



2025 ANNUAL REPORT





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2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meet the farmers and ranchers who form the governing body of BC Agriculture Council and are working together to advance B.C. agriculture:



Jennifer Woike - President
Poultry



Len Smit - Vice-President
Landscape & Nursery



Ray VanMarrewyk - Treasurer
Greenhouse Vegetables



Annelise Grube-Cavers
Director at Large
Organic



Lynda Atkinson
Equine



Sukhpaul Bal
Interior Horticulture



Henry Bremer
Dairy



Brian Kingzett
Aquaculture



David Mutz
Coastal Horticulture



Brian Thomas
Beef Cattle & Pork



Alex Vander Eyk
Floriculture



Hannah Willms
Grain & Oilseeds



Rebecca Senicar
Chair, BC Young Farmers
(ex-officio)

Our Vision

BC Agriculture Council is the lead industry advocate for key sector-wide priorities in British Columbia.

Our Mission

To support and grow a competitive agriculture sector by fostering industry collaboration and shaping effective public policy.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we conclude 2025, I am once again reminded of the resilience, adaptability and determination that define British Columbia's farmers and ranchers. This past year tested our sector in new ways. From continued cost pressures and climate impacts to significant trade uncertainty and tariff threats, producers navigated an increasingly complex operating environment with unwavering commitment to feeding our communities and sustaining rural economies.

On behalf of the BC Agriculture Council Board of Directors, I am proud of the work that the organization accomplished in 2025 and the strength of our collective voice. Our measure of success remains clear: ensuring agriculture's voice and priorities are included at the tables that impact the sector, contributing meaningfully to those discussions and delivering value to our member organizations.

A STRONGER VOICE AT THE POLICY TABLE

Agriculture in B.C. is diverse and regionally unique which benefits greatly from a coordinated, sector-wide approach to advocacy. In 2025, BCAC's role as a trusted, producer-led voice became more important than ever. Our focus has shifted to being more proactive – helping shape policy early, rather than reacting after decisions are made.

Our advocacy remained firmly grounded in member-driven priorities. Water security and storage, cost of production, business risk management programs, labour access, and emergency preparedness continued to dominate discussions. In total, BCAC made 28 unique submissions to government this year, reinforcing the need for practical, evidence-based solutions that reflect on-the-ground realities.

TRADE AND ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY

Early 2025 brought significant uncertainty around tariffs and trade policy, resulting in broad sweeping concerns across our sector and others alike. Through my participation on the Premier's Task Force on Trade and Economic Security, we worked to ensure agriculture's interests were clearly understood within broader provincial discussions about economic resilience. These discussions reinforced an important truth: agriculture is foundational to economic security. When global uncertainty increases, local production capacity matters even more.

PREMIER'S TASK FORCE

Another milestone in 2025 was BCAC's involvement in the Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy, which was the result of a key election ask from the year prior. As we move into 2026, the focus is shifting from recommendations to implementation. Sustained engagement will be essential to ensure these commitments translate into measurable improvements for B.C. producers.

DEMONSTRATING VALUE THROUGH ACTION

BCAC's advocacy extends beyond submissions and meetings. In 2025, we continued to elevate agriculture's public and political profile. Our annual Ag Day in Victoria brought nearly 70 farmers and



Presenting BCAC's Leadership Award
January 2025

ranchers together for more than 40 meetings with Ministers, MLAs, and senior officials. For the first time, a sitting Premier attended our Ag Day reception – a signal that agriculture’s voice is being heard at the highest levels of our government.

Federally, we remained actively engaged through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, contributing to national discussions on business risk management reform, disaster mitigation funding, and regulatory efficiency. With negotiations underway for the Next Federal–Provincial Agricultural Framework, BCAC undertook extensive member consultations to ensure B.C.’s priorities are clearly reflected in the next five-year agreement.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

As we enter 2026, members have provided clear direction. Agriculture must be formally recognized and treated as an essential service. Labour access must be stabilized in the face of federal immigration policy shifts. Agricultural land must be protected and actively farmed. Water licensing backlogs must be cleared, and storage solutions advanced. And above all, competitiveness must improve if B.C. producers are to thrive in an increasingly costly jurisdiction.

The operating environment will not become simpler. But our path forward is clear: coordinated advocacy, credible economic data, strong government relationships, and a unified producer voice.

IN CLOSING

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our member associations, their boards, our dedicated BCAC and WALI teams, and the many partners who support this work. Your engagement and expertise guide everything we do.

It continues to be an honour to serve as President and to represent B.C.’s farmers and ranchers at provincial and national tables. The challenges are significant - but so is the opportunity. By working together, we will continue to strengthen the competitiveness, resilience, and long-term sustainability of agriculture in British Columbia.

Thank you for your trust and your continued commitment to our sector.



Jennifer Woike
President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As we reflect on 2025, it is clear that this past year was one of both significant challenge and meaningful progress for British Columbia's agriculture sector.

