



Regional Agricultural Strategy

Prepared for: Regional District of Central Okanagan
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and Urban Food Strategies



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Acronyms

AAC	Agricultural Advisory Committee
AF	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
ALUI	Agricultural Land Use Inventory
AWDM	Agricultural Water Demand Model
COEDC	Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission
EA	Electoral Area
Ha	Hectare
MMCM	BC Ministry of Mining and Critical Minerals
MOE	BC Ministry of Environment
MOTT	BC Ministry of Transportation and Transit
OBWB	Okanagan Basin Water Board
OCP	Official Community Plan
OKIB	Okanagan Indian Band
ONA	Okanagan Nation Alliance
RDCO	Regional District of Central Okanagan
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy
TFW	Temporary Farm Worker
TFWH	Temporary Farm Worker Housing
UBCO	University of British Columbia Okanagan
UDI	Urban Development Institute
WFN	Westbank First Nation
WLRS	BC Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship
ZBL	Zoning Bylaws

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1. Introduction

Background

Agriculture is an important part of the heritage and cultural identity of the Central Okanagan. It contributes to the economy, the landscape, and to the high quality of life enjoyed by residents. Several challenges are facing agriculture in the region, such as pressures from population growth, a changing climate, and an evolving economy. In response, the RDCO is updating the Regional Agricultural Strategy (RAS), which will facilitate a coordinated regional approach to supporting a thriving agricultural sector in the Central Okanagan.

The Central Okanagan is one of Canada’s fastest growing regions. Over the next several years, the RDCO is advancing key regional planning initiatives to address topics that impact each government partner and pose challenges across jurisdictional boundaries. A regional approach has the advantage of tackling complex inter-jurisdictional issues comprehensively, optimizing outcomes and maximizing resource efficiencies toward the effective achievement of shared goals.

The RDCO’s original Agricultural Plan was established in 2005. The necessity to update the plan emerged as a priority within the Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan in 2017. Phase 1 culminated with the completion of the [Central Okanagan Agricultural Background Report](#) in winter 2022. Phase 2 commenced in October 2024 and will update the Regional Agricultural Strategy (RAS). Figure 1 below summarizes the overall process for updating the RAS.



Figure 1: Regional Agricultural Strategy Process

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the RAS is to provide a regional and comprehensive approach to preserving and protecting the agricultural land base to support the long-term viability of agriculture in the Central Okanagan. Objectives for the RAS are to:



Develop a regional strategy to protect agricultural land



Promote resilience and the economic viability of farming



Encourage economically, environmentally, and socially beneficial agricultural practices



Promote food security, equity, health, and well-being of residents



Develop regional soil management policy

Planning Context

The Central Okanagan region is part of the Okanagan Valley and reaches as far south as Peachland and as far north as Lake Country. The Central Okanagan is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the syilx / Okanagan people.

It is the third largest urban area in the province and is made up of two unincorporated electoral areas (Central Okanagan West and Central Okanagan East), First Nation lands (including Westbank First Nation and Okanagan Indian Band), and four member municipalities (District of Peachland, District of Lake Country, City of West Kelowna and City of Kelowna). Collectively, the RDCO member municipalities, Electoral Areas and First Nations are home to over 246,000 people.

Agriculture and farming have a long history in the Central Okanagan and continue to be a vital part of the economic, social, and environmental fabric of the region. Agriculture in the Central Okanagan has many assets including: a large farming community, robust agricultural land base, long-history of agriculture, proximity to urban markets and proximity to regional, national, and international distribution nodes. There are approximately 27,000 hectares (66,700 acres) of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the Central Okanagan.



Agriculture in the Okanagan

With its fertile soils and favourable growing climate, the Central Okanagan is a major producer of tree fruit crops, grapes, and has a very strong wine sector worth over \$187 million.¹ The large agricultural land parcels, generations of family-run farms, supportive infrastructure, research and development institutions, and easy access to domestic and international markets make agriculture an important economic contributor within the Central Okanagan and to BC more widely.

Figure 2 below shows the jurisdictions and boundaries for the RAS.

