



Ministry of
Agriculture, Food
and Fisheries

Update on Findings and Recommendations from the Food Security Task Force

Presentation: UBCM Electoral Area Directors 2021 Forum

February 3, 2021

Food Security Task Force (FSTF)

- ▶ Established in July 2019 by Premier Horgan.
- ▶ Independent task force with a mandate to provide recommendations to government that support food security and the economic growth of BC's agricultural sector.
- ▶ The FSTF launched a targeted consultation from July to October 2019 with industry and the public.
- ▶ Released report: "The Future of B.C.'s Food System" in January 2020.
 - ▶ <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/121/2020/01/FSTF-Report-2020-The-Future-of-Food.pdf>

FSTF Report: 4 Recommendations










1. Adopt UN Sustainable Development Goals to seek to implement these in future food policies;
2. Establish BC as an Agritech leader by supporting innovation pathway;
3. Create an agriculture and agri-tech institute; and
4. Ensure there is a place to grow food and support emerging agritech industries by examining land use polices and other regulatory considerations.



So What is Agri-Tech?

- ▶ Agritech refers broadly to the use of technology and technological innovation to improve the efficiency and output of agricultural production
- ▶ Complete supply chain: companies developing technologies, adopters of agri-tech, food producers/processors & retail
- ▶ Since 2015, Agri-Tech has grown dramatically in many global economies

Agri-tech Definition: Sub-Sectors

	Aquaculture Related Technology &/or Services 	Biotechnology & Bio-products 	Biowaste & Waste Management 	Farm Robotics, Mechanization & Equipment 	Smart Farming 	Surveying & Mapping 	Processors 	Wholesale & Distribution 	Retail 	
Definition	Developing new technologies for monitoring and grow new types of food in both marine and fresh water environments.	Using biological methods to produce plants, bacteria and animals products with improved traits.	Processing of waste, water and other by-products to reduce harmful substances and convert or re-use materials into new products.	Developing and building equipment used primarily to automate farm work.	Data-based technologies making use of big data and predictive analytics to help farmers make better decisions on daily farm issues.	Providers and developers of aerial surveying and new mapping systems and management application.	The transformation of agricultural products into food, or of one form of food into other forms for consumption by humans or animals.	Companies, organizations & programs that collect food from producers, store it in warehouses, and then distribute the food to retail.	Businesses which sell food directly to consumers to be taken for off-site consumption.	
Companies (examples)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archipelago Marine Research • Cascadia Seaweed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecovatec • GrowZorb • Okanagan Specialty Fruits • Terramera • Vitalus • WestGen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterra • West Coast Reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Intelligence Systems • BW Global • CubicFarms Systems • Ecoation • Enwave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrel Wise • Farm at Hand • SemlosBio • Skaha Remote Sensing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swift Aerial Surveys 				

Agritech in British Columbia

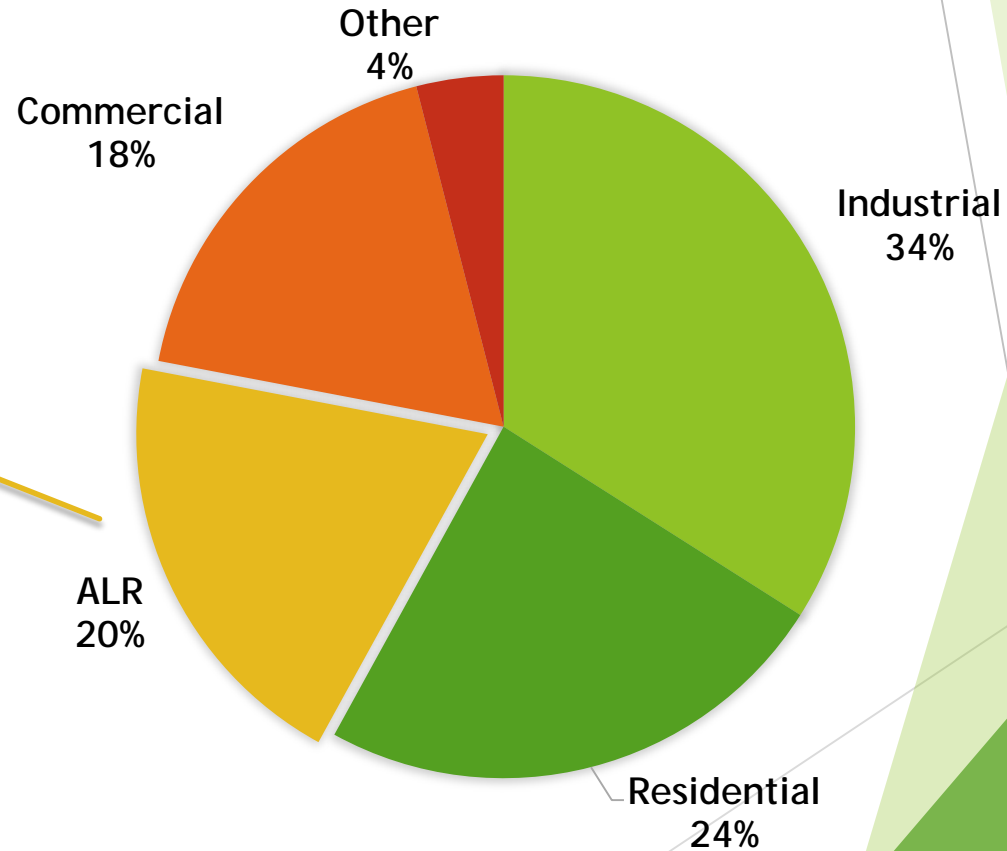
- ▶ BC home to 160 companies with leading innovations and technologies in agriculture, food processing, and seafood sectors
- ▶ \$500M revenues in 2019
- ▶ Focus on BC agri-tech has grown from the launch of the Agriculture Venture Acceleration Program in 2014 to the Food Security Task Force (2019).....
- ▶ Province recognizes that technology adoption and integration is vital to food systems, impacting all operations from small-scale to commercial.

Land Needs for Agri-Tech Sector

Some companies have indicated that they need to be on agricultural land so they can:

- conduct field trials
- increase collaboration with the farming community; and
- be able to expand their operation to apply new proprietary technologies

Current land use by agri-tech companies



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Minister's 2020 Mandate Letter

- ▶ **New name: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF)**
- ▶ The 2020 Mandate seeks to work towards a resilient, sustainable and productive agriculture, food and fisheries system.
- ▶ Four broad commitments:
 1. Improve labour
 2. Enhance Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC programs
 3. **Develop a Regenerative and Agri-tech Network (RAAN)**
 - ▶ Continue work with JERI to support the recommendations from the FSTF and develop made-in-BC agritech solutions
 4. Reinvigorate provincial fisheries, seafood and aquaculture sectors

Moving Forward

- ▶ MAFF has a lead role in food security and food production.
- ▶ Short term:
 - ▶ It is early in the new MAFF mandate - cross-ministry work is underway to develop a Regenerative Agriculture Network
 - ▶ The BC Agri-tech Grant Program created as part of the COVID-19 recovery strategy (JERI Lead)
 - ▶ On-going support via the Agriculture Venture Acceleration Program and the Canadian Agriculture Partnership Innovation Programs
- ▶ Long term:
 - ▶ The Province is under discussions with Canada to coordinate R&D, commercialization and business development through IRAP, the new BC model for the WD, SIF; on-going engagement with PSIs to collaborate on agritech institute hub and new undergraduate/graduate programs in agri-tech; continued support international investment inquiries.

Questions?

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