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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **BC NDP Government Releases Disappointing Budget for Agriculture**

**Abbotsford, BC – February 19, 2020:** This week the BC NDP government released its third budget after delivering a throne speech last Tuesday.

The B.C. Ministry of Agriculture received a \$2.8-million reduction in funding for 2020. The reduction is primarily targeting travel and office expenses, a freeze on hiring and anticipated program slippage. Out of all the provinces, British Columbia continues to have the lowest government expenditures in agriculture as a percentage of agriculture GDP.

Small increases were seen to the Agricultural Land Commission budget as well as the Farm Industry Review Board. Overall, for business and the resource sectors, the 2020 budget is status quo.

Other highlights from the budget include:

- Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC will not increase in its third year as originally planned meaning new Food Hubs will be on hold.
- The Greenhouse Carbon Tax Relief Grant will continue to be funded through the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Carbonated beverages that contain sugar, natural sweeteners or artificial sweeteners no longer qualify for PST exemption.
- Investment planned for Highway 1 216<sup>th</sup> Street to 264<sup>th</sup> Street High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes and a Fraser Valley integrated transportation and land use plan.

“As recent studies have reported, agriculture has significant potential to grow Canada’s economy,” says Stan Vander Waal, BCAC President, “We believe this is also possible in B.C., however, our province still invests less money into the agriculture sector, relative to its size, than any other province in Canada. We need to invest in this sector if we want to realize the potential that it can bring.”

[Read more](#) on the government’s recent budget announcement.

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