The operating environment facing farmers, processors, and agri-businesses continues to grow in complexity, shaped by regulatory pressures, labour shortages, climate impacts, and competitiveness concerns that extend well beyond our provincial borders. BC Agriculture Council's role as a unified, credible, and solutions-oriented voice for the sector has never been more important.

Throughout 2025, BCAC remained focused on advancing the priorities identified by our membership and Board, as outlined in our strategic and policy framework. Our work continued to centre on strengthening government relationships, elevating agriculture's role in the provincial economy, and ensuring that decision-makers understand both the risks facing the sector and the opportunities that exist if agriculture is positioned for long-term success.

One important way the sector's profile was elevated this year was through the Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy. For the first time, the provincial government established a Task Force that included BCAC representatives, primary agriculture and seafood representatives, along with other food system stakeholders such as processors, retailers and First Nations.

The Task Force's recommendations were presented to the Premier in November 2025 and have since been made publicly available on the government's website. As a reminder, the Task Force was responsible for:

- Producing prioritized, actionable recommendations to government on behalf of the sector that provide a clear roadmap for addressing sector challenges;

- Enabling efficient decision making and timely implementation by government to produce a tangible impact for farmers and processors; and
- Developing a measurable long-term vision for sector growth and competitiveness.

Several of the recommendations flowing out of the Taskforce's work were long-standing sector priorities identified by the membership for years. Now that an entire group of food system stakeholders have stood behind our asks, this remains one of the most significant areas of opportunity to push on when looking forward.

A defining feature of the year was the increasingly challenging political and regulatory landscape. While government engagement remained constructive, policy development often moved faster than implementation capacity, and sector concerns were not always reflected early enough in decision-making processes. This reinforced the importance of BCAC's advocacy work — not only responding to policy proposals, but proactively shaping them. Our engagement emphasized the need for practical, evidence-based approaches that recognize agriculture as a foundational contributor to food security, economic resilience, and rural communities (please read on to review specific examples of our policy development and governmental relations activities).

Operationally, capacity and funding constraints also remained a reality in 2025. Like many organizations, BCAC continued to balance growing expectations with finite resources.



Pitt Meadows Agriculture Round Table
April 2025

These constraints sharpened our focus, requiring discipline in where we invest time and effort, and underscoring the value of collaboration across the sector. Despite these limitations, the organization delivered a full and ambitious program of work, a testament to the dedication of our staff, the guidance of the Board, and the commitment of our members.

Another major milestone for the organization is the launch of the BC Agriculture Forum, which will be held for the first time in June 2026. This new initiative is designed to create a dedicated space for industry, government, and partners to engage in substantive, forward-looking policy dialogue.

The central focus areas of the Forum will be on the present and future; we will deliver reports on the current state of the industry, provide meaningful speakers with relevant subject matter expertise, and support coordinated policy solutions at a critical moment for the future of B.C. agriculture. The positive response from registrants to date confirms both the demand for this platform and its potential to shape policy discussions well beyond a single event.

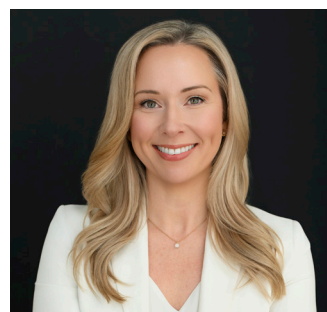
Looking ahead to 2026, BCAC is entering the year with clear priorities and renewed momentum. Our focus will be on advocating for agriculture to be formally recognized as an essential service, strengthening government business risk management programs, and advancing solutions on labour, including safeguarding the Temporary Foreign Worker program to meet agriculture and food security needs. Water security for farmers will remain a critical issue, alongside advocacy for

national infrastructure investments that support competitiveness and resilience.

We will continue to push for farmland to be recognized and protected as critical infrastructure, and for policies that enable B.C. farmers to compete on a level playing field with neighbouring jurisdictions. These priorities are interconnected, and success will require sustained engagement, credible data, and a unified sector voice.

As we move into 2026, BCAC's role is clear: to lead with clarity, collaborate with purpose, and advocate relentlessly for policies that allow agriculture in British Columbia to thrive. The year ahead will demand focus and resolve, but the foundation built in 2025 positions us well to meet that challenge together.

On behalf of the entire team at BCAC, thank you to our members and partners for your continued trust, engagement, and leadership. The work ahead is substantial — and so is the opportunity.



Danielle Synotte
Executive Director



POLICY DEVELOPMENT & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

2025 KEY PRIORITIES

BC Agriculture Council has continued to inform policies and programs at both the provincial and federal levels, drawing upon member input. This work ensures that producer needs and member priorities are reflected in conversations and decisions taken by elected officials and policy makers at every level of government.

The launch of the Premier’s Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy with participation from BCAC and several members presented a valuable opportunity to engage with key decision-makers in government and advance the sector’s interests. Sustained engagement will now be essential to ensuring the government delivers on the Task Force recommendations.

