity of crops and ongoing stewardship Government projects are expanding transportation corridors in Delta. There is public demand for parks, conservation reserves, and farmland has been removed for treaty settlement		<p>interactions in Delta</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a multi-partner communication plan to engage farm groups, e.g., by creating contact lists of farmers willing to educate the public, distributing a “Champions of Farming” speakers list to the Rotary Club, Delta Chamber of Commerce and other groups, and encouraging presentations on agricultural issues, and to engage the public, (e.g., including agricultural awareness events, newspaper coverage, crop information, and farm field identification) • Support and expand opportunities for community gardens/urban agriculture demonstrations to promote agricultural awareness, through additional funding , supportive bylaws and provision of land • Support educational initiatives including agriculture in the secondary school curriculum (agriculture in the classroom), SRD 4-H and agriculture forums for municipal staff and politicians, engaging the Delta School District, Fraser Health Authority, professional associations, and Metro Vancouver to host • Create an annual municipal bursary fund to support a student studying agriculture or agrology • Encourage reports and research that show what the returns to farmers are on agricultural products, where the food dollar goes in the food chain, and the cost of food in relation to other staples in the community 	<p>Lead: Delta, DFI, FVDFMA Support: BCMA, BCATA, COABC, BCAF, EWS and Commodity Associations</p>	High	Immediate
				<p>Lead: Delta Support: NGOs, SFCF, KPU, AAC</p>	High	Immediate
				<p>Lead: Delta, Metro Vancouver, DSD, FHA Support: DFI, FVFDMA, BCAC, PIBC, Agriculture in the Classroom, SRD4-H</p>	High	Immediate
				<p>Lead: Delta</p>	High	Immediate
				<p>Lead: BCMA, AAFC, Agricultural Academies Support: Delta, BCAC, Commodity Associations,</p>	High	Short

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
				DFI		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Delta's kids' garden contest • Review and expand signage to identify agricultural areas, what is grown in those areas, and respect for farm traffic 	Lead: Delta Support: DFI	Medium	Ongoing
					Medium	Ongoing
4.2 Public Responsibility for Induced Agricultural Impacts (section 5.4.2, p. 14)	Wildlife use of farmland is extensive and increasing due to rising populations The public is only vaguely aware of how public projects are affecting agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture is experiencing annual unsustainable damages from waterfowl • Farmers are restricted in crop choices • Economic yields are reduced • Farm economic sustainability is threatened • Corridor expansions are taking farmland out of production, creating economic losses to agriculture • Farm costs associated with providing public ecological goods and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust (DFWT) to promote initiatives to foster public awareness of how farmland sustains wildlife and habitat and to build support for more equitable sharing of the costs of providing ecological goods and services • Lobby senior governments for programs to compensate farmers for wildlife crop damage, through participation in federal – provincial waterfowl damage compensation programs • Lobby the ALC, provincial ministries, BC Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to develop a better accounting perspective for agencies to protect farmland and avert the loss of agricultural land base to public infrastructure works, transportation projects, land claims, wildlife and fisheries policy, incorporating as a last resort enhancement, compensation and mitigation to offset negative impacts on agriculture • Support research into integrated farm-level strategies to mitigate the potential for damages from waterfowl • Advocate with Metro Vancouver to establish a program to compensate farmers for ecological goods and services that agricultural land provides (e.g. creating a regional levy) • Work with environmental agencies to develop effective ways of 	Lead:, Delta, DFWT Support: DFI, AAC, DU	High	Ongoing
				Lead: BCMA, AAFC	High	Immediate
				Lead: ALC Support: BCAC, BCMA, Delta,, AAFC, Metro Vancouver, UBCM, AAC	High	Short
				Lead: DFWT Support: BCAC, BCMA, Delta	High	Short
				Lead: Metro Vancouver. Support: Delta	High	Medium
				Lead: MOEN, CWS	Medium	Medium

Issue	Situation	Concerns	Recommended Actions	Implementing Agencies	Priority for Action	Timeline
			managing agriculturally sustainable wildlife populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby senior governments for waterfowl BMPs under the Environmental Farm Plan program • 	Support: Delta Lead: BCAC		
4.3 Local Institutional Support for Agriculture (section 5.4.3, p. 15)	Procurement of food by local institutions and government does not consider food source Farmers provide non-market benefits to society Farmers need research to adapt to new needs and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local markets should support local agriculture, wherever feasible • Farmers are not paid for ecological good and services • Agriculture needs guidance in accessing carbon sequestration benefits • Local conditions increase the need for local research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Metro Vancouver and other lower Mainland municipalities to investigate the feasibility of regional branding for agricultural products, developing a “buy regional” policy for local governments, and engaging businesses, schools, government agencies, and institutions to participate • Pursue opportunities to re-instate on-farm field trials function, specifically in relation to crops grown in Delta and responses to cope with impending climate change • Lobby the province for a re-instatement of the “Buy BC” program • Explore on-farm carbon tax and sequestration responses that would provide economic benefits to farming 	Lead: Metro Vancouver, Delta, Other municipalities Support: BCAC, BCMA, BCFPA, SSFPA, DCOC	High	Short
				Lead: BCMA, AAFC Support: DFI, Metro Vancouver	High	Short
				Lead: BCMA, BCAC Support: Delta	Medium	Short
				Lead: Province, AAFC, BCMA	Medium	Medium

Note: (1) See List of Acronyms on Page viii; (2) Timeline for Starting Action: Ongoing = continue; Immediate = within 1 year; Short = 1- 2 years; Medium = 2 – 5 years; Long = 5-10 years