

Regional District of North Okanagan

Regional Agricultural Plan



September 2015

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Acknowledgements

The Regional District of North Okanagan's *Regional Agricultural Plan* is a strategy and policy framework document, resulting from a regional planning initiative led by the RDNO in collaboration with:

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Upland Consulting

Andrea Lawseth, BSc, MSc, PAg
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The project was initiated and coordinated by the RDNO, which included securing a 50/50 match funding agreement with the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC. Project coordination, key input into the plan, and in-kind support were provided by RDNO staff and the Regional Agricultural Advisory Committee. Local citizens, stakeholders, survey respondents, and participants of public meetings and focus groups also provided invaluable input and feedback, for which the authors express much gratitude. Images used in this document are used with permission from the authors, unless otherwise indicated. Not for duplication or distribution. All rights reserved.

This project was funded in part by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC through programs it delivers on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC, are pleased to participate in the delivery of this project. We are committed to working with our partners to address issues of importance to the agriculture and agri-food industry in British Columbia. Opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the Investment Agriculture Foundation.

Funding provided by:



Acronyms

AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
AFIS	Armstrong Food Initiative Society
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
ALUI	Agricultural Land Use Inventory
ARDCorp	Agriculture Research and Development Corporation
BCAA	BC Assessment Authority
BCAC	BC Agriculture Council
BMP	Best Management Practices
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CAI	BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative
CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
CLI	Canadian Land Inventory
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
DPA	Development Permit Area
EFP	Environmental Farm Plan
FIRB	Farm Industry Review Board
FPPA	Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
GVW	Greater Vernon Water
IAF	Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC
IHA	Interior Health Authority
LGA	Local Government Act
LUI	Land Use Inventory
MIR	Meat Inspection Regulation
MoAg	BC Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	BC Ministry of Environment
OBWB	Okanagan Basin Water Board
OCP	Official Community Plan
OCCP	Okanagan Conservation Collaborative Program
OKIB	Okanagan Indian Band
RAP	Regional Agricultural Plan
RAAC	Regional Agricultural Advisory Committee
REF	Real Estate Foundation
RDNO	Regional District of North Okanagan
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy
SSFPA	Small Scale Food Processor Association
UBCM	Union of BC Municipalities

Definitions

It can be difficult for any community to agree upon the terms used to describe food production at a regional level. Definitions outlined by dictionaries, Statistics Canada, the BC Assessment Authority (BCAA), and local plans help to provide a starting point for discussion.

“Agriculture” according to the Merriam Webster dictionary:

The science, art, or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock and in varying degrees the preparation and marketing of the resulting products.

A “census farm” as described by Statistics Canada:

An agricultural operation that produces at least one of the following products intended for sale: crops (hay, field crops, tree fruits or nuts, berries or grapes, vegetables, seed); livestock (cattle, pigs, sheep, horses, game animals, other livestock); poultry (hens, chickens, turkeys, chicks, game birds, other poultry); animal products (milk or cream, eggs, wool, furs, meat); or other agricultural products (Christmas trees, greenhouse or nursery products, mushrooms, sod, honey, maple syrup products).

In the Agricultural Census, an agricultural operation is defined as: “a farm, ranch or other operation that produces agricultural products intended for sale.”

Farm status (or farm class) as determined by BCAA¹:

- a) *land used for a qualifying agricultural use;*
- b) *land used for a purpose that contributes to a qualifying agricultural use;*
- c) *land used for a farmer’s dwelling;*
- d) *land in an agricultural land reserve (ALR) that is used for a retired farmer’s dwelling;*
- e) *land used for the training and boarding of horses when operated in conjunction with horse rearing; and*
- f) *in some cases, vacant land associated with a farm.*

The term “sustainable agriculture” is used throughout this report. For consistency, the definition of “sustainable agriculture” as it appears in the *Township of Spallumcheen Agricultural Plan* is used:

“A sustainable agriculture is one that, over the long term, enhances environmental quality and the resource base on which agriculture depends; provides for basic human food and fiber needs; is economically viable; and enhances the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.”²

A combination of the above-mentioned definitions, the project Terms of Reference, and discussions with farmers and other stakeholders were used to ensure that a variety of levels and types of food production were captured in the RAP to accurately reflect food production occurring in the North Okanagan region.

¹ BC Assessment Authority fact sheet: classifying farmland.

<http://www.bcaassessment.ca/public/Fact%20Sheets/Classifying%20Farm%20Land.aspx>

² Township of Spallumcheen Agricultural Plan. Phase 2 Report: Issues and Opportunities. 2006.



Figure 1. Local honey being sold at Swan Lake Nurseryland, Electoral Area B.

1.0 Introduction

Agriculture defines the history and identity of the North Okanagan. Every community within the North Okanagan includes Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands and has agricultural designations supporting agriculture within their Official Community Plans (OCPs), as well as agricultural policies and zoning. Agriculture provides local and regional economic benefits, as well as multiple opportunities for local access to agricultural produce and products.

The development of a Regional Agricultural Plan (RAP) is an important opportunity for the Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) and the agricultural sector to work toward a more resilient and sustainable local economy. Although the Regional District's and member municipalities' planning initiatives have been lessening urban development pressure on productive agricultural lands, it has been recognized that long term planning for agriculture is essential for the long-term viability, resilience and sustainability of the agricultural sector. The RAP process has provided a unique opportunity to develop recommended strategies, policies, actions and pilot projects that could support agriculture in the future. Upland Consulting has been retained to undertake the development of the RAP.

The RAP was initiated in early 2013 as a priority Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) implementation project, with support by the Investment Agriculture Foundation. The planning process is being led by the Regional District and the Regional Agricultural Advisory Committee (RAAC), comprised of elected officials and members of the farm community. RAAC was essential in providing technical advice and input into the planning process, as well as acting as a liaison within the regional agricultural community.

This report is the culmination of a *Background Report*, *Market Opportunities Analysis*, and extensive consultation with the agricultural community. The *Background Report* presents an overview of the regional context, results of the Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI), Census of Agriculture analysis, community consultation and issue identification. The *Market Opportunities Analysis* provides a high-level assessment of opportunities and challenges facing the North Okanagan agricultural sector. This RAP combines that information with feedback from the community to present a vision statement, key priorities and recommended actions towards planning for agriculture in the North Okanagan. It also includes an overview of potential pilot projects, an implementation strategy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and a list of funding opportunities.

1.1 Intent of Regional Agricultural Plans

Regional Agricultural Plans (RAPs) recognize agriculture as the highest and best use of agricultural land and focus on developing strategies to support a viable agricultural industry at the regional level³. The intent of this plan is to provide an overview of the current regional food system in the North Okanagan (*Background Report*), identify opportunities (*Market Opportunities Analysis*), and make recommendations that would help support a healthy, resilient and sustainable agricultural sector. The RAP considers agriculture in its regional context and attempts to identify and anticipate future changes and challenges. The RAP, although commissioned by the Regional District of North Okanagan, acknowledges that the participation of local governments, senior levels of government, agricultural businesses, community organizations, and the public is essential to realize a resilient, sustainable and profitable regional agricultural sector.



Figure 2. Vernon Farmers Market.

³ Smith, B. 1998. Planning for Agriculture. BC Ministry of Agriculture publication.
<http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/800Series/822420-1.pdf>

1.2 The Regional Agricultural Plan Process

This final document, the RAP, synthesizes the *Background Report* and *Market Opportunities Analysis* into a vision statement, key priorities, a set of recommended actions as well as an outline of pilot projects, an implementation strategy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and a funding strategy.

The specific process objectives of the RAP as set forth in the Terms of Reference are to:

- Undertake a comprehensive analysis of the agricultural industry and the resource base;
- Identify agricultural issues, trends, opportunities and challenges facing the agricultural industry;
- Develop strategies and policies to take advantage of opportunities and mitigate challenges;
- Develop policies to protect agricultural land;
- Develop policy and establish criteria to assist in the evaluation of ALR exclusion, non-farm use and subdivision applications; and,
- Provide recommendations that will promote public awareness of the importance of agriculture.

The RAP process was initiated in December 2013 and includes the following actions:

1. Regular meetings with RDNO staff and the RAAC;
2. Regional food system workshop to identify collaboration opportunities;
3. Public open houses to initiate the project;
4. Focus group sessions with key stakeholders;
5. Surveys of the farming and non-farming communities;
6. General context review and development of the *Background Report*;
7. *Market Opportunities Analysis*;
8. Drafting the *Regional Agricultural Plan*;
9. Reviewing the draft with RDNO staff and the RAAC;
10. Public open house to present the draft RAP to the public; and
11. Finalizing the RAP and preparation for its adoption.



Figure 3. Sheep near Cherryville, BC.

1.3 A Regional Agricultural Plan is a Community Plan

It is important to note that, while the RAP has been developed for the RDNO, it is not the responsibility of the RDNO to accept, adopt, endorse, implement or accommodate any or all of the recommendations included within the RAP. Rather, the RAP represents a community endeavor and as a result it will require the effort of many individuals and organizations within the region to succeed.

Whenever possible, potential lead organizations and agencies are identified within the recommendation tables. The recommendations and associated implementation strategy are put forward with the understanding that collaboration will be required in order to achieve success. Furthermore, the scope of this plan is regional, therefore the provincial and federal level are addressed to some degree but are not the main focus of the report. Several actions and pilot projects would benefit from participation of senior levels of government, as well as the potential stakeholders identified. The North Okanagan is fortunate to be home to many organizations that support local agriculture either directly or indirectly. They include:

Producer Groups

- BC Agricultural Council
- BC Association of Abattoirs
- BC Fruit Growers Association
- BC Grape Growers Association
- BC Poultry Association
- BC Young Farmers – Okanagan
- Interior Greenhouse Growers Association
- Kamloops Okanagan Dairymen Association (KODA)
- Lumby Range/Livestock Association
- North Okanagan Beekeepers Association
- North Okanagan Cattlemen Association
- North Okanagan Organic Association
- Okanagan North Growers Co-op
- Okanagan Shuswap Sheep Producers Association
- Okanagan Tree Fruit Cooperative
- Okanagan-Kootenay Cherry Growers Association

Community Groups

- Armstrong Food Initiative Society
- BuyLocal BC – Okanagan
- Enderby Food Action for Today and Tomorrow (FACT) committee
- Kamloops/Okanagan 4-H Regional Council
- North Okanagan Food Action Society (FASNO)
- Seed Savers
- Vernon Permaculture
- Vernon Pigeon and Poultry Club
- Young Agrarians

2.0 Vision Statement

A RAP vision statement is meant to encompass a direction for the future for agriculture in the region and to speak to key priorities heard from the community. It provides direction for the RAP: the key opportunities, recommended actions, pilot projects, implementation strategy, and funding strategy – these all flow from the vision statement.

The vision statement was derived through an iterative process. Surveys presented to the community (both farmers and non-farmers) included the following question:

What role do you see the local/regional agricultural industry playing within the success and growth of the North Okanagan's economic development?

Key words were taken from the survey responses and discussions with stakeholders and were pulled into a draft vision statement, which was discussed by the RAAC and further refined at the second Focus Group session. The final vision statement is as follows:

By 2035:

Agriculture is an important part of the North Okanagan's past, present, and future identity and offers everyone an opportunity to become connected to the local food system. The land base is affordable for farms of all sizes and profitable agricultural businesses thrive with support from government policies and regulations. Sustainable production practices ensure resilience in the face of climate change and provide residents and visitors with a diversity of healthy food and related agricultural crops.



Figure 4. Fruit orchards outside of Vernon, BC.

3.0 Key Priorities

Feedback gathered from surveys, interviews, focus groups, the *Background Report*, and *Market Opportunities Analysis* were compiled to yield top priorities for the region. The following seven priorities (in no particular order) emerged.

1. Protecting farmland and farmers
2. Strengthening the local agricultural economy
3. Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and climate change resilience
4. Managing clean, accessible, and affordable water
5. Ensuring farmland availability for emerging and multigenerational farmers
6. Creating supportive government policies and regulations
7. Raising awareness through education and celebration of agriculture

The priorities are further explained and a series of recommended actions are provided in table format in the following series of tables. The issue of climate change arose repeatedly and it is felt that each priority is vulnerable to the effects (both known and unknown) of climate change. Particular focus to climate change is afforded in Priority #3.

The tables include a list of suggested key players (including lead agency and supporting partners), along with priority level, timeframe, funding requirements and potential funding sources. It is important to note that the inclusion of any organization or agency in this list *does not* translate into a commitment on their part to participate, rather it provides a suggestion regarding the appropriate type of leadership and support required in order for each action to succeed.

The overall responsibility for the implementation of the RAP rests with the RDNO itself and, therefore, some of the actions are steps that the Regional District can implement. However, this is truly a community-based plan, and members of the farming community and supporting organizations are expected to take a lead role in many of the actions.

The following columns of information are included in the tables:

Actions

1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.:

Describes the specific action(s) required to meet the stated objective.

Potential Key Players

Lead(s): One or more agencies that could take a lead role in embarking upon the activity.

Supporting: One or more agencies that could partner to assist with implementing the action.

Priority

High: Requires urgent action for progress to be made and/or for other actions to succeed.

Medium: Not critical for actions to move forward, but necessary and important.

Low: Less important but still necessary for improvements in the local agriculture system.

Timeframe

- Short: To be completed within 1-3 years.
- Medium: To be completed within 3-5 years.
- Long: To be completed within 5-10 years.
- Ongoing: Will require continued efforts over the short-long term timeframe.

Funding Requirements and Potential Sources

Listed as Existing, Negligible, Low, Moderate, or Significant. Estimated amount and potential granting agencies included whenever possible.



Figure 5. Local food and nursery products for sale Swan Lake Nurseryland, Electoral Area B.

3.1 Priority 1: Protecting Farmland and Farmers

The RDNO has a total area of approximately 787,000 ha, of which 65,124 ha (or 8.7%) is in the ALR. This represents 39% of all ALR lands in the greater Okanagan region. However, most of the ALR is located in the valley bottoms where non-farm development pressure is also greatest; thereby creating the potential for land use conflict. Since the ALR's inception in 1974, the RDNO has lost a net amount of 5,160 ha (7.3% of the farmland base), mostly through removal as part of Electoral Area ALR Reviews. Fortunately ALR loss to development pressure is relatively low compared to other regions of BC with similarly high rates of population growth. This is one indication of the high level of support for farming and the ALR that already exists in the North Okanagan. The limited loss of ALR is due to strong ALR protection policies in OCPs and, more recently, the RGS.