As the expiry of the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP) approaches and discussions are underway on the next five-year federal-provincial agricultural policy framework, BCAC held 27 meetings to consult with member associations and directly with producers on how a wide range of programs could be improved to better reflect the realities of farming in B.C.

BCAC’s spring 2025 member consultations re-affirmed sector-wide priorities for the year and confirmed strong support for the organization’s policy development role.

WATER SECURITY & STORAGE

- Agricultural Water Reserves
- Investment for storage
- Groundwater licensing

COST OF PRODUCTION

- Carbon tax advocacy
- Minimum wage in B.C. subsidy
- Tax exemption on insurance premiums

BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT

- Modernized program suite
- Improved AgriStability access and timelines
- Equity in program delivery

ACCESS TO LABOUR

- Expanding upon the Recognized Employer Pilot
- On-arrival MSP coverage
- Support for worker housing

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & CLIMATE READINESS

- Seat in Emergency Operations Centres (regional)
- Re-entry permits
- Disaster Financial Assistance Program improvements

PRIORITY OVERVIEW

WATER SECURITY & STORAGE

BCAC, along with several members, participated in the Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food Economy and successfully advocated for eight recommendations related to water security. Among these recommendations is an immediate clearing of the backlog of existing use groundwater applications and significantly streamlining the process going forward. The Task Force recommendations prompted 18 consultations from the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship on the technical details of these changes. BCAC, drawing upon feedback from its members, responded to 16 of these.

COST OF PRODUCTION

In 2025, B.C. repealed its carbon tax, removing this additional cost to some forms of agricultural production. The Premier's Task Force also issued 10 recommendations intended to improve the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in B.C. Sustained engagement will be needed to ensure delivery on these, including eliminating the Provincial Sales Tax on all agriculture inputs and equipment.

BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT

BCAC was and continues to be actively engaged with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) on business risk management (BRM) improvements in the next five-year federal-provincial framework, even chairing all three of the CFA working groups on this topic. This has allowed BCAC to advance 16 recommendations, nearly two-thirds of the proposed changes, all of which were developed with member feedback and with a view to ensuring the BRM suite is more responsive to the needs of B.C. farmers in future. Further, BCAC staff developed a "What We Heard Report" stemming

from the comprehensive consultation conducted with the membership. This report has already been used several times in sharing with all levels of government and informing resolutions for the CFA 2026 annual general meeting.

ACCESS TO LABOUR

BCAC pushed for on-arrival Medical Service Plan coverage for Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) as well as exemptions for Agricultural Stream workers from driver's licensing requirements. Further, BCAC advocated for greater flexibility for TFWs to move between farms, ensuring a more adaptable workforce, and for an extension to the Recognized Employer Pilot. Rising housing costs remain an issue, leading BCAC to call for financial support programs to help farm employers construct new, improved worker housing.

The Premier's Task Force issued five recommendations related to labour, many of which closely match priorities BCAC members have identified. Continued advocacy in 2026 will be needed to ensure delivery on each of these valuable opportunities.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & CLIMATE READINESS

BCAC continued to advocate for updates to Disaster Financial Assistance to ensure damages to farm operations are appropriately covered. BCAC also continues to strengthen the sector's role in emergency response and recovery through the Investment Agriculture Foundation funded Food Security Planning and Preparedness Project. With the flooding in the Fraser Valley at the close of the year, BCAC also coordinated a joint letter with members calling for the recapitalization of the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund federally.

BCAC POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- Agriculture Education & Awareness Advisory
- Emergency Management & Climate Readiness
- Labour
- Land Use
- Small-Scale Producers
- Water Security & Management

SECTOR-WIDE ADVOCACY

BCAC made **28 unique submissions** to Government covering a wide range of topics critical to the sector, including, but not limited to:

- Recognizing agriculture as an essential service and prioritizing its needs in policy and program changes,
- Clearing the backlog of existing use groundwater applications and streamlining the process for producers,
- Sellable offset credits for producers who maintain wetlands or riparian setbacks,
- On-arrival MSP coverage for TFWs,
- Recapitalizing the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund and reigniting discussions about national infrastructure priorities, and
- Preventing burdensome flammable dust regulations – BCAC successfully prevented costly changes, protecting farm businesses from unnecessary regulation.

LOOKING FORWARD

Both the federal and provincial governments increasingly rely upon BCAC for policy input and the development of programming and administrative processes relevant to the interests of BCAC’s member associations. This means that policies and programs adopted by both these levels of government increasingly reflect member interests. However, increased coordination and effort from both BCAC and its members will be vital in 2026 as advocacy ramps up on the Premier’s Task Force recommendations, which could address many of the obstacles to growth in the B.C. agriculture sector.

