
NEWS RELEASE

Farmers and ranchers in Victoria bring forward solutions to increase food security and strengthen the sector

Victoria, B.C. October 24, 2023: A delegation of B.C. farmers and ranchers are in Victoria today to bring forward solutions to the challenges faced by the sector in providing the food security and agricultural products British Columbians seek. The delegation is part of BC Agriculture Council's (BCAC) annual *Ag Day in Victoria* event. As the lead industry advocate for key sector-wide priorities in British Columbia, BCAC delivers a unified voice for the province's over 20,000 farm families through the unique commodity associations it represents.

BCAC's *Ag Day in Victoria* includes a series of scheduled meetings between the delegation and the Premier, Cabinet Ministers including Finance, Agriculture and Food, Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, Labour, as well as MLAs, senior government officials and key stakeholders. This year's discussions will focus on producer-led solutions to water security for agriculture and the challenges presented by the rising costs of production impacting BC's farms and ranches.

"This past year has been challenging - many farmers report that the drought, wildfires, port strike, high inflation and interest rates added major financial pressures to their farm business," says BCAC President Jennifer Woike. "When farms and ranches go out of business, it impacts the supply of agricultural products to consumers and, of course, local food security."

Agriculture in British Columbia generates nearly \$5 billion in farm operating revenue, including sustaining over 30,000 jobs within the province. Over 200 primary commodities are grown, harvested, and raised in British Columbia making it one of the more diverse agriculture sectors in Canada.

"BCAC believes that industry and government working together will lead to the best solutions to support B.C.'s producers as they take on the challenges of access to water, inflation and the high costs of production," says Woike. "We believe there is strong alignment between many government and industry priorities which presents ripe opportunity for us to collaborate."



www.bcac.ca
P: 604.854.4454
T: 866.522.3447
F: 604.854.4485

UNIT 1 – 2650 PROGRESSIVE WAY
ABBOTSFORD, BC V2T 6H9

“I welcome B.C.’s farming community to Victoria for a day of sharing and partnership, as we work together on food sovereignty, emergency planning and preparedness, climate readiness, Indigenous agriculture, improving supply chains and expanding local food production,” said B.C. Minister of Agriculture and Food, Pam Alexis. “The B.C. government is here to help farmers today, as we were yesterday, and will be tomorrow, with investments, programs and support to increase food security and maintain agriculture as a key economic driver in our province.”

About BCAC: [BCAC](http://www.bcac.ca)’s mission is to grow a strong, sustainable and competitive agriculture sector through building industry consensus and advancing public policy. This is achieved by delivering a unified voice for the sector to government through member farm associations that in turn, represent approximately 96% of provincial farm gate sales.

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Media Contacts

Anna Marie White
Ag Day Media Liaison
BC Agriculture Council
Mobile: 604-366-1521 | amwhite@bcac.ca

Cassy James
Communications Manager
BC Agriculture Council
Mobile: 604-997-3804 | cjames@bcac.ca