Through a survey conducted in 2014, 38% of farmer respondents indicated that they plan to expand their operations within the next 5 years. In order to accommodate this goal, land use planners and decision-makers will need to maintain their commitment to ALR protection and also support farming endeavours outside the ALR. An Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) conducted in 2014 indicated that nearly 20,000 ha of land outside the ALR is being farmed within the RDNO. A farmed landbase translates into real jobs, both directly and indirectly. In 2006, agriculture represented 4.6% of North Okanagan jobs. When combined with food and beverage manufacturing this number rose to 6.0% of jobs. Within that category, the number of farm operators increased from 1,715 in 2001 to 1,770 in 2011, indicating that the agricultural sector is growing despite existing challenges. Projected annual growth rates in demand for agricultural jobs is 1.7% from 2010 to 2015 for the region, which compares to 1.3% growth in regional jobs overall. Local food production and associated jobs results in economic benefits for the region. In 2011, total gross farm receipts in the RDNO were estimated to be worth over \$126 million. In 2007, the *North Okanagan Food System Action Plan* identified local food being sold at 50 local wholesalers, 36 mainstream retail outlets and 18 alternative retailers, which indicates a high level of consumer demand for local products.

Therefore, it pays to protect farmland. Growth management and farmland protection policies are included within municipal and regional planning documents, which discourage ALR subdivision and exclusion. Additional farmland protection opportunities were identified throughout the stakeholder engagement process. These additional initiatives will help to limit non-agricultural development, minimize conflicts between producers and non-producers, and proactively use and manage farmland for agriculture.

Subthemes that emerged within the recommended actions in this priority include:

- A. Protecting the Farmland Base
- B. Strengthening the ALR: Non-ALR Edge
- C. Information Availability
- D. Taxation Tools and Incentives

Priority 1: Protecting Farmland and Farmers				
A. Protecting the Farmland Base	Potential Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Potential Sources
1.1 Protect current ALR boundaries as stable in planning documents recognizing that amending ALR boundary results in speculation, urban development pressure, and the reduction of agricultural activity on adjoining farmland.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: ALC, MoAg, MoTI	High	Short	Requirements: Low to Moderate Staff time Source: RDNO, member municipalities
1.2 Consider developing an <i>Agricultural Impact Assessment</i> policy for all non-farm development (i.e. subdivision and non-farm use as well as exclusion) applications within the ALR. Development proponents would be required to provide evidence that the proposed use would be of net benefit to agriculture. This could be included within the <i>Development Application Procedures and Administrative Fees Bylaw (No. 2315, 2008)</i> .	Lead: RDNO Supporting: Member municipalities	High	Medium	Requirements: Moderate (\$15,000 - \$20,000) Consultant fees. Amount may be less if done by staff. Source: RDNO
1.3 Encourage the RAAC to review all North Okanagan ALR-related decisions on an annual basis to explore the cumulative impact of applications on the farmland base. These would include exclusion, inclusion, subdivision, non-farm use, and major urban development applications adjacent to the ALR.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low to Moderate Staff time Source: RDNO, member municipalities
1.4 Explore developing guidelines for siting and size of residential uses in the ALR. See the Ministry of Agriculture's Discussion Paper and Bylaw Standard (2011).	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: MoAg, ALC	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low to Moderate (\$5,000 - \$10,000) Sources: RDNO

Priority 1: Protecting Farmland and Farmers				
B. Strengthening the ALR : Non-ALR Edge	Potential Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Potential Sources
1.5 Work with the real estate and development industry to better communicate the impact of the <i>Right to Farm Act</i> on properties adjacent to the ALR. This could involve distributing a brochure (<i>Strengthening Farming</i> produced by MoAg), communicating with realtors, and requesting that disclosure statements to be included for property sales adjacent to farms. Encourage realtors to inform potential buyers if agriculture is a permitted use (and to what extent) within the zone they are considering purchasing.	Leads: Real Estate Industry, Chambers of Commerce, MoAg, ALC Supporting: RDNO , RCMP, member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Mainly staff time. Sources: REF, RDNO
1.6 In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers, consider developing a “good neighbour” agricultural policy to encourage farmers, non-farming neighbours and the general public to deal with issues of conflict using an issue-based approach.	Leads: RDNO , MoAg, member municipalities	High	Medium	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Sources: RDNO, member municipalities
1.7 Consider encouraging the creation of a DPA for Farmland Protection on land located adjacent to the ALR for OCPs within the RDNO that are currently lacking this tool. In concert with the DPA, develop comprehensive mapping identifying ALR areas that may require buffering from non-farm land uses. Consider including buffers on land located adjacent to farms that are not in the ALR.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Short	Requirements: Moderate to high (>\$15,000) Sources: RDNO, member municipalities

Priority 1: Protecting Farmland and Farmers				
C. Information Availability	Potential Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Potential Sources
1.8 Use the 2014 ALUI results and 2011 Agricultural Census data to create a baseline of agricultural information and interactive online mapping tool, based on the RDNO Map interface. Update the data with subsequent Stats Canada reports to monitor changes to RDNO's agricultural sectors. Include Canada Land Inventory data layers when they become available.	Lead: RDNO , MoAg Supporting: Member municipalities	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Moderate (\$15,000 - \$20,000) Sources: RDNO, member municipalities
1.9 Create a weblink that extends from the RDNO website to the online FASNO farm directory. http://foodaction.ca/directory/	Leads: RDNO Supporting: FASNO	High	Short	Requirements: Negligible
1.10 Consider conducting a deeper level of investigation into how farmers wish to expand their operations in the next few years. This information will better help decision-makers plan for and facilitate changes to the local agricultural sector.	Leads: UBCO, Okanagan College Supporting: RDNO , ALC, MoAg	Medium	Short	Requirements: Moderate. (\$15,000 - \$20,000) Possible summer student position. Sources: IAF, REF, other grants.

Priority 1: Protecting Farmland and Farmers				
D. Taxation Tools and Incentives	Potential Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Potential Sources
1.11 Work with BCAA to explore whether the sale of value-added products could be included in determining primary production gross income. Currently only the sale of raw farm products are included in the calculation of income, and this threshold is often too high for small farms to achieve farm status for tax purposes.	Leads: MoAg, BCAA Supporting: RDNO	High	Medium	Requirements: Negligible
1.12 Encourage farmers and property owners leasing their land to farmers to apply for farm tax status through the BCAA. This will reduce the annual tax rate and create more affordability in land access.	Leads: RDNO Supporting: Real Estate Industry, MoAg, ALC	High	Medium	Requirements: Staff time (information session or factsheet or other communications piece).



Figure 6. Farm for sale in Mara, BC.

3.2 Priority 2: Strengthening the Local Agricultural Economy

North Okanagan farmers are able to produce a fairly wide variety of crops and livestock products and local retailers have a keen interest in offering local products for sale and have expressed that there is strong demand for local food. While gross farm receipts for the North Okanagan were \$126 million in 2011, most of that capital is exported from the region. Meanwhile, an estimated total of \$300 million is spent on food and food products in the region every year. This points to an opportunity to keep more food dollars within the community. Many farmers, ranchers, and orchardists in the North Okanagan are experiencing the same economic challenges as other farms across BC. Overall, North Okanagan farms have gotten more profitable over the years. The gross margin has risen from 5% in 2001 to 11% in 2011, meaning that for every dollar of sales, the farmer earns eleven cents of profit. The revenue per hectare of farms in the North Okanagan has also increased since 1996 from \$1,343 to \$1,495 (10%) in 2011. However, when adjusted for inflation, the numbers look different. In 2011, the \$1,495 earned per ha equates to just \$1,109 in 1996 dollars. This means that farmers lost 17% in the 15 years between 1996 and 2011 on a per hectare basis when adjusted for inflation. There are therefore struggles with profitability, which translates into challenges in expanding operations, or to making efficiencies through the adoption of technology (purchasing equipment).

While previous local plans to improve the connectivity of the food system have seen some success, there have been financial, administrative, and regulatory obstacles in meeting objectives. Support for new farming initiatives is important for growing the sector; however, support is also needed to enhance current farming operations and allow farmers to capitalize on economies of scale. The majority of small-scale produce growers are unable to provide enough quantity of products for export out of the region independently, or to sell to retail outlets and restaurants on a consistent basis. At the same time, the majority of fluid milk being produced by dairy operators is being shipped out of the region on a daily basis. The need to encourage farm product processing and other value-added opportunities regionally is recognized as a way to increase economic viability.

Initiatives are required to assist producers to improve sector viability regionally. Innovation enhances profitability and allows farmers to develop entrepreneurial ideas, gain useful marketing and business management skills, and access capital. Unfortunately, a detailed economic development strategy for agriculture in the RDNO is missing. If developed, this agri-economic development strategy would provide a clear, supported direction for local agricultural enterprises and would attract innovative business models that are tailored to RDNO's specific situation, needs, and values.

Subthemes that emerged within the recommended actions in this priority include:

- A. Economic viability of local operations
- B. Regional marketing opportunities
- C. Creation, distribution, and sales of value-added farm products

Priority 2: Strengthening the Local Agricultural Economy				
A. Economic viability of local operations	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Sources
2.1 Continue to support efforts by the City of Vernon's Economic Development Department to explore opportunities to promote agricultural business development and initiatives through economic development planning, including the identification of funding opportunities.	Leads: City of Vernon	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time Sources: CoV/RDNO
2.2 Continue to support the objectives of the Regional Employment Lands Action Plan that closely match the intent of the Regional Agricultural Plan. Topics of common interest may include ensuring that agriculture is highlighted as a key employments sector, and co-locating agri-industrial and agri-support business through land use designation.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time Sources: RDNO
2.3 Host a skills and knowledge building workshop series to discuss successful farm business models. Include topics such as winter business models, becoming wholesale ready, food processing and value adding, marketing boards, small-scale alternative green energy projects, production quotas, and food safety.	Leads: Community Futures, FASNO, other agri-organizations Support: RDNO , MoAg	High	Medium	Requirements: Moderate (\$5,000 - \$10,000) Sources: Non-profit grants
2.4 Actively facilitate connections between producers who need skilled labour and existing employment programs (e.g. agri labour pool; student summer job program; Step-Up; and SOIL apprenticeships).	Leads: MoAg, Service Canada, farmers Support: Post secondary institutes, employment service organizations	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) These programs exist - it is just a matter of connecting producers to them. Sources: MoAg (in kind), Service Canada
2.5 Support a pilot project to establish a <i>North Okanagan Farmers Institute</i> that is inclusive of a diversity of producer types, sizes, and scales.	Leads: Farmers, Young Agrarians Support: RDNO (RAAC)	High	Short	Requirements: Staff time
2.6 Perform an inventory of regional farm equipment and determine if enough farmers are willing to form an equipment co-operative or share/rental system. The B.C. Cooperative Association provides information and other support for cooperative farms where resources, capital and knowledge can be pooled.	Lead: Farmers, local agricultural and food organizations Supporting: BC Coop Association	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Sources: IAF, RDNO

Priority 2: Strengthening the Local Agricultural Economy

A. Economic viability of local operations	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Sources
2.7 Support the adoption of on-line software systems that connect producers to food retailers and wholesalers to improve communication and ease of ordering, logistics, locating local products, direct purchasing connections, and the number of business relationships with regional producers.	Leads: Regional producers, Retailers, wholesalers, chefs Supporting: Farmers	High	Medium	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Sources: IAF, local economic development organizations



Figure 7. Local value-added products for sale in Enderby, BC.

Priority 2: Strengthening the Local Agricultural Economy				
B. Regional marketing opportunities	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Sources
2.8 Build upon online and print resources that showcase regional farmers and food businesses, as well as maps of local food restaurants, farm tours, wineries, breweries, cheese-makers, among others. Currently there are several directories with overlap in listings but many are not kept up-to-date and others are incomplete. One streamlined local food guide or directory, similar to what is produced in the Comox Valley, would assist not only the public, but also farmers get to know what types of activities are occurring in their area and potentially create opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.	Leads: Vernon Tourism, FASNO, Okanagan and Shuswap Chefs Association. Supporting: RDNO , Member municipalities, BCAFM, Community Futures	High	Short	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000) Requires ongoing maintenance and renewal. Sources: Advertisers, Tourism BC, REF
2.9 Assist the agricultural community with the development of a common local identity, logo, or brand that can be used to highlight North Okanagan farms and their farm products and differentiate them from other regions.	Leads: EDC, Farmers Institutes, BC Tourism Supporting: BCAFM, CSR	Medium	Long	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Sources: IAF, RDN, graphic designer in-kind, other grants
2.10 Consider exploring the results of previous feasibility studies to determine whether opportunities exist for a year-round indoor farmers' market or storefront with regular hours. Example: <i>The City of Vernon's Public Market Feasibility Study and Business Plan (2011)</i>	Leads: BCAFM, farmers, development community Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Medium	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Cost will depend on location and management model. Sources: Vendor fees, grants, credit unions
2.11 Explore additional partnership opportunities to further promote North Okanagan agri-tourism, including enhanced promotion of the Shuswap Circle Tour.	Leads: City of Vernon, Shuswap Tourism Supporting: RDNO , Vernon Tourism, BC Tourism	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Moderate to Significant (\$15,000 - \$20,000) Sources: BC Tourism, farmers (in-kind), BCAFM (in-kind), chamber of commerce, local media.

Priority 2: Strengthening the Local Agricultural Economy				
C. Creation, distribution, and sales of value-added farm products	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Resource Requirements & Sources
2.12 Explore increasing financially viable processing infrastructure within the region. This could include milk processing (yogurt), wheat and grain value chains, or large-scale meat processing. The <i>Regional Employment Lands Action Plan</i> and, potentially, the upcoming <i>Regional Growth Strategy 5-Year Review</i> , provide opportunities to explore these.	Leads: Producer groups (KODA, etc.), RDNO Supporting: MoAg	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
2.13 Facilitate connections between local farmers and organizations such as the Small Scale Food Processors Association, small scale meat processing, and existing cold storage facilities.	Leads: Farmers and agri-organizations Support: SSFPA	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible
2.14 Continue working with local farmers, agricultural operators, senior levels of government, member municipalities, and IHA on solutions that would facilitate local food processing, including the continuation or expansion of the North Okanagan Class “E” License pilot program to support Class D and E licenses in the region.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities, IHA, ALC, MoAg	High	Long	Requirements: Staff time
2.15 Encourage producers to build upon the success of existing production of niche and specialty products to create collaborative marketing opportunities both within and external to the region.	Leads: Farm businesses, processing agencies	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Negligible
2.16 Support and improve other Shuswap and Okanagan farmer-owned brokerage firms or co-ops to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-ordinate production and on-stream timing, - Provide a central order desk for local retailers, - Provide information about sources of supply and on-farm markets, - Co-ordinate transportation of inputs and goods for sale - Facilitate connections between local farmers and chefs to increase the amount of local food offered in restaurants, cafeterias, schools, etc. and to help farmers plan what and how much to grow of various crops in order to meet demand. 	Leads: Farmers, Retailers, Distribution companies Supporting: RDNO	High	Medium	Requirements: Depends on how the program is carried out. Could be low – moderate. Sources: Co-op Assoc. of BC, Farmers Institutes (in-kind)
2.17 Identify potential mechanisms by which farming workshops, demonstrations, and educational courses can be offered on a regular basis, including possible collaboration with academic institutions.	Lead: IHA, academic institutes, farmers, RDNO Supporting: MoAg,	Low	Medium	Requirements: Negligible Sources: IHA, MoAg

3.3 Priority 3: Encouraging Sustainable Agricultural Practices and Climate Change Resilience

The North Okanagan is one of the more productive growing regions in Canada. Many farmers in the region have indicated that they are committed to growing food in a sustainable manner and community members are interested in seeing environmentally-sound practices in the region continue to be enhanced. While the agricultural sector has a role to play in becoming more efficient and minimizing carbon emissions, it need not be unduly targeted. Rather, it is one piece of our society that has an overarching duty to respond to climate change. The RDNO will work with provincial and federal governments on clarity around GHG emission targets and reduction strategies for all sectors.