KEEPING "AG" ON THE AGENDA

28 unique submissions

in response to government consultations

5 committee meetings

to inform BCAC’s policy work

27 member meetings

to consult on SCAP program needs

1 resolution proposed & adopted

at CFA AGM

RAISING AGRICULTURE’S PROFILE IN THE MEDIA

65+

Media Requests

Increased by **91% over 2024**

2025 Hot Topics:

1. Trade & Tariffs
2. Farm Profitability
3. Emergency Management & Climate Readiness
4. Water Security & Storage

Featured in:

Business in Vancouver
CBC Vancouver
CKNW Radio
CTV News
Global News BC



AGRICULTURE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROJECT

Emergency events in B.C. are becoming more frequent and severe, threatening farms, ranches, and the province's food security. To build a stronger, more resilient agriculture sector, BCAC is leading a coalition of seven farm organizations to enhance the sector's emergency preparedness and response.

PROGRESS IN 2025

- **Project Development** – Sought and received project funding support from the Investment Agriculture Foundation's Food Security Emergency Planning & Preparedness Fund.
- **Emergency Planning** – Completed a coordinated BCAC Emergency Management Plan which was adopted by the BCAC Board of Directors to guide BCAC's actions before, during, and after major emergencies.
- **Agriculture Coordinators** – Trained an additional 6 individuals in 2025 and made the roster of BCAC-trained Agriculture Coordinator candidates available to all Local Authorities in British Columbia.
- **Access Pass System** – Completed the Temporary Access Pass Template through engagement with the Province and 10 Local Authorities to promote standardized access by producers to their farms and ranches during emergencies.
- **Producer Training** – Hosting regional workshops in conjunction with AgSafe in 2025 to help farmers and ranchers prepare for crisis events.



INDIGENOUS RESOURCE OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE

BCAC joined panel exploring the intersection of agriculture, Indigenous knowledge and food autonomy.



SILGA CONFERENCE

BCAC joined a panel on emergency preparedness and response at the Southern Interior Local Government Association Conference.



BCAC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

BCAC and WALL staff participated in an emergency response training session.



PREMIER'S TASK FORCE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD ECONOMY

The Premier's Task Force was established following sustained advocacy by BCAC in the lead-up to the 2024 provincial election, calling for a provincial agri-food competitiveness and growth strategy.

Co-chaired by BCAC's Executive Director and composed of 15 additional members - including several BCAC board and member representatives - the task force met throughout 2025 to develop [32 recommendations for Government](#). The work focused on key priorities for the sector, including water, competitiveness, labour and talent, land, and investment.

The recommendations were presented to the Premier at the end of 2025. Supporting the prioritization and implementation of these recommendations will be a major focus of BCAC's work in 2026.

HIGHLIGHTS

16
MEMBERS

5
KEY THEMES

32
RECOMMENDATIONS



2024

JULY 2024 - BCAC ELECTION CAMPAIGN

BCAC launches provincial-wide election campaign, meeting with candidates to raise B.C. agriculture priorities.

JANUARY 2024 - INITIAL REQUEST

BCAC submits formal letter requesting support for a provincial agriculture sector strategy.

SEPTEMBER 2024 - PLATFORM INCLUSION

The BC Greens, BC NDP and BC Conservatives committed to developing a plan to strengthen the sector.

2025

FEBRUARY 2025 - ANNOUNCEMENT

B.C. government officially announces the Premier's Task Force on Agriculture & Food Economy.

MAY 2025 - WATER SESSION

Task Force holds meeting on water.

JUNE 2025 - COMPETITIVENESS SESSION

Task Force holds meeting on competitiveness.

OCTOBER 2025 - FALL SESSION

Task Force holds two-day meetings on labour, land, and investment.

NOVEMBER 2025 - MEET WITH PREMIER

Task Force co-chairs and members meet with premier to present their recommendations.

2026

PRIORITIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

BCAC to focus on prioritizing and actioning of recommendations.

AG DAY IN VICTORIA

BC Agriculture Council's annual advocacy event, Ag Day in Victoria, brought nearly 70 B.C. farmers, ranchers, and industry leaders together for close to 40 meetings with cabinet ministers, MLAs, senior government officials, and key industry stakeholders.

RECOGNIZING AGRICULTURE AS ESSENTIAL

From productive meeting discussions to a well-attended MLA reception, we ensured our message was heard across all provincial parties and key government portfolios.

This year's key ask is for the government to **recognize B.C.'s agriculture sector as an essential service**, which also means ensuring its critical needs are reliably met so farmers and ranchers can keep supplying our province under even the most extreme conditions.



Meeting with Attorney General
October 2025

By formally recognizing the B.C. agriculture sector as essential, government would be investing in a future-proof system that enhances public safety, community resilience, and economic stability while ensuring British Columbia's people, land, and food systems thrive together. This demonstrates a commitment to our province's resilience and provides British Columbians with confidence that their food supply is under their own control.