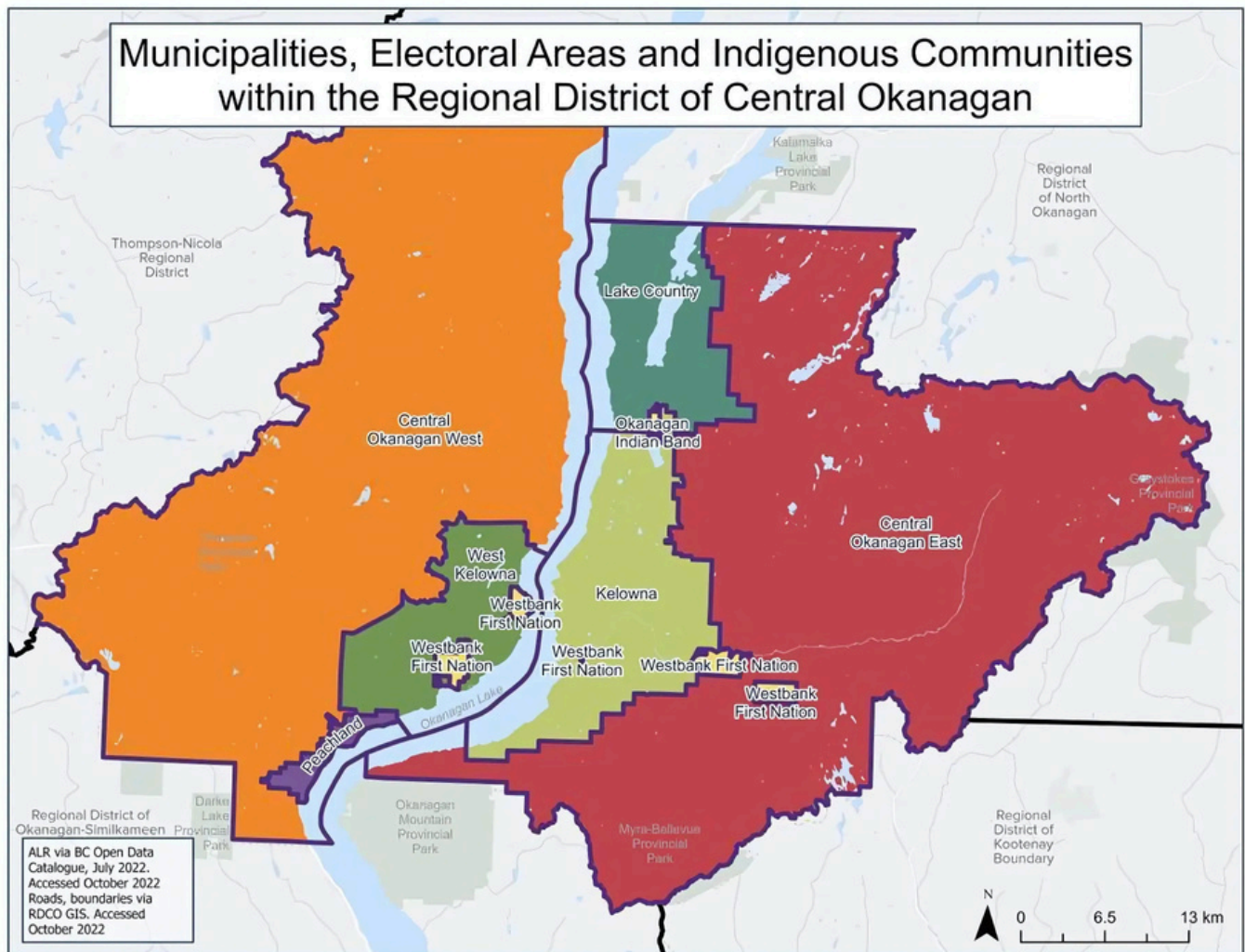


Figure 2. Municipalities, Electoral Areas, and Indigenous Communities in the RDCO

¹ Census of Agriculture, 2021. Statistics Canada.

The Role of Regional Districts in Agricultural Planning

About Regional Districts

Regional Districts (RDs) are a federation of municipalities, electoral areas, and First Nations, which each have representation on the Regional District Board of Directors. RDs play an important role in region-wide planning by developing a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and other plans and strategies that link or coordinate the otherwise independent planning and land use regulation choices of the member municipalities. Municipalities are responsible for creating a Regional Context Statement that links their aspirations as expressed in their Official Community Plan (OCP) to the regional vision as expressed in the RGS. The Regional Context Statements must be accepted by the Board of Directors of the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO).