Regardless of the great climate and soils in the region, there is still some concern about adaptation to climate change and mitigating potentially harmful effects. Some constraints were raised as challenges to farming in responses to the Farming Survey and during focus group sessions. Specific challenges include high irrigation needs, stony and hard clay soils, steep slopes, shallow soils, poor drainage, invasive species and predator threats to livestock. Water and climate change are closely tied to emergency planning as well. As a result of climate change, farmers are expecting to deal with emergency weather events such as drought more frequently. Other emergencies, such as storm events or earthquakes, would shine a light on the need for local food to sustain the North Okanagan residents during the emergency. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to farming operations from an emergency preparedness perspective as well. Programs such as the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) exist for farmers to access with financial incentives for installation of items such as composting systems and manure storage facilities.

Invasive species, particularly plant species such as horsetail and tansy ragwort, have known impacts to the agriculture and livestock industry. Some of these species are poisonous to livestock and encroach onto agricultural land from drainage ditches, roadways, rights of way, and empty lots. Conflicts between agriculture and wildlife exist in most BC communities, however some conflicts are more evident in rural areas. Wildlife such as Bighorn sheep, deer, and black bears can have significant impacts on crops and livestock production. Diseases can be spread between Bighorn sheep and domestic sheep, which can have detrimental effects on production. Best management practices can help to mitigate effects of wildlife and invasive plant species and maximize the efficient use of resources.

Subthemes that emerged within the recommended actions in this priority include:

- A. Climate change adaptation and emergency planning
- B. Implementation of sustainable farm practices and technologies
- C. Wildlife and livestock interaction management
- D. Control of invasive species and mitigation of their effects

Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and climate change resilience				
A. Climate change adaptation and emergency planning	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
3.1 Consider developing a regional Agricultural Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Implementation Plan. The plan will identify top priority actions for assisting farmers in accessing and interpreting raw data, adapting to, and mitigating the effects of, climate change such as drought or flooding impacts, or the need to try different crop varieties.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities, CAI, OBWB, farmers Supporting: MoAg, BC Emergency Response	High	Medium	Requirements: High (> \$20,000) Sources: MoAg, CAI, IAF, OBWB
3.2 Collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture on a pilot project that would develop site-specific climate change mitigation plans for individual farms.	Leads: RDNO , CAI, farmers Supporting: MoAg, BC Emergency Response	High	Medium	Requirements: High (>\$20,000) Sources: CAI, MoAg, RDNO
3.3 Assist in producer education around climate change adaptation by hosting discussions and workshops on: crop tolerance to drought, insurance, integrated management of pests and disease, habitat for pollinators, re-introduction of native grasses for pasturing, and using technologies that protect crops from weather damage.	Leads: RDNO , CAI, member municipalities Supporting: MoAg, UBC Okanagan, Okanagan College	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low to Moderate (\$5,000 - \$10,000) Sources: MoAg, CAI
3.4 Update the North Okanagan Farmed Animal Mass Carcass Disposal Plan to include provisions for farmed animal relocation to respond to emergency events. This update may include identification of relocation areas, transportation routes and animal housing needs.	Leads: RDNO , CAI, member municipalities, groundwater representative(s) Supporting: MoAg	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Moderate to High (\$15,000 - >\$20,000) Sources: MoAg, RDNO, CAI
3.5 Participate in ecologically-based conservation programs that are specific to farmland.	Leads: OCCP, farmers Supporting: MoAg, MoE, RDNO , member municipalities, OBWB	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) Staff time Sources: RDNO, MoE, MoAg, Environment Canada

Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and climate change resilience				
B. Implementation of sustainable farm practices and technologies	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
3.6 Encourage farmers to participate in the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program by working with Advisors to create an environmental health plan for the farm. The EFP is voluntary, confidential, and free. There are financial incentives for implementing best management practices.	Lead: MoAg, ARDCorp, farmers Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low Sources: MoAg, ARDCorp
3.7 Support farmers to assess the carrying capacity of the available land base to utilize nutrients. This may include continuing to export and/or compost manure, and using precision nutrient application practices to reduce nutrient runoff into surface and groundwater resources. Encourage farm tours of operations using best practices to share success stories throughout the farming community. These tours or learning exchanges could be done on a sector-by-sector basis (e.g. dairy, beef, poultry).	Lead: MoAg, farmers, MoE Supporting, RDNO, member municipalities	High	Medium	Requirements: Moderate to High (> \$20,000) Sources: MoAg, ARDCorp
3.8 Assist producers who wish to access permits to manage vegetation in ditches. Provide communication leadership between individual farmers, MoE, and Fisheries & Oceans to expedite the process.	Lead: RDNO, MoAg, farmers Supporting: MoE, F&O	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low
3.9 Become engaged in the review of the Agricultural Waste Control Regulation. Elected officials, farmers, and members of the public could provide feedback to the MoE through this process.	Lead: RDNO, farmers, member municipalities Supporting: MoE, MoAg	High	Short - Medium	Requirements: Low
3.10 Encourage those with challenging, environmentally sensitive and forested properties or those with shallow soils to consider alternative ecological farming practices such as agroforestry.	Lead: MoAg, ARDCorp, farmers Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low Sources: MoAg, ARDCorp
3.11 Support the health of pollinators through habitat preservation and adoption of agro-ecological principles. E.g. distribution of bee nest boxes and the planting of wildflowers in public parks and other public spaces.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: local food organizations, public	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low – Moderate (\$5,000 - \$15,000)

Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and climate change resilience				
B. Implementation of sustainable farm practices and technologies	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
3.12 Support environmental education opportunities for producers.	Lead: MoAg, MoE, local academic institutes.	High	Medium	Requirements: Variable, depending on the method of education used.
3.13 Develop a food system and agriculture speaker series at Okanagan College, with a focus on topical issues on food and the environment.	Lead: Okanagan College, farmers Supporting: local food organizations, public	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Variable, depending on length and depth of the speaker series. Sources: Okanagan College



Figure 8. Greenhouse production in the North Okanagan.

Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and climate change resilience				
C. Wildlife and livestock interaction management	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
3.14 Participate in initiatives to seek management solutions to deter wildlife (e.g. Bighorn sheep, coyotes, bears, deer) from damaging crops and livestock and spreading diseases.	Leads: RDNO , MoE, MoAg, OCCP, member munis Supporting: SPCA, Bear Aware, EFP program	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Will depend on initiatives Sources: MoE, ARDCorp, IAF, non-profit grants
3.15 Distribute research and other information on current ungulate migratory pathways and wildlife corridors regionally. Include strategies to reduce livestock interactions with wildlife. The MoE and the IAF have many publications available on these topics.	Leads: OCCP Supporting: IAF, MoE	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low (< \$5,000) Sources: MoE, IAF
3.16 Communicate information to farmers about the provincial crop insurance program.	Lead: MoAg, farmers Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	Medium	Short	Requirements: Low Sources: MoAg

Priority 3: Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and climate change resilience				
D. Control of invasive species and mitigation of their effects	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
3.17 Encourage coordination between MoE, MOTI, FLNRO and AGRI to manage noxious weeds on Crown range land. This will help to ensure farmland availability for the long term.	Leads: MoAg, MoE, FLNRO, MoTI Supporting: farmers, RDNO	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low Sources: MoAg
3.18 Continue to support the reduction of invasive species and noxious weeds through bylaw enforcement and collaborate with the agricultural community to identify high-priority areas.	Leads: RDNO , farmers Supporting: MoE, MoAg, member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time (bylaw enforcement)

3.4 Priority 4: Managing Clean, Accessible, and Affordable Water

There was consistent feedback from farmers throughout the consultation process that access to irrigation water and seasonal water scarcity were among the top challenges to agricultural production. The issues of water rates & utility costs, rights to water access for new producers, and on-farm water storage were also raised. Summer irrigation needs for agriculture and domestic uses are 2.5 times higher than the annual average use, which significantly reduces in-stream flows. Additionally, climate change has led to lower summer flows overall for the last 30 years.

The use of reclaimed water can be one way of limiting the stress on an overburdened water system and is one of many environmentally conscious water reduction strategies that could be implemented. Currently, only a small proportion (approximately 10%) of reclaimed water from the community water system is used for irrigation in the North Okanagan. Other strategies such as on-farm water storage, low-flow irrigation equipment and techniques and the use of drought tolerant crop varieties can further lessen water usage rates.

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) conducts a variety of research projects on water usage by farmers in the area and is interested in balancing water use, protecting necessary irrigation volumes and ensuring water access for all water uses in the Okanagan watershed. Tools such as an updated and expanded North Okanagan Agricultural Water Demand Model being produced by the BC Ministry of Agriculture will help to inform future water usage strategies. This model calculates water use on a property-by-property basis and includes data on crop types, irrigation systems, soils and climate data. The model also links water use areas with surface and groundwater source to determine future supply conditions. Additionally, the new *Water Sustainability Act* (2014) encourages Regional Water Management Plans/Strategies, which would require participation and support from the local farming community.

Subthemes that emerged within the recommended actions in this priority include:

- A. Policies and strategies that support management of water quality and quantity
- B. Innovative on-farm water use and conservation
- C. Water governance and agriculture

Priority 4: Managing clean, accessible, and affordable water				
A. Policies and strategies that support management of water quality and quantity	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
4.1 Monitor BC's new <i>Water Sustainability Act</i> for forthcoming regulations that may be pertinent to the agricultural community.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: MoE, MoAg	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible
4.2 Participate in the development of Water Sustainability Plans, which would include the agriculture sector as a major component.	Lead: OBWB Supporting: MoE, MoAg, farmers, RDNO , member municipalities, IHA	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Sources: OBWB MoE, IHA, participating local governments
4.3 Continue to support the implementation of actions outlined in the OBWB <i>Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy</i>	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: OBWB	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low to Significant Sources: OBWB, RDNO
4.4 Match the recent <i>Shuswap River Watershed Sustainability Plan</i> with AGRI's Water Demand Model results from the 2014 Agricultural Land Use Inventory.	Lead: RDNO Supporting: AGRI	Medium	Short	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) Staff time Sources: RDNO
4.5 Collaborate with senior levels of government on coordinated solutions to surface and groundwater issues that may impact the agricultural sector, such as water quality, fisheries management, flooding and drainage and inter-basin water transfers.	Leads: RDNO , farmers Supporting: Fisheries and Oceans Canada, MoE, MoAg	High	Long	Requirements: Low to Significant Sources: RDNO, MoE, MoAg
4.6 Continue to consider agricultural water supply and drainage needs, including irrigation and livestock watering, in all land use, surface water management, and groundwater management plans.	Leads: RDNO Supporting: member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible

Priority 4: Managing clean, accessible, and affordable water				
B. Innovative on-farm water use and conservation	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
4.7 Encourage the continued development, implementation, and support for the use of non-potable water for some farm activities.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities, farmers Supporting: MoAg, agricultural supply industry	High	Medium	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) Staff time Source: RDNO, water utilities
4.8 Review current groundwater inventory and mapping and assess potential opportunities for irrigation from aquifer sources.	Leads: OBWB, MoE, UBCO Supporting: member municipalities, RDNO , NRCan	High	Medium	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Sources: MoE, OBWB
4.9 Encourage farmers to use the Scientific Research and Experimental Development Program (SR&ED) to obtain funding to develop and test innovative irrigation technologies.	Leads: Farmers, MoAg, AAFC Supporting: consultants	Low	Medium	Requirements: Negligible
4.10 Support a pilot project for farmers who would like to improve water intake systems and storage of water on their property for the purposes of farming. This could include a farm tour of producers who have successfully created on-farm water storage.	Leads: MoAg, MoE, CAI Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities, agricultural supply industry	High	Medium	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) In-kind staff support Sources: RDNO
4.11 Promote the implementation of BMPs for irrigation and water conservation on farms through the EFP program and other programs.	Leads: MoE, MoAg, farmers Supporting: RDNO	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible to Significant depending on the BMP Sources: ARDCorp
4.12 Encourage the use of the BC Irrigation Scheduling Calculator as developed by the BC Ministry of Agriculture, and the AgConnect tool as developed by Greater Vernon Water.	Leads: MoAg, farmers, GVW Supporting: RDNO	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible
4.13 Utilize programs, such as the EFP program, to assist with funding the construction of livestock exclusion fencing and ensuring healthy riparian buffer areas to protect surface water from manure runoff, alg.	Leads: MoAg, farmers Supporting: RDNO	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible to Significant depending on the size of the project Sources: ARDCorp, OBWB

Priority 4: Managing clean, accessible, and affordable water				
C. Water governance and agriculture	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
4.14 Collaborate with the farming community to discuss water governance and rates. This could be done by hosting a forum to discuss water affordability within the current governance and rate structure.	Leads: Greater Vernon Water, other local water utilities, OBWB, farmers Supporters: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Short	Requirements: Low to Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000)
4.15 Continue to collaborate with the farming community to maintain access to adequate quantities of water at appropriate rates for farm operators.	Leads: Greater Vernon Water, other local water utilities, OBWB, farmers	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low to Significant

3.5 Priority 5: Ensuring Farmland Availability for Emerging and Multigenerational Farmers

The cost of farmland in most regions of BC is prohibitive: not only for new farmers but also for those who are taking over longstanding family farm businesses. Concerns have been raised by the North Okanagan farming community regarding the most appropriate type of access agreement for land (purchases, rentals, and leases) and affordable farm financing. Most farmers need financial assistance in order to scale up their production and often one family member must work off the farm. North Okanagan farmers responded overwhelmingly through the survey and one-on-one interviews that the cost of land, taxes, and inputs are some of the top concerns facing agriculture in the RDNO. Despite these challenges, many are hoping to expand their operations over the next five years. It's clear that expansion or start-ups of any business type requires significant investments. For agriculture that includes land, plants, animals, equipment, labour, training, permits, licences, or technology. Despite these costs, interest rates are currently relatively low, and now would likely be a good time to invest in the agricultural sector.