CONNECTING AGRICULTURE WITH DECISION-MAKERS



Minister Popham at the Evening Reception



Minister of Water, Land & Natural Resource Stewardship



BC Conservative MLAs



BC Conservative Leader & Ag. Critic



Minister of Jobs & Economic Growth

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Nearly 40 meetings were held this year, including meetings with:

- Premier of British Columbia
- Minister of Agriculture and Food
- Attorney General and Deputy Premier
- Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth
- Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
- Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness
- Minister of Labour
- Minister of Infrastructure
- Minister of Forests
- Minister of Citizen Services
- Minister of Environment & Parks
- Leader of the Official Opposition
- Shadow Critic for Agriculture

MLA meetings also took place with **NDP** and **Conservative** parties (all official parties were invited to meet), in addition to meetings with the **Agricultural Land Commission**, **BC Farm Industry Review Board**, and **Investment Agriculture Foundation**.

AG DAY AT A GLANCE

35+
Meetings

92%
Member Participation

1
Key Message

70
Industry Leaders



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

In 2025, BCAC strengthened collaboration with members by partnering to attend key local government conferences, including the Southern Interior Local Government Association and the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities. Participating in these forums alongside members allowed BCAC to amplify coordinated, pan-agriculture messaging directly with local decision-makers.

BCAC also secured funding to provide 81 self-led online Indigenous Relations training courses. Participants included B.C. farmers and ranchers, members staff and boards, from regions across the province, including Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland, the Interior, the Cariboo, and the Peace.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

BCAC strengthened sector connections through key collaborations this year, including representing B.C. at several BC Business Council roundtables, sharing insights on industry panels including the BC Food & Beverage's Thrive Conference, and joining the Building Resilient Communities Conference to foster cross-sector collaboration with governments and Indigenous peoples.

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK

In January 2025, BCAC welcomed its first associate members under this newly introduced membership category:



Irrigation Industry Association of B.C.

Associate members are strategically selected on an invite-only basis and represent allied organizations that align with BCAC's sector-wide advocacy priorities. This new membership category is intended to strengthen partnerships across related industries while supporting the long-term sustainability of the organization.



BCAC General Managers Meeting
June 2025

EXPANDING INFLUENCE ACROSS GOVERNMENT

BCAC's strategic outreach has increased its influence at municipal, provincial, and federal levels. This growth reflects BCAC's effectiveness in shaping policy discussions on agriculture.



UBCM Panel Presentation
September 2025

PROVINCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Trade and Economic Security Task Force

In addition to the Premier's Task Force on Agriculture and Food, BCAC's Board President was invited to serve on a task force convened by the provincial government in response to the emerging threat of U.S. tariffs. This participation ensured agriculture's concerns were represented in provincial discussions on trade risks and economic security.

Government Farm Tour

BCAC hosted its 2025 Government Farm Tour in Abbotsford and Chilliwack in August 2025. Participants included 10 MLAs and MPs, several of their staff, and senior staff from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

The tour provided elected officials with an on-the-ground perspective of the diversity, challenges, and opportunities in B.C. agriculture.

FEDERAL ENGAGEMENT

Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA)

At the national level, BCAC played a leadership role within the CFA. This included successfully leading the adoption of a resolution to protect against foreign speculation on agricultural land at the AGM and representing B.C.'s perspective at significant events such as the summer meetings and advocacy Hill Day in Ottawa.