Land tenure can be an indication of farm stability. Those leasing land are less stable than those who own their land with regard to investments in infrastructure. In the North Okanagan, 45.5% of the land is owned, while 54.5% of the land is either leased from governments, rented or leased from others, or crop-shared with others. Despite the association with long term instability, leasing (or licencing) farmland can be one of the most affordable ways for farms to become established. During the first Focus Group session in May 2014, producers indicated there was difficulty of accessing land for leasing and for new entrants to agriculture. There were concerns raised about the limitations to land tenure and leasing and that the length of land rentals restricted the inclination or ability for farmers to invest in infrastructure or land and soil improvements. Some of the farmers present in the Focus Group session also mentioned that they were actively looking for land to lease, which indicated a desire to expand current production and potential for market growth.

Whether a producer is just starting out or coming from a long family history of farming, the question whether and how to obtain land is challenging. While most of the North Okanagan ALR (and some farmland outside the ALR) has been cleared, large capital costs may still be required to convert or prepare land to be productive. Sometimes a family's younger generation of farmers may decide to switch crop varieties, upgrade equipment, or modernize practices. These activities all entail investment costs. With appropriate policies and community initiatives in place, some of the burden of accessing land can be alleviated.

Subthemes that emerged within the recommended actions in this priority include:

- A. Farmland access options
- B. Succession planning
- C. Alternative land access options

Priority 5: Ensuring farmland availability for emerging and multigenerational farmers				
A. Farmland access options	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
5.1 Continue to create and share resources such as farmland access agreement reports and decision-making guides. Share links to the resources on local government websites.	Lead: Young Agrarians, Farm Folk / City Folk Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low (\$5,000 - \$10,000) Sources: non-profit grants
5.2 Collaborate with farmers who are seeking land to document the challenges they encounter at a local regulatory level. Results can be used to inform how to best support new and emerging farmers.	Lead: Young Agrarians, farmers	Medium	Long	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000) Sources: IAF, REF
5.3 Monitor ongoing changes to the ALC Act and regulations to determine new legal parameters around long-term lease agreements on ALR.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: MoAg, ALC	High	Short	Requirements: Low Sources: RDNO
5.4 Provide leadership regarding the distribution of information on financing options. This may include hosting events to share examples of successful farm business plans, grant or loan applications, or alternative financing opportunities.	Lead: Community Futures, Real Estate Industry, lending agencies Supporting: Young Agrarians, MoAg	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000) Sources: IAF, REF
5.5 Encourage realtors to become more knowledgeable regarding farmland access types.	Leads: Real estate industry	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible

Priority 5: Ensuring farmland availability for emerging and multigenerational farmers				
B. Succession planning	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
5.6 Offer assistance and workshops on options for family farm succession planning. This may include fostering a mentorship program for those without anyone to pass the farm to within the family.	Lead: MoAg, ALC, Growing Forward Supporting: RDNO , farmers	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 to \$15,000) Sources: ARDCorp, FIRB
5.7 Provide access to research and information regarding alternative business arrangements such as stratas, cooperatives, and corporations and alternative land ownership/tenure models. These may assist families in succession planning.	Leads: Young Agrarians, MoAg Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities, farmers	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low (< \$5,000) Sources: REF



Figure 9. Dairy farm outside of Enderby, BC

Priority 5: Ensuring farmland availability for emerging and multigenerational farmers				
C. Alternative land access options	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements and Sources
5.8 Continue to update and promote land-linking and mentorship programs to match land with people who want to farm.	Leads: Young Agrarians Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities, realtors	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) Sources: various NGO funding
5.9 Explore the possibility of using the 2014 Agricultural Land Use Inventory results to create a database of ALR properties that are either vacant or being underused in terms of food production.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: Real Estate Industry, Young Agrarians	High	Short	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 to \$15,000) Sources: RDNO, Young Agrarians
5.10 Support apprenticeships, mentorships, incubator farms, and other farm-based employment programs. This could include: industry-based training programs (e.g. for dairy technicians); Step-Up - a federal mentoring program; and Okanagan College's Culinary Arts Program. This will assist new/emerging farmers to gain experience prior to renting or purchasing land.	Leads: Community Futures, Okanagan College, UBCO, Young Agrarians, ag industry, AAFC Supporting: farmers, Farm Folk / City Folk, RDNO , member municipalities,	Medium	Long	Requirements: Low (<\$5,000) In-kind staff support. Established programs are self-funded. Sources: SIDIT, Western Diversification,
5.11 Consider putting publicly-owned ALR properties into a <i>Regional Farmland Trust</i> or <i>Agricultural Parks</i> for new and emerging farmers, a community allotment gardening program, an incubator farm program, or an agricultural demonstration site.	Leads: RDNO , Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low to Significant

3.6 Priority 6: Creating Supportive Government Policies and Regulations

Land use regulation by local governments is established under the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*, which contains extensive land use regulations, zoning powers and subdivision powers. This enables local governments to adopt regional growth strategies and OCPs that establish a framework for land use regulation, including zoning bylaws. The RDNO's growth management plans and OCPs recognize agriculture as a significant contributor to the region's landscape, identity and economy. Zoning bylaws can influence agricultural land in several ways, including through the setting of minimum parcel sizes and maximum building foot prints, setting parameters around secondary dwellings, setbacks, and establishing the potential for subdivision of agricultural lands, to name a few. Collectively, these plans express a commitment to the preservation and strengthening of the region's rural economy and lifestyle, including the protection of lands capable of agricultural productivity, encouraging a diverse and profitable agricultural sector and supporting a sustainable and resilient local food system.

One indication of high support for agriculture is the recent development of the RDNO's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). As part of that process, a *Quality of Life* survey was conducted in 2013 and was completed by over 1,400 residents. Survey respondents rated *Agriculture & Food Systems* as the second most important policy area after *Environment & Natural Lands*. The RGS agriculture and food system policies were recommended, through consensus, by a Working Group that included agricultural producers, urban agriculture organizations, educational institutions and local, regional and provincial staff. Every municipal and Electoral Area OCP bylaw is required to contain a Regional Context Statement, which describes how the policies are aligned with the RGS.

Despite this local support, some government policies and regulations continue to pose challenges for farmers and understanding the interplay between various statutes, bylaws and regulations can be difficult. There are numerous federal, provincial, regional and municipal governing authorities that regulate agricultural uses and food production and these are scattered in various statutes, regulations, bylaws and guidelines. It is important to note that many provincial and federal regulations affecting agriculture are beyond the jurisdictional scope of the local and regional government in BC. The intent of the RAP is to provide guidance to regional and local government that supports local and regional planning efforts. Awareness of jurisdictional responsibilities and authority can be useful in defining policy, strategies, actions and pilot projects that can be taken by local government and those that require broader collaboration.

Subthemes that emerge within the recommended actions in this theme include:

- A. Policy and Plan Updates
- B. Subdivision and Zoning Considerations
- C. Availability of Local and Regional Support
- D. Food Policy

Priority 6: Creating Supportive Government Policies and Regulations				
A. Policy and Plan Updates	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements & Sources
6.1 Continue to work with member municipalities to encourage the efficient use of existing serviced urban, and future urban lands for residential development, as identified in the RDNO's Regional Growth Strategy. Work with member municipalities to investigate a cooperative policy approach to agricultural lands within the urban/rural interface that will mitigate the loss of agricultural land to potential expansion of urban growth areas.	Lead: RDNO Supporting: Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
6.2 Include a regular review and update of the planning documents, bylaws and administrative policies and provincial and federal regulatory changes to ensure that they reflect the increasing interest and commitment to regional agriculture and the North Okanagan food system. The upcoming 5-year RGS Review provides an opportunity to begin this process.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: RAAC, local planning committees	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
6.3 Explore funding opportunities and mechanisms to resource the implementation of the RAP. Possible matching funds are available from a variety of grant agencies (see the RAP Funding Strategy for more details).	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
6.4 Host annual meetings with local municipal governments, Splotsin First Nation, Okanagan Indian Band, and farmers to discuss plans, policies and bylaws affecting local agriculture.	Lead: RDNO Supporting: Farmers, OKIB, Splotsin First Nation	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time

Priority 6: Creating Supportive Government Policies and Regulations				
B. Subdivision and Zoning Considerations	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements & Sources
6.5 Consider not forwarding applications to the ALC for exclusion, subdivision, or non-farm uses which are not consistent with existing OCP or zoning bylaws (including applications for wind turbines), or alternatively forwarding, but not supporting, applications which are inconsistent with local government bylaws.	Lead: RDNO	High	Short	Requirements: Staff time
6.6 Include provisions in all policy documents that make it clear that neither a subdivision approving officer nor the ALC is obliged to approve subdivision applications that meet minimum lot sizes. This is already included in most documents.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: ALC	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time Source: RDNO, member municipalities
6.7 Consider developing Development Permit Area (DPA) for Farmland Protection for all OCPs within the RDNO to ensure consistency throughout the RDNO for requirements of development (e.g. vegetative buffers, consideration of road endings). This would apply to properties adjacent to ALR land for development permits and subdivision applications. Request member municipalities to adopt similar DPA guidelines for Farmland Protection.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: ALC	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time and resources (using existing information such as CLI and LUI inventory mapping data). Source: RDNO, member municipalities
6.8 Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and utility companies on approaches to corridor design that minimize the impact on the ALR and existing agricultural operations. Example: ALC's <i>Subdivision Approval Officer's Toolkit</i> : http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/planag/subdiv.htm	Lead: MoTI, BC Hydro, RDNO Supporting: Member municipalities, ALC	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff Time Will require meetings or other forms of communication with MoTI and several ALR landowners.
6.9 Review permitted uses on land both outside the ALR and zoned as light industrial to ensure it encourages the development of support services and value-added agricultural production. During the RGS 5-Year Review, explore the introduction of Employment Land designations and policies that include Agri-Industrial and Agri-Commercial Areas. The <i>Regional Employment Lands Action Plan</i> currently being undertaken by the RDNO may be an appropriate vehicle for starting this action as it may be crafted to include consideration of agricultural processing incentives such as siting or co-supportive opportunities.	Lead: RDNO Supporting: Member municipalities, ALC	High	Medium	Requirements: Staff time

Priority 6: Creating Supportive Government Policies and Regulations				
B. Subdivision and Zoning Considerations	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements & Sources
6.10 During the RGS 5-Year Review, work with the ALC on regional policies that would support innovative agricultural processing or retail proposals, including cooperative arrangement, that would support the resilience and sustainability of local agriculture.	Lead: RDNO , MoAg, ALC Supporting: Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
6.11 Examine the feasibility of identifying “urban agriculture” as an allowed activity within town centres and on rural residential land and perhaps even within greenspaces and parklands. This scale of food production will help to support a healthy pollinator population and raise awareness regarding what’s in season locally.	Lead: Member municipalities Supporting: RDNO	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
6.12 Consider updating Schedule E “Signage Provisions” of the <i>RDNO Zoning Bylaw (No. 1888, 2003)</i> to specifically allow for the following types of signs in farming areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertise farms on farm properties and along roadsides (not just specific farm businesses); - Identify agricultural areas, similar to groundwater or watershed signs; - Engage the public in respecting farm traffic; - Provide directions to local farmers markets or farm gate sales; - Develop themed signs such as a “Wine Route” or “Circle Farm Tour” or “Entering a Farm Fresh Area.” 	Leads: RDNO , MoTI, Member municipalities Supporting: BC Tourism, BCAFM	High	Short	Requirements: Low to Moderate (\$5,000 - \$15,000) The cost of establishing or updating the bylaw(s) will be relatively low. The cost of creating and installing the signs themselves will be greater. Sources: RDNO, member municipalities

Priority 6: Creating Supportive Government Policies and Regulations				
C. Availability of Local and Regional Support	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements & Sources
6.13 Ensure that RDNO employees, directors, and members of the RAAC have the appropriate level of understanding of agriculture and associated legislative framework that allow them to effectively address the needs of the farming community. This could be achieved by providing professional development workshops and updates.	Lead: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: MoAg, ALC	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low to Moderate (\$5,000 to \$10,000) Sources: RDNO, member municipalities
6.14 Identify current on-farm or near-farm housing options for farmers and farm labourers. This would be an initial first step in a longer process to establish more affordable on-farm farm worker housing that does not compromise the agricultural productivity and integrity of farms. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ministry of Agriculture’s “Regulating temporary farm worker housing in the ALR: Discussion paper and standards”</i> • <i>Farm Worker Housing Policy Review, Community Social Planning Council BC</i> 	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: Local agricultural and labour organizations , ALC	Low	Long	Requirements: Moderate to Significant (\$15,000 - \$20,000) Sources: RDNO, MoAg, IAF and other grant agencies.
6.15 Consider collaborating with other Regional Districts in the Southern Interior on solutions to agricultural sector issues of mutual concern.	Lead: RDNO Supporting: Other regional districts	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time
6.16 Continue to provide pre-application assistance to farmers requiring approvals for farm related structures and other works that fall under regional authority where applicable.	Lead: RDNO	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time

Priority 6: Creating Supportive Government Policies and Regulations				
D. Food Policy	Key Players	Priority	Timeframe	Funding Requirements & Sources
6.17 Re-consider endorsing the vision and guiding principles of the North Okanagan Food Charter, as developed by the North Okanagan Food Action Society. http://foodaction.ca/fasno-food-charter/	Lead: RDNO Supporting: FASNO	Medium	Long	Requirements: Negligible
6.18 Continue to work with and support agricultural and food security organizations in the region to expand and become more effective in their work.	Lead: RDNO Supporting: Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Negligible
6.20 Explore options within the Local Government Act and Community Charter that would allow the RDNO to develop a local food procurement policy for the institutions within the region. While annual food purchases are relatively small, such a policy would allow the RDNO to demonstrate its commitment and support for local and ethically produced foods and services. The policy could also be adopted by other institutions.	Lead: RDNO, IHA, UBCO, OUC Supporting: Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Staff time Sources: RDNO, Member municipalities

3.7 Priority 7: Raising Awareness through Education and Celebration of Agriculture

Despite existing strong support for locally-produced food, there is a need for a change in thinking regarding purchasing habits. Within the global marketplace, labour, production, and transportation costs are artificially low, making it challenging for local producers to compete with low-priced imported food. Furthermore, consumers (and retailers) demand a consistent supply of products year-round (or a spike in certain products during holidays), which can be a challenge for some farmers. Farmers have expressed the desire to see agricultural education at the community level as well as in the local school curriculum. Citizens who are educated about the local food system are able to express their support for local food to friends and family outside of the region. Educational opportunities can also be used to explain the beneficial characteristics of supporting local agricultural production and the extension of these benefits to the local economy.

Providing farm tours and serving prepared food on-site is one way that farmers can continue farming in a profitable manner, and many Okanagan farms are examples of this. Many farmers indicated in the survey that they would be interested in being involved in agri-tourism, however few had specific suggestions as to what that activity may be. Recent discussions at the ALC suggest that local governments and producers are requesting more clarification around the definition of “agri-tourism” specifically as it pertains to scale, permanence, and type of activity. It is likely that the ALC will be working to define some of these terms for producers and local governments in the near future. In the meantime, an agri-tourism strategy or agri-tourism framework could be developed with input by the RDNO farming community. Both the Spallumcheen Agricultural Area Plan and the Coldstream Agricultural Plan call for working locally and regionally towards an agri-tourism strategy.

There is an opportunity to partner with local museums and heritage sites to create tributes to the North Okanagan’s agricultural history. The District of Coldstream’s Agricultural Plan also speaks to the opportunity for more museums or historical venues to celebrate the agricultural community’s contribution to the local and regional identity. Other events, such as the Armstrong IPE, serve to celebrate agriculture on a large scale. The success of the IPE is an indication of the desire of the wider community to learn about and engage with farming activities.

Subthemes that emerge within the recommended actions in this theme include:

- A. Education occasions for the public
- B. Agritourism opportunities at the farm level
- C. Agricultural events and showcases at the community level

Priority 7: Raising awareness through education and celebration of agriculture				
A. Education occasions for the public	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Funding Requirements and Sources
7.1 Facilitate linkages between secondary and post secondary curriculum and programs and regional farming interests such as culinary programs that demonstrate how to source locally.	Lead: Young Agrarians, Farm Folk / City Folk, UBC Okanagan, Okanagan College Supporting: School Districts 22 & 83	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low
7.2 Increase communication of research needs between farmers, academia, and government research stations.	Lead: Farmers, agricultural organizations Supporting: UBC Okanagan, Okanagan College, other academic institutions	Medium	Long	Requirements: Low
7.3 Continue to support existing in-school agricultural education programs and expand to camps and after-school care when possible. For example, Agriculture in the Classroom, children's cooking classes, schoolyard gardens, BC Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program. Include aquaculture and fish hatcheries, e.g. Kingfisher Interpretive Centre. Encourage fundraising with local produce.	Lead: School Districts 22 & 83 Supporting: Farmers, MoAg	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Sources: Act Now BC, Evergreen, MoAg
7.4 Continue to support and revitalize 4-H clubs. Distribute information regarding 4-H scholarships within School Districts 22 & 83.	Lead: Canadian 4-H Council, BC 4-H, farmers, ag-industry Supporting: School District 22 & 83, IHA, RDNO , member municipalities	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Sources: 4-H Clubs, MoAg, ag-industry
7.5 Assist in education around climate change adaptation and agriculture by making connections between the research community and the farming community.	Leads: Okanagan College, UBCO, OBWB, CAI, MoAg Supporting: Farmers, ag-industry	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Low to Moderate (\$10,000 - \$15,000) Sources: MoAg, CAI

Priority 7: Raising awareness through education and celebration of agriculture

B. Agritourism opportunities at the farm level	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Funding Requirements and Sources
7.6 Consider developing a regional agri-tourism strategy	Lead: Farmers, City of Vernon, Tourism Vernon, Chamber of Commerce Supporting: MoAg, ALR	High	Ongoing	Requirements: Moderate to Significant (\$15,000 to \$25,000) Sources: Tourism BC, IAF
7.7 Share success stories from those who have experience in agri-tourism (U-picks, culinary events, farm tours) with other farmers who are interested.	Leads: Tourism Vernon, farmers, RDNO (RAAC) Supporting: MoAg	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low (< \$5,000) Sources: RDNO



Figure 10. Regional Agricultural Plan open house in Armstrong, BC.

Priority 7: Raising awareness through education and celebration of agriculture				
C. Agricultural events and showcases at the community level	Key Players	Priority	Time Frame	Funding Requirements and Sources
7.8 Explore opportunities to collaborate with museums and historical societies in the region to celebrate the agricultural history of the region.	Leads: Farmers, ag-industry, food industry, local historical societies Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	Medium	Long	Requirements: Varies
7.9 Leverage the Patchworks Farm model to create other learning opportunities for both farmers and the community at large.	Leads: Okanagan College, Kindale Development Supporting: RDNO , member municipalities	Medium	Medium	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Sources: RDNO, Okanagan College
7.10 Build upon the active mural culture of the North Okanagan to further celebrate local agriculture by including farming as a theme on street art (e.g. murals, lamppost banners). These could be created by children through a class project or by local artists.	Leads: RDNO , member municipalities, School Districts, local art community	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Sources: RDNO, member municipalities
7.11 Explore the possibility of creating an interpretive trail adjacent to farmland that includes historical anecdotes, archival photos, and facts about the local agricultural sector. This could be achieved on publicly-owned ALR parcels.	Leads: Historical organizations, RDNO , member municipalities Supporting: agricultural organizations, farmers	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Significant (> \$20,000) Sources: RDNO, member municipalities
7.12 Continue to assist with the promotion of agricultural events and festivals in the RDNO (e.g. farmers markets, the IPE).	Leads: Tourism Vernon, Tourism BC, RDNO , IPE Support: member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	Requirements: Low (if simply assisting to advertise other events) – Moderate (if hosting new events). Sources: Chamber of commerce, Tourism Vernon.

4.0 Pilot Project Descriptions

4.1 Semi-Annual Food System Meetings

Throughout the public consultation activities associated with the development of this RAP, it was evident that members of the local food system (e.g. farmers, processors, distributors, retailers, etc.) lack an opportunity to sit down with one another to discuss regional agricultural issues. While farmers are often members of producer groups, and processors/retailers are members of business associations, there are few opportunities available to bring these groups together. The RAAC is one forum with broader representation from the agricultural community, however the agenda is often focused on specific planning issues. Two of the public consultation components of this planning process, the Regional Food System Workshop held in Vernon and the Focus Group sessions, provided a forum for members of the agricultural community to discuss challenges and opportunities with one another. A more regular and formalized version of these types of gatherings could assist in fostering relationships across agricultural sectors in the North Okanagan. It was suggested that the meeting agenda would need to be established ahead of time on focused topics that are applicable to all sectors. Topics for discussion could include:

- Climate change adaptation strategies;
- Farm succession (new farmers and intergenerational farming);
- Current agricultural research (i.e. UBCO to present recent findings);
- Emergency preparedness plans for agriculture;
- Marketing opportunities – selling to restaurants and distributors (invite restaurateurs and distributors to be involved in the discussion); and
- Small and medium-scale processing and storage opportunities within the region.

These meetings could occur two to three times a year to start during the late fall or early winter when producers are less busy and are able to attend. Events such as Meat Your Maker (<http://www.farmfolkcityfolk.ca/events/meet-your-maker-3/>) could be another opportunity for everyone to connect. This event is currently organized annually in Kelowna and could be duplicated in the North Okanagan. The newly established Farmers' Institute could be the lead for organizing these meetings, which could be hosted at the RDNO office.

Potential Key Players:	Community Futures, agricultural stakeholders (e.g. producers, processors, retailers, distributors, etc.)
Timeframe:	Ongoing
Funding Requirements:	Low (\$2,500) (requires a meeting room and refreshments).
Potential Funding Sources:	Possible options: RDNO in-kind or Food Action Society or IHA

4.2 North Okanagan Farmers' Institute

Through discussion with farmers in the North Okanagan, it became apparent that farmers are craving ways to connect with one another outside of the RAAC meeting format. One option could be the development of a North Okanagan Farmers Institute. Farmers' institutes exist in a number of communities as a way for farmers to meet one another and address issues specific to their region. Farmers' institutes can provide a number of benefits for their members including:

- Sharing of knowledge about farming in the specific geoclimatic zone
- A way to gain general farming knowledge through workshops and guest speakers
- Equipment and tool exchange programs
- Fundraising capabilities for agricultural programs and projects such as 4H
- Mentoring support for new farmers in the area

Most farmers' institutes incorporate as societies in order to formalize the relationship and maintain accountability of their members. This is not a requirement though and is up to the individual institute to determine what will work best for them. This organization would have a different mandate than producer associations and would work to improve knowledge transfer between farmers in different commodities. The Province of BC supports Farmers Institutes and has ratified their operational structure through the *Farmers and Womens Institutes Act*.

Some example Farmers' Institutes include:

- Nanaimo-Cedar Farmers Institute
- Pemberton Farmers Institute
- Powell River Farmers Institute
- Farmers Institute at Cobble Hill
- Hornby/Denman Growers and Producers Alliance
- Delta Farmers Institute
- Salt Spring Island Farmers Alliance

It was discussed during the second focus group session that a number of farmer groups and "institutes" had already been established in the region, but have gone dormant for a variety of reasons. By establishing a single organization to represent farmers it would allow an opportunity to apply for funding for a variety of new initiatives. Existing membership lists for the farmer groups could be combined and used as the original invitation list for the first meeting. This first meeting and subsequent meetings could be held at the RDNO offices or the Women's Institute Building in Coldstream, if appropriate. Funding could then be sourced to provide an administrator for the Institute and informal extension support person for the farming community.

Potential Key Players:	North Okanagan Farmers
Timeframe:	Short
Funding Requirements:	Low – Medium (\$5,000 - \$10,000 in the first year)
Potential Funding Sources:	Farmers would be asked to pay an annual membership. Initial in-kind support may be available from the BC Ministry of Agriculture.

4.3 On-Farm Water Storage Options

As part of the consultation process, farmers were asked to identify any specific biophysical constraints on their farms. The top response from farmers was high irrigation needs coupled with seasonal water scarcity challenges. Climate change, population growth, and expansion of the agricultural land base are expected to result in significantly increased water withdrawals from surface and groundwater sources in the region, especially during summer months. An integrated and comprehensive approach to water management (from supply and storage, to irrigation, to drainage) at the individual farm level would be beneficial in helping producers mitigate the effects of water scarcity and drainage throughout the year. As such, a pilot project to develop a toolkit to assist farmers in evaluating their water supply, storage capacity and water use would allow farmers to better manage the water they currently have.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District is currently working on Phase 1 of their Integrated Farm Water Planning Pilot, which could be an excellent model for the North Okanagan region. In Phase 1 a planning toolkit was developed for farmers to assist with farm water planning, while Phase 2 involves piloting the toolkit across the region. The objectives of the toolkit are to increase awareness of climate impacts on farm water management, develop practical tools producers can use to effectively manage water on the farm, increase producers' resiliency against variable and extreme weather. The toolkit guides producers through:

- A careful review of current water resources, systems and practices on the farm;
- An analysis of significant water issues and opportunities; and
- Development of practical strategies to address issues, take advantage of opportunities, and build resilience against uncertain future conditions.

Phase 2 is currently underway in Cowichan and includes a range of farm types and locations. If successful, this toolkit could be shared and implemented in regions outside of Cowichan. The North Okanagan could use this toolkit to run its own pilot project and determine the efficacy for use in this region.

Potential Key Players:	OBWB, RDNO, CAI, Farmers
Timeframe:	Short to Medium
Funding Requirements:	Medium to High (\$30,000 - \$50,000)
Potential Funding Sources:	CAI, IAF, ARDCorp, OBWB, RDNO

Conclusion

Those involved in agriculture and food production in the North Okanagan are passionate people. Farmers are keen to see barriers removed so that their livelihoods can be enhanced and made more economically viable and at the same time, consumers are interested in obtaining more of their food from local sources. The vision, goals, objectives, and recommended implementation actions outlined in this Regional Agricultural Plan are all derived from the community engagement process.

The agricultural industry in the North Okanagan is sophisticated, but still has room to grow, from both a diversity of products and revenue-generating perspective. Opportunities include good soil, climate, and supportive local market. Challenges include the cost of land, inputs, and transportation as well as labour, marketing, and processing. Water quality and quantity is paramount for the continued success of farming in the North Okanagan.

The development of a Regional Agricultural Plan for the North Okanagan fulfills, in part, a region-wide commitment set forth in the Regional Growth Strategy to preserve and strengthen the rural economy and increase the viability and productivity of farmland and food production. The Regional Agricultural Plan includes a vision statement for food production, goals and objectives for achieving the vision and a detailed set of recommended actions for implementation. The Regional Agricultural Plan will provide all members of the food producing community in the North Okanagan, along with elected officials, staff, and other leading agencies in the region, with a strong vision and directive towards increasing food production and enhancing the livelihood of those involved in agriculture.

Appendices

Appendix I: Implementation Strategy

Appendix II: Funding Opportunities

Appendix III: Monitoring and Evaluation

Appendix I: Implementation Strategy

A. Hiring a coordinator to implement the RAP

A coordinator-based approach may result in more focused attention on the implementation strategy and provide direct staffing resources over a number of years. Jurisdictions that have taken this approach have often incorporated the Ag Plan coordinator position into an Economic Development Commission or other economic development organization. This includes the Comox Valley Regional District who has streamlined implementation through the Invest Comox Valley organization (<http://www.investcomoxvalley.com>) and the Central Okanagan Regional District who has channelled the work through the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (<http://www.investkelowna.com>). If it is decided that an implementation coordinator is the best way to implement the RAP, a deeper investigation into funding sources for the coordinator's compensation will be required.

Pros: Designated staff member who is focused solely on implementation. A leader and central point of contact for the projects.

Cons: Salary and renewing salary. May be difficult to engage with other organizations because perceived ownership. Would need a special skill set including agriculture, planning, and public consultation.

Cost estimate: \$75,000 per year for 0.75 FTE including expense budget for events and meetings.

B. Have the RAAC become the stewards of the RAP

In some jurisdictions the Agricultural Advisory Committee or local Farmers Institute becomes the stewards of the plan. This has occurred in the Regional District of Nanaimo and the Squamish Lillooet Regional District. A minimal level of staff involvement still occurs.

Pros: Good level of engagement, skill set is mixed, good local knowledge is provided on a continual basis. Networking and connections can easily be made.