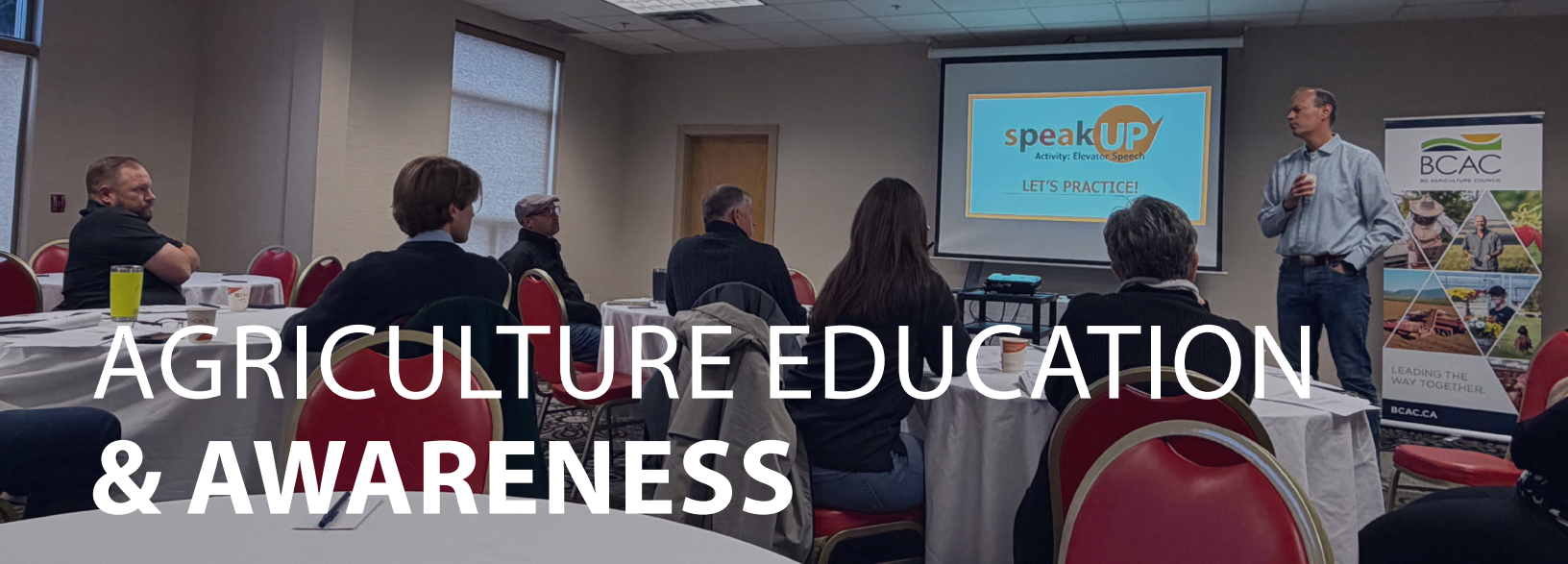
Election 2025

Ahead of the spring federal election, BCAC met with multiple candidates to highlight our sector's federal priorities.

Following his appointment to cabinet, we hosted Minister MacDonald in B.C. to discuss issues including Business Risk Management, labour, competitiveness, emergency management, and the sector's responses to climate events, trade challenges, and market diversification.



Meeting with newly elected MP Sukhman Gill
July 2025



AGRICULTURE EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Public trust is at the core of a thriving and resilient agriculture sector. BCAC remains committed to strengthening the connection between farmers, the public, and policymakers to ensure a sustainable future for B.C. agriculture.

EMPOWERING FARMERS

BCAC closed the year with another successful **Speak Up! training** workshop, equipping farmers and ranchers with the tools to effectively tell their stories, engage the public, and navigate tough conversations around agriculture.



Farm tour stop at Vaandrager Farms
August 2025

FARM TOURS

BCAC hosted an MLA/MP tour in the summer where elected officials were brought to a poultry farm, a vegetable greenhouse, a field vegetable farm, and a floriculture operation. BCAC's key priorities as a sector were shared and host producers answered many questions related to cost of production and their ability to compete here in B.C. versus other jurisdictions.

PUBLIC OPINION POLLING

A public opinion poll was conducted early in 2025 to understand public perceptions and concerns about agriculture. Highlights include:

- **Trust in farmers is strong** — 62% of British Columbians express a high level of trust in B.C. farmers, with trust highest among older adults and those living outside Metro Vancouver.
- **Climate and cost pressures resonate** — The most recognized challenges facing farmers are weather-related extremes (69%) and rising costs (62%), highlighting a strong public awareness of the sector's vulnerability.
- **Awareness of water issues is low** — Despite being a top policy concern for B.C. agriculture, water access is the least understood issue among the public—offering a major opportunity for education and storytelling.
- **Familiarity gaps persist** — Urban audiences express general awareness but low understanding of farming realities, signalling the need for messaging that converts visibility into comprehension.
- **Perception of regulations boosts trust** — 81% of respondents are aware of the strict regulations B.C. farmers follow, with 90% saying this makes them more likely to trust and buy local products.

CKNW RADIO: "KEEP IT LOCAL" SERIES

BCAC partnered with CKNW to bring Simi Sara's "Keep It Local - The Farming Series" to radio listeners in B.C. The campaign ran from mid-September to early October and featured interviews with six farmers from different commodities. The series was bookended with promotional ads and generated over **1.2 million impressions**. The campaign also included digital ads on the CKNW website, a social post on the CKNW social channels, and a dedicated page on the CKNW website that collated each interview into one spot for easy reference.



IMPACTFUL CONTENT

BCAC created social posts that supported public trust several times throughout the year. We covered topics such as the variety of farms in B.C., the number of family-owned farms, and the economic impact of agriculture in B.C.



WALI GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

In 2025, WALI focused on strengthening operational stability, improving service delivery, and modernizing systems to better support agricultural employers across B.C.

Building on lessons from recent seasons, the team prioritized timely worker arrivals, clearer communication with employers, and stronger coordination with government and international partners.

600+

LMIA's Processed

1,000+

SAWP & AgStream employers served

1,500+

WALI e-news subscribers

Investments in the Employer Portal, expanded employer engagement initiatives, and participation in federal consultations reinforced WALI's role as a trusted service partner in agriculture temporary foreign worker (TFW) programs.

While federal immigration policy changes were introduced in response to rising temporary immigration levels, agriculture TFW programs were not directly affected. WALI continued to monitor developments and advocate for recognition of the essential role TFWs play in supporting Canada's agriculture sector and food security.

RETURN TO A TYPICAL SEASON

Following the challenging 2024 season caused by a January cold snap, worker arrivals in 2025 returned to more typical levels.