Cons: May be perceived as biased, and cherry-picking of actions based on personal gain may be of concern. Implementation may move slowly as RAAC members are essentially volunteers and there may not be a lot of time to work on it. Potential high turnover rate of RAAC members may mean inconsistency in rate of implementation.

Cost estimate: \$25,000 per year for expenses and honorariums.

C. Using a hybrid approach (government + non-profit) such as the Whistler 2020 model

Whistler2020 is a community plan (OCP) that was developed by the community, and it is being supported and implemented by the community. The RMOW manages the work of the Whistler2020 Team, but the creativity, direction and execution of the plan is a product of the ongoing dedication and commitment of Whistler2020 Partners, community task forces, and the many organizations and businesses that are making its vision a reality on a daily basis.

Every year, organizations and citizens come together to review the vision, and then come up with actions that can be done to help the community move toward this vision. Over the past 5 years, through the Whistler2020 process, 607 sustainability actions and initiatives have been recommended to community organizations, and to date, approximately 489 actions have been completed. There are 96 indicators that are reported on annually to determine progress towards the community's vision. The indicators range from visitor numbers and satisfaction to income, energy use and community decision input. Trends going in the wrong direction receive extra attention and actions then get targeted toward reversing those trends.

Pros: Good chance of implementation happening quickly and smoothly. Multiple staff spread over multiple organizations focused on implementing different aspects of the plan.

Cons: High level of committed and sustained funding and/or fundraising required.

Cost estimate: Will depend on the level of staffing and number of actions implemented each year. This would be the most expensive option.

Implementation Strategies and Successes: Examples from Other Communities

The following describes implementation strategies and successes from other jurisdictions.

Squamish Lillooet Regional District – Lillooet and Area B (2014)

<http://www.slrd.bc.ca/planning-building/planning-development-services/policies-plans/agriculture-planning/agricultural-area-plans/area-b-lillooet-statimc-agricultural-area-plan>

The SLRD Area B plan was adopted in 2014. The implementation strategy is getting underway in 2015 with the hiring of a full time (6 months) implementation coordinator at a budget of \$22,000. There is a possibility that the funding will be renewed after 6 months. The first tasks will be to formalize the implementation body, develop a Farmers Institute for the region, and assist the creation of a local food hub.

The job description can be found here:

https://www.slrd.bc.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/Ag%20Plan%20Implementation%20Coordinator_Ad%20and%20Posting.pdf

District of West Kelowna (2011)

An Agricultural Plan Support Officer position (1 FTE) hired by the DWK will be dedicated to implementing the agricultural plan and will make recommendations to council and update goals and policies annually.

The DWK Agricultural Plan was completed in 2011. Implementation is being coordinated by a combination of staff time and consultant fees (research/reports/studies). Grants for some fees identified. Costs expected to be at least \$33,000 with many actions requiring budgets to be developed in the future. The AAC plays an advisory role.

See: <http://www.districtofwestkelowna.ca/DocumentCenter/View/1300> (page 68)

And: <http://iafbc.ca/annual-reports/advancing-agriculture-in-west-kelowna/>

City of Kelowna (1998)

Implementation strategy suggests the City will play a lead role. Estimates of costs are provided in the range of \$2.5 million, although much is directed towards drainage upgrades.

See:

<http://www.kelowna.ca/CityPage/Docs/PDFs/Strategic%20Planning/Agriculture%20Plan.pdf>
(page 67)

Regional District of Central Okanagan – Agricultural Plan

https://www.regionaldistrict.com/media/51874/FINAL_AgBackReport_Jul05.pdf

- When plan was originally completed, Keith Duhaime was hired as an Agricultural Support Officer <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/800Series/820110-29.pdf>.
- Recently, the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission developed an Agricultural Support Program to assist farmers in developing a business plan <http://www.investkelowna.com/agriculture>

Examples of activities undertaken by the Agricultural Support Officer in 2011 and 2012 included:

- One-on-one support to agriculture-related businesses; connects businesses with promotion and marketing opportunities.
- A series of focused succession workshops and mentoring to begin in late 2011 until the spring of 2012.
- Worked with the provincial and federal government personnel to facilitate the ability of local businesses to hire from European sources.
- Pursuing the development of incubation facilities in the Central Okanagan to provide new entrants to agriculture to establish and nurture sustainable enterprises capable of providing globally competitive goods and
- Worked diligently on a proposal to re-introduce small scale mixed farming to the Fintry Provincial Park. The proposal is to restore agricultural and farming activities to the Fintry Estate and create an incubator for new entrants to the farming sector. The activities would be representative of early 20th century farming, organic and artisanal in nature, with an emphasis on sustainability. They would provide recreational, educational and transformational opportunities especially for new farmers and farm enterprises.

<http://www.regionaldistrict.com/media/28152/2011AR.pdf>

City of Kamloops Agriculture Area Plan (2013)

<http://www.kamloops.ca/environment/land-agricultureplan.shtml>

- The plan identifies 72 action items categorized into six over-arching strategies. One of the top priorities has been to bring city bylaws and policies into alignment with those of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) on issues like agri-tourism, which the ALC allows, but the city has not.
- No dust will gather on this plan. Before it was officially adopted work had begun on the next step. “A step further to supporting the agriculture industry is to develop a targeted community-wide food strategy,” says Luciani. “Through the consultation we learned there was a real desire to do that, and the process is starting already.”

Regional District of Nanaimo Agricultural Area Plan (2012)

<http://www.rdn.bc.ca/cms/wpattachments/wpID2520atID5166.pdf>

The RDN has used an approach to implementation that mixes staff time with consultant services. Completed actions include;

- Policy change: AAC members now allowed to comment on ALC applications. The highest priority Action Item that was identified by the AAC was to amend the AAC Terms of Reference to allow the AAC to make comments on applications to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).
- Advocate for Changes in Farm Tax Assessment
 - The RDN has sent a letter the British Columbia Assessment Authority requesting consideration of changes to farm tax assessment.
- Creation of an Agricultural Website
 - This website was created in response to this identified sub-project. The content and purpose of this site may change to reflect new information and any additional direction that comes as a result of Agricultural Area Plan implementation.
- Livestock Emergency Evacuation Plan was developed with assistance from consultants.

Comox Valley Agricultural Plan (2002)

http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/assets/Department/Documents/Planning_CVAP_Phase2.pdf

This is one of the older Agricultural Plans in BC. Successful implementation has been in part to the hiring of 1 FTE through the economic development commission (Invest Comox Valley). Examples of recommendations and associated actions include:

- Review current enhancement projects and initiate an EFP program for all farms to enhance habitat in a manner that also improves farm productivity.
 - Farmers began applying for EFPs soon after the plan development
- Support development of covered shelter or enclosed facility for the farmers market
 - Farmers Market runs year-round and is inside at the Native Sons Hall in the winter months
- Promote local agriculture products, including a possible Regional Marketing Campaign.
 - Economic Development Commission created the tagline “Provenance of BC” to attract European agricultural investment.
- Devise and support strategies to support small scale local processing. Support initiatives to provide shared laboratory and processing facilities and equipment such as a community kitchen.
 - Community Kitchen at LUSH Valley is used as an incubator for new food businesses – can be rented out
- Develop an inventory of current and potential agri-tourism and rural experiences. Link to existing Farm Stay tourism and working holiday programmes. Establish Comox Valley as a culinary tourism destination using local farm products. Develop marketing materials for local agri-tourism opportunities.
 - Marketing materials created by CVEDS

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Agricultural Area Plan – Area C (Oliver) (2008)

http://www.rdosmaps.bc.ca/min_bylaws/planning/projects/agric_plan/AreaC_Ag_PlanJun2008.pdf

- An Implementation Plan was developed in 2010 for zoning bylaw changes http://www.rdosmaps.bc.ca/min_bylaws/planning/projects/agric_plan/major_issues_summaryJUNE2010.pdf
- Oliver has branded itself as the Wine Capital of Canada <http://www.winecapitalofcanada.com>

Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan (2012)

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/ltc/de/pdf/defarmplanfinalnov152012.pdf>

The Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance was formed to implement the Salt Spring Island Farm Plan - <http://plantofarm.org/>

Successful actions include:

- Salt Spring Abattoir
 - The Salt Spring Abattoir is a community facility managed by the non-profit [Salt Spring Abattoir Society](#). The Abattoir was built to remove the need for farmers to leave the island for slaughter service, ensure humane treatment of animals, and

increase local food production and food security. The facility opened in late 2012, offering poultry and lamb service. The introduction of beef and pork service is planned for later this year. The Alliance is actively raising funds to pay off the remaining debt from the construction of this specialized facility, as well as to assist the Salt Spring Abattoir Society in implementing a long-term, cost-recovery operational model.

- Farm Produce Centre
 - The Salt Spring Island Farm Produce Centre is a planned community facility envisioned to assist farms with the processing and wholesaling/distribution of locally grown produce. The Produce Centre was identified in the Local Area Farm Plan as an important component in establishing a stronger local food system. An initial needs assessment was undertaken and [a conceptual business plan](#) developed with funding from a 2011 Vancity enviroFund Grant. In late 2012 ownership of a property on Beddis Road was given to the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society (SSIFTS) as part of a rezoning agreement. This property is recognized as a good site for the Produce Centre for its central location, supportive zoning and availability. In late 2013, a Produce Centre Planning Committee was initiated by the Alliance and the SSIFTS to oversee a facility Feasibility Study and eventual Master Plan for the site on Beddis Road. Discussion groups were held in February 2014 with potential facility users. A draft conceptual design plan for the purpose of amending the Development Permit were completed in August 2014. We are currently seeking input from community stakeholders on the draft plan.
- Farm Photo Project and Farm Calendar
 - The Farm Photo Project is a collaboration between the SSIAA, the Salt Spring Photography Club and GISS students to create an inventory of excellent farm-related photographs to be used for fundraising and promotional activities for local agriculture. Small groups of talented photo students were teamed with experienced Photo Club mentors. Each team was assigned to several farms which they photographed between November 2013 and August 2014. The final photos are included in a 2015 calendar, showcased at September 24 – October 8 exhibit at Harbour House, and will used by the SSIAA online and in print.
- Advocacy Role for the SSI Ag Alliance
 - The Alliance represents agricultural interests to all levels of government. We write letters to decision-makers, participate in relevant discussion forums and meet with local, provincial and federal regulators whose mandates impact food production on Salt Spring. We are seeking to share our experience with other communities, traveling near and far to educate, problem-solve and offer inspiration to those working towards similar goals.

Alberni Valley Agricultural Plan (2011)

<http://www.acrd.bc.ca/cms/wpattachments/wpID254atID881.pdf>

The Regional Board has supported and budgeted for a contract service provider (up to \$30,000) to work on agriculture support services. To date, successful actions include:

- Display booth at the Islands Agriculture Show in Cowichan, BC in each of the past three years. In 2013, the Alberni Valley had the opportunity to be the Feature Farming Community at the trade show which allowed a number of perks highlighted by hosting the

welcome reception with local food prepared by the North Island College Culinary Program and local wine provided by two Alberni Valley wineries.

- Farm to Chef Forum and Business Fair in Ucluelet in February 2014. Alberni Valley food producers had the opportunity to set up display booths and sell produce in Ucluelet before getting the chance to sit down and network with chefs and restaurant operators from the West Coast.
- Food Survey completed in cooperation with the Alberni Valley Transition Towns Society and Vancouver Island University. 2,300 food surveys were mailed out to residents in the ACRD to gauge eating habits and interest in local food production.
- Setting up an agriculture display at the Alberni Valley Fall Fair
- Assisting with the annual Family Farms Day event where Alberni Valley farms are opened up to engagement with kids
- Created a Food Charter adopted by the ACRD Board
- Working with the Economic Development Officer on agriculture initiatives and grant applications for funding opportunities.

Appendix II: Funding Opportunities

In order to implement the recommendations presented above, funding will need to be sourced. While some funding may be generated through the RDNO, outside sources of funding have been identified to support specific initiatives within the implementation plan.

Funding Agency	Funding Program	What They Fund	Funding Amount	Recommended Actions
BC Gaming	Community Gaming Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts and Culture Sport Environment Public Safety Human and Social Services Parent Advisory Councils and District Parent Advisory Councils 	Local organizations: up to \$100,000 per year Regional organizations: up to \$225,000 per year	3.3; 3.5; 3.8
CIBC	Community Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial literacy Employment opportunities Increased access to community services Promoting equality and diversity 	Most organizations receive less than \$10,000	2.17
Community Foundation of the North Okanagan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts, Culture and Heritage Education Environment Health and Recreation Children, Youth and Families, Seniors Animal Welfare 	Not stipulated	2.5; 2.7; 2.17; 7.6
Community Futures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business counselling and planning Workshops Training Loans Other investing 	Business loan programs. No grant programs available.	2.1; 2.3; 2.7; 5.5; 5.8; 7.7
Enterprising Non-Profits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational readiness Business development 	Up to \$5,000 Up to \$10,000	2.3; 2.6; 2.7; 2.10
Evergreen	Toyota Evergreen Learning Grounds Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For schools to create outdoor classrooms and food gardens. 	Up to \$3,500 for schools and \$2,000 for daycares	7.3
	Walmart-Evergreen Green Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For non-profit organizations looking to create community food gardens 	Up to \$10,000	6.13

Farm Credit Canada	Lending Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financing and loans for both producers and agribusinesses Start-up loans for young farmers 	Not stipulated	5.5; 5.7
	Agrispirit Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for non-profit organizations for capital projects such as community gardens 	Between \$5,000 and \$25,000	
Interior Health Authority	Healthy Communities Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding support for food security and/or food safety projects FOODSAFE courses 	Not stipulated	4.2
Interior Savings Credit Union		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Health Economic growth 	Not stipulated	4.2; 7.6; 7.12
Investment Agriculture Foundation	Food and Beverage Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the competitive position of BC food and beverage processors; Build BC's reputation as a leader in health and lifestyle-oriented products; Build business relationships and collaboration with value chain partners; and Enhance communications and coordination among industry stakeholders. 	Not stipulated	2.1; 2.12; 2.14
	Emerging Sectors Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging business opportunities (e.g. small scale/lot agriculture, natural health products, aboriginal agriculture, agritourism and direct farm marketing, apiculture, small-scale food processing and more). 	Not stipulated	1.10; 2.1; 2.9; 2.15
	Small Projects Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects must be completed within one year Funded based on eligibility, benefit to BC agriculture, demonstrated need, and industry support. 	For projects under \$30,000 where IAF offers up to \$10,000 of funding.	2.3; 2.5; 2.6; 2.7; 2.8; 3.3; 3.8; 3.10; 5.2; 5.7
Ministry of Agriculture	Growing Forward 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Risk Management Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program Climate Adaptation On-Farm and Post-Farm Food Safety Program Business Knowledge and Strategic Adaptation Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program Beneficial Management Plan (BMP) Program Environmental Health and Programs (EHAP) Environmental Emergencies Planning Program 	Varies from no-charge services to grant programs	3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.6; 3.7; 3.10; 4.5; 4.11; 4.13; 7.5
Ministry of Health	Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides low-income families and seniors who are enrolled in participating cooking and skill-building programs with coupons each week to spend at their local farmers' market 	Varies depending on market size.	2.10

Okanagan Basin Water Board	Water Conservation and Quality Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that conserve and protect water 	Up to \$300,000 per year is made available and individual grants are \$3,000 minimum to \$30,000 maximum	3.1; 4.2; 4.3; 4.8; 4.13
Public Health Agency of Canada	Multi-Sectoral Partnerships to Promote Healthy Living and Prevent Chronic Disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address complex social issues such as childhood obesity and the prevention of chronic diseases 	Minimum of \$100,000 per year (matching funds) over a minimum of a two-year period (up to five years) and the maximum value cannot exceed \$5 million per project.	2.1; 2.5
Public Health Association of BC	Farm 2 School Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To serve healthy meals in school cafeterias and classrooms. 	\$500 to support program planning and \$3500 for implementation	7.3
Real Estate Foundation	Sustainable Food System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of sustainable food systems into community planning, urban design, and neighbourhood planning; Regional approaches to food systems planning; Inter-relationships between food systems, ecosystems, natural capital, and the built environment; and Tools, policies, and legal mechanisms to support access to land for all activities required in a sustainable food system. 	Not stipulated	1.5; 1.10; 2.8; 5.2; 5.5; 5.10
Southern Interior Development Initiatives Trust		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support regionally strategic investments in economic development projects that will have long-lasting and measurable regional benefits 	Maximum of \$25,000	2.1; 2.7; 2.9; 6.4
The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation	National Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepen or disseminate work that has been successful at a local level. 	Not stipulated	
	Regional Value Chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides resources and funding focused on the assessment of regional food systems, business planning, and learning projects. 	Not stipulated	2.1; 2.5; 7.1
	Institutional Food Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the work of hospitals, long-term care facilities, universities, schools and other institutions that want to serve healthier, local and sustainable food. 	Not stipulated	6.20
Tides Canada		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and oceans Environmental conservation Climate and energy solutions 	They will only fund projects with an annual budget of	3.1

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • The Arctic • Social inclusion • Civic engagement. 	over \$100,000 and each project is responsible for generating revenue to cover expenses.	
UBCM	Community Works Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation infrastructure • Broadband connectivity • Public transit • Drinking water • Wastewater • Solid waste • Community energy systems • Brownfield redevelopment • Recreational infrastructure • Cultural infrastructure • Tourism infrastructure • Disaster mitigation • Capacity building. 	Not stipulated	2.10
	Strategic Priorities Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management Planning • Community to Community Forums 	Not stipulated	1.8; 6.4; 6.17
Vancouver Foundation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal welfare • Arts and culture • Children, youth and families • Community-based health research • Education; environment • Health and social development • Youth philanthropy 	Varies from \$1,000 to \$75,000	2.3; 2.5; 2.7; 7.10; 7.11
Western Diversification Fund		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation • Skills Development and Training • Trade and Investment • Building Capacity for Defence Procurement Opportunities; and, • Economic Growth Acceleration Opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) 	Not stipulated	1.10; 2.1; 2.3; 5.11; 7.6; 7.12

More information on funding opportunities available to the RDNO, individuals and organizations is provided below.

BC Gaming Community Gaming Grants

Government gaming grants allow eligible non-profit organizations to apply for gaming revenues to support a broad range of programs and services. Responsibility for the gaming grants program lies with the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development; the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch distributes the grants. Organizations receiving community gaming grants must use their grant funds for approved, eligible purposes. Programs must have been in operation for at least 12 months prior to application. (In other words, a grant will not be awarded for a program that is being offered for the first time.) To receive a grant, the program must fall into one of the following sectors:

- Arts and Culture;
- Sport;
- Environment;
- Public Safety;
- Human and Social Services; or
- Parent Advisory Councils and District Parent Advisory Councils. (These organizations are aligned with schools.)

For more information: <https://www.gaming.gov.bc.ca/grants/community-gaming.htm>

CIBC Community Grants

CIBC's community granting aims to assist Canadians in need through skills development, including financial literacy and employment opportunities; increased access to community services and promoting equality and diversity. Funding is available for registered charities or non-profit organizations.

More information is available at: <https://www.cibc.com/ca/inside-cibc/in-your-community.html>

Community Foundation of the North Okanagan

Community foundations are charitable organizations dedicated to improving communities in specific geographic areas by pooling charitable gifts of donors to create endowment funds and investment income to make grants. The Community Foundation of the North Okanagan distributes grants to charities in the region who make a significant contribution to the quality of life in the area. The granting program is open to charitable groups working in virtually any area that makes a positive community impact in the following key areas:

1. Arts, Culture and Heritage
2. Education
3. Environment
4. Health and Recreation
5. Children, Youth and Families, Seniors
6. Animal Welfare

Eligible applicants must be registered charities and/or qualified donees under the Income Tax Act. They must also demonstrate fiscal responsibility and effective management. For more information or to apply for a grant please visit: <http://www.cfno.org>

Community Futures

Community Futures provides support services for individuals wanting to start, expand, franchise, or sell a business in rural areas of BC.

Services include business counselling and planning, workshops, training, loans and other investing.

<http://www.communityfutures.org>

Enterprising Non-Profits

Enp BC is a collaborative program that promotes and supports social enterprise development and growth across BC as a means to build strong non-profit organizations and healthier communities. Some organizations receive in-kind expert support while others receive grants. Matching grants up to \$10,000 are usually used to pay for consultant/professional fees related to a planning or development activity and cannot be used for operations, overhead, or implementation, or to retroactively pay for parts of a project already underway or completed. Funds may be used to support planning and/or research activities along the entire development path including: opportunity identification; organizational readiness activities; feasibility studies and market research; marketing plans and business plans; or any portion of these activities. More information and eligibility criteria can be found at: <http://www.socialenterprisecanada.ca>.

Evergreen

Evergreen was established in 1991 with the mandate to engage “Canadians in creating and sustaining dynamic outdoor spaces – in schools, communities and homes” (Evergreen, 2012). Evergreen is the leading national funder and facilitator of local, sustainable greening projects in schoolyards, parks and communities through the Toyota Evergreen Learning Grounds Grants, Evergreen Common Grounds Grants and the Walmart-Evergreen Green Grants.

The **Toyota Evergreen Learning Grounds Grants** provide funding for schools to create outdoor classrooms and food gardens. Schools can apply directly twice per year.

The **Walmart-Evergreen Green Grants** are available up to \$10,000 for non-profit organizations looking to employ community-based restoration and stewardship initiatives in urban and urbanizing areas such as naturalization, restoration and stewardship and community food gardens.

<http://www.evergreen.ca/get-involved/funding-opportunities>

Farm Credit Canada (FCC)

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is the leading national agricultural lender. Their mission is “to enhance rural Canada by providing specialized and personalized business and financial services and products to farming operations, including family farms, and to those businesses in rural Canada, including small and medium-sized businesses, that are businesses related to farming”. FCC offers financing and loans for both producers and agribusinesses, as well as start-up loans for young farmers.

FCC also offers funding for non-profit organizations for capital projects between \$5,000 and \$25,000 through the FCC AgriSpirit Fund. Past projects have included hospitals and medical centres, childcare facilities, fire and rescue equipment, playgrounds, food banks, libraries, recreation centres and community gardens. More information about this fund can be found at: <https://www.fac-fcc.ca/en/in-your-community/giving-back/fcc-agrispirit-fund.html>

Interior Health Authority

The IHA provides funding for projects that promote health and wellness and encourage marginalized and vulnerable members of the community to play an active role in their own health. It is also responsible for FOODSAFE courses. The Healthy Communities program may also provide funding support for food security and/or food safety projects. More information can be found at: <http://www.interiorhealth.ca>

Interior Savings Credit Union

The ISCU donation program focus is on youth, health, and/or economic growth within the Okanagan and Thompson Valley. All requests for donations or sponsorship must be submitted online. All applications for donations and sponsorship must be:

- Submitted by community-based, non-profit, volunteer, public service, or charitable organizations.
- Focused on programs or events serving the areas of youth, health and/or economic development.
- To serve the communities of the Okanagan and Thompson Valley
- Submitted at least eight (8) weeks in advance of the event or project.

All applications must clearly demonstrate how the project or event will work toward the betterment of our community, benefit the greatest number of people for the longest period of time, provide ISCU employees the opportunity to participate and contribute as volunteers, measure results, and provide positive economic spin-off for the credit union or the local economy (for example, an event that draws a significant amount of tourists to the community).

For more information: <https://www.interiorsavings.com/Community/Corporatesponsorship>

Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF)

The Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) strategically invests federal and provincial funds to support innovative projects that benefit the agri-food industry in BC. IAF offers a wide range of funding for industry groups and municipalities in funding categories such as animal industries, plant industries, processing industries, environmental issues, emerging sectors and other. Start-up funding is not available for individuals, but specific funding programs are available within each category to deal with specific industry issues and enhance the sectors. Recent funding includes Buy Local programs, First Nations food branding, pollinator preservation projects, and more.

The IAF's *Food and Beverage Processing Initiative* can be used to address the key issue of inadequate processing infrastructure. Funding is available for projects that match one or more of these strategic priorities:

- Enhance the competitive position of BC food and beverage processors;
- Build BC's reputation as a leader in health and lifestyle-oriented products;
- Build business relationships and collaboration with value chain partners; and
- Enhance communications and coordination among industry stakeholders.

Another funding program that could be beneficial is the *Emerging Sectors Initiative*. IAF classifies an emerging sector as those that have emerging business opportunities; leadership, vision and capacity to increase sectoral contributions to the provincial economy and provincial five-year annual average market receipts of less than \$10 million. Examples of emerging sectors include: small scale/lot agriculture, natural health products, aboriginal agriculture, agri-tourism and direct farm marketing, apiculture, small-scale food processing and more. Projects that address gaps in scientific knowledge, technology adaptation and transfer, skills, business development, collaboration with partners and pre-commercialization exploration may be eligible.

Additionally, IAF also offers Small Project grants for projects under \$30,000 where IAF offers up to \$10,000 of funding. Projects must be completed within one year and funding is not intended for sub-components of larger projects. Projects are funded based on eligibility, benefit to BC agriculture, demonstrated need, and industry support. There are no set intake deadlines and you can submit an application at any time.

Information on each of these initiatives can be found on the IAF website at http://www.iafbc.ca/funding_available.

Ministry of Agriculture - Growing Forward 2

The Growing Forward 2 (GF2) is a five-year Agricultural Policy Framework, under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). It is a \$3 billion dollar investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to increase the profitability of the agricultural sector in Canada. The focus is on innovation, competitiveness and market development to ensure Canadian producers and processors have the tools and resources they need to continue to innovate and capitalize on emerging market opportunities. Programs cover the following key areas:

- Business Risk Management
- Innovation

- Competitiveness and Market Development
- Adaptability and Industry Capacity

Within these categories there are a number of programs relevant to RDNO farmers and agricultural organizations. A few key programs include:

- Business Risk Management (Production and Livestock Price Insurance; Crop Loss and Damage Due to Wildlife; and Agriculture Income Protection)
- Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program
- Provincially Significant Projects
- Climate Adaptation – Regional Agricultural Adaptation and On-Farm Adaptation
- On-Farm and Post-Farm Food Safety Program
- Business Knowledge and Strategic Adaptation (Farm Business Management and Advisory Services)
- Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program
- Beneficial Management Plan (BMP) Program
- Environmental Health and Programs (EHAP)
- Environmental Emergencies Planning Program

For more information: <https://www.ardcorp.ca/ardcorp>

Ministry of Health - Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program

The FMNCP provides low-income families and seniors who are enrolled in participating cooking and skill-building programs with coupons each week to spend at their local farmers' market. Participants can use the coupons to purchase eligible products including fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, nuts, dairy and fresh cut herbs. Within cooking and skill-building sessions, participants learn to cook healthy, nutritious meals using locally procured farm products. Farmers Markets can apply directly to the BC Association of Farmers Markets to be involved in the program and must partner with a local social service agency for delivery.

For more information:

<http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/resources/nutrition-coupon-program>

Okanagan Basin Water Board Grants

The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) receives funding from senior government agencies, manages finances for collaborative partnerships and distributes grants for local water quality and conservation projects. The Water Conservation and Quality Improvement (WCQI) grant program provides funds to local governments, irrigation districts and non-profit organizations for projects that conserve and protect water, based on the recognition that we are all part of “One Valley, One Water”. Up to \$300,000 per year is made available and individual grants are \$3,000 minimum to \$30,000 maximum.

Priority is given to projects that have a measurable outcome and demonstrate how goals will be met, have matching funding in place or applied for, or demonstrate a collaborative approach with other jurisdictions. More information can be found at <http://www.obwb.ca/overview-grants/wcqi>.

OBWB also has an extensive list of other funding agencies and programs on their website for water and environmental programs at <http://www.obwb.ca/overview-grants>.

Public Health Agency of Canada

The Public Health Agency of Canada has a program entitled the **Multi-Sectoral Partnerships to Promote Healthy Living and Prevent Chronic Disease**, which is intended to address complex social issues such as childhood obesity and the prevention of chronic diseases. All projects must: include multi-sectoral partnerships; be able to demonstrate measurable results; be founded in evidence; have the potential to be expanded into other areas of the country, other target populations, and different settings; or address other chronic diseases or risk factors. Funding requests must be a minimum of \$100,000 per year (matching funds) over a minimum of a two-year period (up to five years) and the maximum value cannot exceed \$5 million per project. Eligible applicants include:

- Canadian not-for-profit voluntary organizations and corporations;
- For profit organizations;
- Unincorporated groups, societies and coalitions;
- Provincial, territorial, regional, and municipal governments and agencies;
- Organizations and institutions supported by provincial and territorial governments (regional health authorities, schools, post-secondary institutions, etc.);
- Individuals deemed capable of conducting population health activities; and
- Non-Canadian recipients may be considered on an exceptional basis
- Aboriginal organizations

More information can be found at: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fo-fc/mspphl-pppmvs-eng.php>.