In February, representatives from the three primary organizations that facilitate the arrival of workers through the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) to Canada – FARMS, FERMES, and WALI – met with operations staff from Mexico's Ministry of Labour. The meeting focused on improving how operational data is exchanged between partners, identifying inefficiencies, and strengthening coordination to improve processing timelines and accuracy.



SAWP Caribbean Binational Meeting
November 2025



WALI meeting with Consulate of Guatemala
May 2025

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with employers remained a priority. WALI hosted in-person information sessions in the spring and virtual sessions throughout the year.

A new series of small-group virtual meetings, “Small Talk Sessions,” was also launched in 2025. Limited to 20 participants and focused on a single topic, these sessions encouraged more direct discussion and engagement between employers and WALI staff.

WALI EMPLOYER PORTAL

Overall, WALI processed more than 600 Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) applications for the SAWP Mexico program and supported 1,000 employers requesting over 2,300 housing inspections.

Following system improvements introduced in 2024, processing LMIAs under the Recognized Employer Pilot (REP) ran more smoothly in 2025. As the REP concludes in 2026, WALI anticipates working with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to review outcomes and discuss future program developments.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

In 2025, WALI strengthened relationships with the Mexican and Guatemalan Consulates in Vancouver and met with Guatemala’s Ambassador to Canada to discuss opportunities to expand worker participation.

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS

WALI also participated in federal consultations as ESDC continues developing a new agriculture and fish processing stream and considers broader updates to agriculture temporary foreign worker programs. With input from employers and the BCAC Labour Committee, WALI submitted responses to each of the 6 ESDC discussion papers, with further updates expected in 2026.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Following the completion of WALI’s strategic plan in 2024, David Mutz was appointed WALI President in 2025. The plan focuses on improving customer service, strengthening government relations, and enhancing stakeholder engagement.

Key priorities for 2026 include strengthening housing inspection reporting, increasing employer feedback through an annual satisfaction survey, improving data sharing with partner organizations, enhancing the stability of the Employer Portal, and engaging with ESDC on potential program changes.



Veronica Moreno
General Manager



ABOUT BC YOUNG FARMERS

The Committee's primary purpose is to provide input to BCAC to ensure the organization's advocacy efforts are inclusive of the next generation's voice. The Committee also provides educational, leadership, and networking opportunities for young farmers in British Columbia.

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES WITH BCAC

- Chair co-hosted the BC Agri-Food Industry Gala and members supported the event through silent auction contributions which resulted in \$10,300 raised for the committee.
- Participated in BCAC's government farm tour to represent young farmers and address MLA/MP questions throughout the day.
- Two members attended meetings and the MLA reception at BCAC's Ag Day in Victoria.
- Seat on BCAC Board of Directors.
- Represented on BCAC Policy Advisory Committees.

COMMITTEE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- Attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture AGM in Ottawa with four members.
- Attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture Summer Board Meeting, Policy Summit, and Industry Roundtable in Winnipeg, MB.
- Hosted an in-person work planning meeting and professional development day focused on the topic of Human Resources & Conflict Resolution.
- Two members attended the national Agriculture Excellence Conference in Winnipeg, MB.

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Finalized development of a new, in-house scholarship program to launch in 2026.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Co-hosted a booth at the Pacific Agriculture Show.
- Maintained an online presence through website and social media.

2025 COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Rebecca Senicar
Chair



Kaitlin Guitard
Vice Chair



Jeff Spitters
Treasurer



Arshdeep Dhaliwal
Member



Nathan Flokstra
Member



Jacintha Kulchar
Member



Russell Reitsema
Member

BC YOUNG FARMERS IN ACTION



Pacific Agriculture Show



Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) Summer Meetings



CFA Annual General Meeting



Ag Day in Victoria Reception



BCAC Government Farm Tour

BC FARMER ID CARD PROGRAM



CONVENIENCE IN YOUR POCKET

The **BC Farmer ID Card** continues to be a core revenue-generating program for BC Agriculture Council to stabilize member dues. In addition, the program directly encourages membership in BCAC member associations by offering a significant discount on the cost of the cards for farmers and ranchers who are members of these associations.

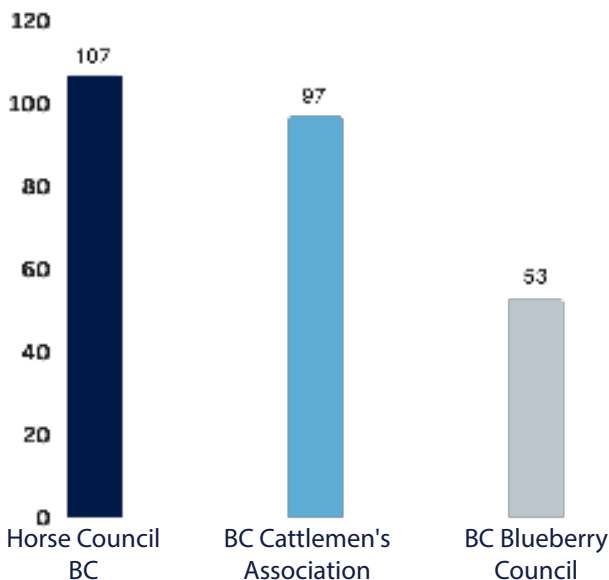
EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS

In addition to convenience and tax savings, the BC Farmer ID Card program offers cardholders a suite of exclusive, farmer-focused perks through our affinity partners—a program we are continually interested to expand.