Public Health Association of BC

Farm to School (F2S) Program

The Farm to School (F2S) Salad Bar Program was originally established in BC as an initiative of the BC Healthy Living Alliance (BCHLA) and is managed and administered by the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC). The goal of the program is to connect schools with local farms to serve healthy meals in school cafeterias and classrooms. The objectives of the program are:

- To increase fruit and vegetable consumption amongst participating school aged children;
- To increase student knowledge about the local food system, local foods, and nutritional health;
- To enhance student skills in the areas of food production, processing and serving;
- To strengthen local farm, school, and aboriginal partnerships;
- To strengthen the local food economy; and
- To develop promising practice models that are self-financing, ecofriendly and have the potential to be implemented elsewhere.

The F2S Program has recently started offering Start-Up Grants to BC schools who want to plan and implement new F2S programs. The first phase is a \$500 grant to successful applicants to support program planning, followed by a \$3500 grant for implementation. More information on this program can be found at: <http://www.phabc.org/modules.php?name=Farmtoschool>

Real Estate Foundation (REF)

The Real Estate Foundation of BC (REF) is a non-profit corporation that receives interest from pooled or “unassigned” trust deposits held by real estate brokers and uses the funds to support real estate related issues such as education, research, law reform and activities intended for the public or professional good including environmental issues related to land and water (REF, 2012). The mission of the Foundation is “to support sustainable real estate and land use practices for

the benefit of British Columbians.” The three grant program focus areas are the Built Environment, Fresh Water Sustainability and Sustainable Food Systems, with the most effective projects leading to on-the-ground change.

The **Sustainable Food System** focus area involves initiatives that remove barriers or contribute to new approaches and practices in sustainable food systems in BC. These could include land use planning, policy, regulation, design, mapping and feasibility studies within the urban, peri-urban and rural areas of BC. The foundation is particularly interested in:

- Integration of sustainable food systems into community planning, urban design, and neighbourhood planning;
- Regional approaches to food systems planning;
- Inter-relationships between food systems, ecosystems, natural capital, and the built environment; and
- Tools, policies, and legal mechanisms to support access to land for all activities required in a sustainable food system.

More information and past projects can be found on REF’s grants website at <http://www.refbc.com/grants/general-grant-program>

Southern Interior Development Initiatives Trust

The mission of the Southern Interior Development Initiatives Trust (SIDIT) is to support regionally strategic investments in economic development projects that will have long-lasting and measurable regional benefits. The SIDIT grant program provides non-repayable funding to municipalities, regional districts, First Nations, registered non-profit societies, institutions, and industry associations. The strategic priorities are:

- Contribution towards economic sustainability of small communities
- Regional impact
- Realistic measurement criteria established to assess project outputs
- Job creation, preservation or enhancement
- Economic diversification
- Leveraging of other funds (matching funds are expected)
- Filling funding gaps
- Avoiding overlap and duplication
- Economic merit
- Research and development leading to commercialization
- Strategic initiatives
- Ensuring geographic sensitivity in fund disbursement

More information can be found at <http://www.sidit-bc.ca>.

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation was established in 1937 to engage Canadians in building a more innovative, inclusive, sustainable and resilient society. The purpose of the Foundation is to enhance Canada’s ability to address complex social, environmental and economic challenges through developing, testing, and applying innovative approaches and solutions; strengthening the community sector; and collaborating with partners in the community. One of their areas of focus is the Sustainable Food System Initiative

(<http://mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/programs/sustainable-food-systems>).

The Sustainable Food Systems Initiative aims to make systemic change to increase local and regional sustainable food production capacity while ensuring that healthy food is accessible to all. There are a number of programs within this initiative including:

- **National Grants** – These work across the food system to deepen or disseminate work that has been successful at a local level. Some of these national grant recipients include: Food Secure Canada, Seeds of Diversity, Public Health Association of BC, FarmStart, and the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society.
- **Regional Value Chain Program** – This program was created with the focus on strengthening the ability of regional producers, processors, distributors, food service providers and retailers to make healthy, sustainably produced food accessible to all Canadians. This program provides resources and funding focused on the assessment of regional food systems, business planning, and learning projects. Vancouver Farmers Market is a recipient in this program.
- **Institutional Food Program** – This program was launched in 2014 and supports the work of hospitals, long-term care facilities, universities, schools and other institutions that want to serve healthier, local and sustainable food. Farm Folk/City Folk in partnership with the Vancouver School Board and North Island College in Courtenay, BC have been working on local food procurement programs with the support of the J.W. McConnell Foundation.

Tides Canada

Tides Canada provides innovative philanthropic, financial, and project management services for “change makers” – philanthropists, foundations, activists and civil organizations. They work on issues such as: water and oceans; environmental conservation; climate and energy solutions; food; the Arctic; social inclusion; and civic engagement.

When selecting the projects they choose to be a part of they are searching for “good people with great ideas, building solutions that promote environmental sustainability and social justice”. The Tides Canada Initiatives (TCI) is a shared administrative platform that powers a range of projects and collaborations across Canada. The TCI support team manages the books, contracts, and human resources needs so the project staff can work on the project on-the-ground. They will only fund projects with an annual budget of over \$100,000 and each project is responsible for generating revenue to cover expenses. TCI allocates 10-12% of the project revenues to contribute to shared overhead costs. Some of the projects include: the BC Food Systems Network, Farms at Work and Sustain Ontario – The Alliance for Healthy Food and Farming. For more information please visit - <http://tidescanada.org/projects>.

Union of BC Municipalities

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) has two main funding programs the **Gas Tax Agreement** and the **Local Government Program Services**.

The Gas Tax Agreement has two funds that may be appropriate for economic development activities related to agriculture: Community Works Fund and the Strategic Priorities Fund.

- **Community Works Fund (CSF)** – This fund is delivered to all local governments in BC through a direct annual allocation to support local priorities. Local governments need to enter into a CFW Agreement with UBCM prior to receiving funding. Eligible investment categories are: Local roads, bridges; Highways; Short-sea shipping; Short-line rail; Regional and local airports; Broadband connectivity; Public transit; Drinking water; Wastewater; Solid waste; Community energy systems; Brownfield redevelopment; Sport infrastructure; Recreational

infrastructure; Cultural infrastructure; Tourism infrastructure; Disaster mitigation; and Capacity building.

- **Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF)** – The SPF is an application based program available to local governments and other recipients outside of the Greater Vancouver Regional District to support infrastructure and capacity building projects that are larger in scale, regional in impact or innovative, and align with the program objectives of productivity and economic growth, a clean environment and strong cities and communities.

The Local Government Program Services are not currently open for applications, but there are two programs that could be accessed for economic development initiatives:

- Asset Management Planning Program
- Regional Community to Community Forum

For more information visit: <http://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding.html>

Vancouver Foundation

The Vancouver Foundation is the largest of Canada's 180 community foundations. Endowment funds are set up that can be dedicated to charitable purposes and a portion of the income generates from the fund is donated as grants to eligible charities. The Vancouver Foundation supports growth and innovation through project-based grants for new initiatives that are community self-directed and lead to measurable and sustainable impacts.

Applications must: demonstrate commitment from applicants and partner organizations, link to the organizations' mandate and strategic plan, build upon community strengths, show evidence of collaboration, funded by 50% or more from other sources, involve through affected by the proposal in the development of the proposal, and use, enhance, mobilize or expand on the skills, capacities and assets of local people and communities.

Only registered charities are eligible to apply for funding the following applicable project areas: animal welfare; arts and culture; children, youth and families; community-based health research; education; environment; health and social development; and youth philanthropy. For more information please visit: <http://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/grants/index.htm>

Western Diversification Program

The Western Diversification Program (WDP) is one of the programs through which Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) makes strategic investments in initiatives that enhance and strengthen the economy of Western Canada. WDP has a Call for Proposals (CFP) process where interested parties develop project proposals and apply for funding. The criteria for acceptance includes:

- Strengthens the department's responsiveness to economic trends and industry needs
- Ensures alignment to Government of Canada plans and priorities

Projects must support the development and diversification of the western Canada economy, and activities where economic and/or employment benefits are occurring within Western Canada. Projects must also support one or more of the following priorities:

- Innovation
- Skills Development and Training
- Trade and Investment

- Building Capacity for Defence Procurement Opportunities; and,
- Economic Growth Acceleration Opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis)

More information and funding criteria can be found at: <http://www.wd-deo.gc.ca/eng/301.asp>

Other Credit Unions

The North Okanagan region also has other Credit Unions that contribute to the community. There are no granting programs available, but there may be opportunities for partnerships and collaboration. These Credit Unions include:

- Vantage One Credit Union – <https://www.vantageone.net>
- Prospera Credit Union – <https://www.prospera.ca>
- Valley First (First West Credit Union) – <http://www.valleyfirst.com>

Funding Databases

(Taken from Northern Development Initiative Trust (<http://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca>)).

Aboriginal Canada portal funding tool

Interactive tool lists funding available specifically for Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/apps/fundingtool.nsf/index_en.html

Charity village grant-giving foundations

Free listing of Canadian non-profits and charities that give grants.

<http://www.charityvillage.com/cv/nonpr/nonpr17.asp>

Fundsnet: Canada foundations and grants

Lists Canadian foundations and grants.

http://www.fundsnetserices.com/searchresult.php?sbcats_id=29

Philanthropic Foundations Canada members list

Lists members of PFC, an association of Canadian grant making foundations.

<http://pfc.ca/en/about/our-members>

Appendix III: Monitoring and Evaluation

To help guide the implementation work, a monitoring and evaluation framework is provided, which includes performance indicators. Both short-term and long-term indicators have been identified to help determine the progress of this *Agricultural Plan*.

Performance Indicator	Measures of success	Evaluation Mechanism
1. The RAP provides a meaningful regional planning and governance tool that is supported by municipalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RDNO and RAAC adopt the RAP Municipalities in the RDNO endorse the plan and potentially amend it to their respective OCPs. The plan is made available on-line and in print There is RDNO staff designated to answer questions about the RAP and agriculture in the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of municipalities that endorse or adopt the plan publically (website content, meeting minutes) Number of references to the RAAC in media stories about agriculture.
2. Plan Priority Actions are Achieved		
a. Farmland and farmers are protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALR is designated and protected by municipal land use plans. Within the lifespan of this plan, there is no net loss of agriculture land and quality of land in the RDNO. The real estate industry is informed by and informs on the “Right to Farm Act” and what it means to land near the ALR edge. Relators sell farmland to buyers who intend to farm. Information for food and farming businesses is readily available. Taxation tools and incentives are improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ALR mapping and land use plans in municipal official community plans are consistent Number and type of UBCM resolutions that are passed to protect farmland and farmers. Number and type of amendments made to the BCAA that decrease tax burden on producers and increase flexibility in leasing land to emerging farmers (leasing and taxation).
b. The local agricultural economy is strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local operations are economically viable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Economic Development strategies that address opportunities outlined in this Plan. Number of producers targeting niche products (surveys, farm census) Increase in farm gate sales as a proportion to number of farmers and accounting for changes in commodity prices affecting net revenue.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops are put on for increasing the financial viability of farm operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of workshops and number of attendees.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producers use available labour programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of farms who have adequate skilled and unskilled labour resources.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional farm products are marketed throughout the local areas, the province, and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of a web and print resource on regional agriculture and food businesses.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of companies that use a regional brand and logo in their print and web promotional material.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a permanent indoor farmers market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of vendors and value of product sold over time participating in the farmers market
c. Sustainable agriculture practices are the norm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local products are easily distributed to regional and other retail and wholesale customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of medium to small farms distributing meat and eggs increases (Census)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture adapts to climate change and other events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of farmers who participate in climate adaptation and readiness workshops • An Agricultural Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Implementation Plan is developed and adopted • An RDNO livestock evaluation plan is adopted, tested, and used for training staff and producers in emergency response. • Number of community GHG inventories that include agricultural use of fossil fuel (fuel, fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers use sustainable farm practices and technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of farms that have an Environmental Farm Plan and actively participate in the program. • Number of pollinator species that significantly increase in population. • Number of sustainable food system lectures, information workshops, and forums that are provided.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crops are protected from wildlife interference in ethical and environmentally sound ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of crops affected by wildlife decreases. • Number of farmers participating in crop insurance programs increases.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invasive species are controlled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of a management strategy and active implementation process for controlling invasive species. • Number and frequency of invasive species declines.
d. Water resources are stewarded to provide clean accessible water for agriculture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and strategies support effective management of water quality and quantity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Provincial policies that are integrated into regional and local decision making frameworks (I.e. Water Sustainability Act) • Existence of a North Okanagan Water Management Strategy • Number of farms experiencing water shortages or water quality issues decline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farms conserve water that results in decrease overall demand and cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of water used per farm declines • Quality of water after farm use improves • Number of producers seeking support for setting up water conservation systems increases.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water available and affordable for regional producers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A monetary definition of “affordable” is established through consultation with farmers. • Water costs are in proportion to farm revenues.

<p>e. Farmland is available for farmers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmland is made accessible and affordable through multiple means. Farms have succession plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and use of print and online information resources for emerging farmers that provide information as well as help to connect people who have farmland and people who are looking for land to farm. Number of long-term lease agreements in the RDNO increases. Number of workshops on farm succession plans. Number of farms that have succession plans.
<p>f. Government policies and regulations create a supportive environment for agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative land access options increase viability of new farm start-ups. Regional and municipal land use policies reflect the Regional Growth Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of farms using alternative land access options (e.g. land-linking, coops, incubator farms, regional farmland trusts) Regional Context Statements reflect land use priorities of the Regional Growth Strategy Regional and municipal budgets include resources to implement the RAP Number of meetings that are held to facilitate the implementation of the RAP at the policy level.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivision and zoning Local and regional government support farming and agriculture through educating staff on the legislative framework for implementing the RAP, increase access to information and programs (the “one window”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmworker housing is identified (short term) as part of an overall process to provide affordable housing for farm workers The region has a shared vision of farming and food systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of farmworkers that have affordable housing in such a way that does not compromise the agricultural productivity and integrity of farms (BC Assessment info) The North Okanagan food charter is endorsed by the RAAC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic institutions demonstrate their commitment to local food and farming through purchasing local food where possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monetary value of local products purchased by the RDNO and member municipalities.
<p>g. Agriculture is celebrated and a continuum of education opportunities is provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The general public is well-informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of community, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary learning and capacity building opportunities that exist. Number of farmgate signs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agritourism provides as stable source of income for producers There is a continuum of agriculture and food related education and capacity building resources from the personal and community to the farm business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and type of agritourism operations (including stories of success and lessons learned) Number and type of education resources available to the general public as well as farm businesses.

- North Okanagan agriculture is showcased and celebrated throughout the Valley.
- Number of community agriculture related events
- Number of people participating in these events
- Number of municipalities celebrating farming and local food in the public realm (e.g. murals, public art, banners etc.)