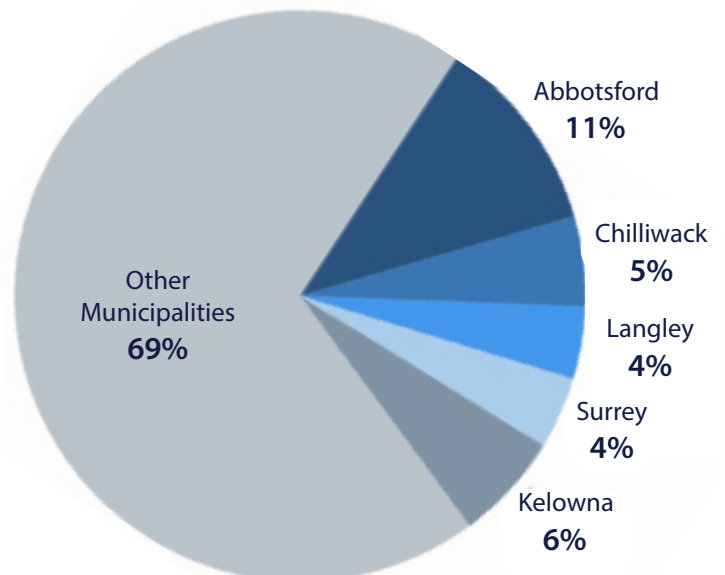
DID YOU KNOW?

Members of BCAC member associations receive 50% off their BC Farmer ID Card.

TOP 2025 MEMBER ACCOUNTS



MOST ACCOUNTS BY MUNICIPALITY



BCAC EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PROGRAM

BCAC launched the **BCAC Employee Benefits Program** in mid-2024. Developed with direct input from farmers, the program offers flexible, affordable plans designed to help farms attract, protect, and retain employees—key to long-term sector success.

Now in its second year of promotion, the program saw **expressed interest increase by 250%**.

NEW OWNER-OPERATOR PLAN

In 2025, BCAC launched a new benefits offering specifically for owner-operators and their families. The program provides a choice of five comprehensive plans, giving owner-operators flexible coverage options. Visit bcac.ca/benefits for more details.



TAILORED COVERAGE:

OWNER-OPERATORS

Tailored benefits for owner-operators and their families.

SMALL TO MEDIUM TEAMS* (2-10 EMPLOYEES)

Pre-set, flexible options to fit small farm operations.

LARGE OPERATIONS (10+ EMPLOYEES)

Custom plans designed to match larger business needs.

For more details and to receive a quote, visit:
[BCAC.CA/BENEFITS](https://bcac.ca/benefits)

*PLAN DETAILS (2-10 EMPLOYEES)

	Bronze <i>New to employee benefits or need a more affordable option?</i>	Silver <i>On solid footing and looking for added value?</i>	Gold <i>Well-established and looking to optimize your benefits plan?</i>	Platinum <i>Seeking premium offers at an affordable rate?</i>
PARAMEDICAL	\$250/yr, 80%	\$500/yr, 80%	\$500/yr, 90%	\$500/yr, 100%
DRUG COVERAGE	\$2,000/yr	\$2,500/yr	\$5,000/yr	\$10,000/yr
BASIC DENTAL	\$1,000, 80%	\$1,000, 90%	\$1,500, 90%	\$1,500, 100%
24/7 VIRTUAL HEALTHCARE	Included	Included	Included	Included
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	Included	Included	Included	Included
EMERGENCY TRAVEL INSURANCE	Included	Included	Included	Included

OUR MEMBERS

BC Blueberry Council
BC Broiler Hatching Egg Producers Association
BC Cattlemen's Association
BC Cherry Association
BC Chicken Growers Association
BC Cranberry Growers Association
BC Dairy Association
BC Egg Producers Association
BC Fruit Growers Association
BC Grain Producers Association
BC Grapegrowers Association
BC Greenhouse Growers Association
BC Hazelnut Growers Association
BC Honey Producers Association
BC Landscape & Nursery Association
BC Pork Producers Association
BC Potato & Vegetable Growers Association
BC Poultry Association
BC Salmon Farmers Association
BC Shellfish Growers Association
BC Strawberry Growers Association
BC Turkey Association
BC Wine Grape Council
Fraser Valley Pea and Bush Bean Growers Association
Horse Council British Columbia
Organic BC
Peace Region Forage Seed Association
Raspberry Industry Development Council
United Flower Growers

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