About Agricultural Advisory Committees

RD's and municipalities can establish Agricultural Advisory Committees (AAC) that are involved in, and support, projects aimed at promoting public awareness, diversification and growth of the agriculture sector and advise the Board of Directors on matters regarding the agricultural sector. In May 2025, the terms of service for the [RDCO AAC](#) were rescinded and the AAC was dissolved.

Regional District Service Areas

The RDCO brings together Westbank First Nation (WFN), Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), member municipalities, and Electoral Areas to plan for the future by identifying shared needs and opportunities, and by delivering cost-effective services. The RDCO provides services to residents in the Central Okanagan West and Central Okanagan East Electoral Areas (EA), including water, land use planning and solid waste management. Each of the incorporated municipalities (Kelowna, West Kelowna, Lake Country, and Peachland) have the jurisdiction for land use planning and service provision within their boundaries.

The manner in which agriculture is considered at the regional policy level is through the RGS, OCPs, and subsequently through regulations in zoning bylaws. RGSs are long-range plans that assist RDs and member municipalities to plan a coordinated future for their communities while dealing with regional issues and decisions that cross local political boundaries. An OCP provides a long-term vision and strategies for future land use, development and servicing. A Zoning or Land Use Bylaw regulates and permits uses within each zone, representing current land use. Through these documents, local governments can support local agricultural production and increase farm viability.

Roles for Regional Districts in agriculture planning and implementation

RDs play an important role in agricultural planning as they are best positioned to tackle region-wide topics in order to bring consistency and fairness to the policies and procedures taken on by members of the RD. Key roles for RDs in planning and implementing agricultural plans include:

² Government of BC. Accessed October 2022. Regional Districts in B.C.

The Role of Regional Districts in Agricultural Planning (continued)

Develop a Vision:

RDs can create a vision for agriculture that supports members in aligning their respective policies and plans in order to have the best possible outcomes for agriculture. RDs can also integrate agriculture into the many other regional plans such as Regional Growth Strategies, Economic Development Plans, and Climate Change Adaptation Strategies, among others.

Convene and Facilitate:

RDs can serve as a central connector among First Nations, municipalities, food organizations, industry associations, universities, and community groups, promoting alignment and collaboration on agricultural initiatives.

Collect and Share Data:

RDs have access to a wide array of data not always available to First Nations, member municipalities, and NGOs. RDs can share this data to help support policy decisions and funding opportunities within the region.

Provide Education and Information:

RDs can provide internal and external learning opportunities and information that are aligned with the visions and policy directions in local agriculture plans, often through existing communication systems and platforms. For example, public education around the many benefits that farms and farmers bring to the region, is a key way that RDs can provide information that helps to bolster agricultural plans and visions.

Prepare for Emergencies:

RDs play a key role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies that impact agriculture (e.g. drought, fire, flood). As per provincial regulations, local governments are required to have their own agriculture coordinator for emergencies. This could take the form of enhancing the region's food recovery network, supporting emergency food access planning, creating a livestock evacuation plan, and preparing for agricultural business disruptions during crises.

Incentives to Support a Resilient Agriculture Sector:

RDs can offer incentives for sustainable practices, by promoting regenerative farming practices and supporting payment for ecosystem services on farmland.

Advocate for the Agri-Food Sector:

RDs can help strengthen the agri-food sector by advocating for policies and supports from the provincial and federal levels of government.

Leading and Supporting:

Many of the challenges identified will require clear and consistent political leadership from elected officials in order to effect change and implement solutions. Many activities for RDs can also involve playing a support role (e.g. promotions, data sharing, meeting space etc.) for the work of other entities towards the vision and goals of an agriculture plan.

3. RAS Vision and Goals

Vision

The purpose of the RAS vision statement is to articulate a clear, aspirational, and future-oriented goal for the agricultural sector. It provides a guiding framework for the region by setting a shared direction and outlining the desired future for agriculture in the Central Okanagan.

Central Okanagan agriculture feeds our community, our economy, and our future

Agriculture in the Central Okanagan is based on strong relationships between the farming community, all levels of government, and Indigenous communities. Farmland is protected, farms are thriving, and the community supports a regional agri-food system that sustains present and future generations through a strong local business environment, water use efficiency, climate resilience, and the responsible adoption of technological innovation.

Goals

The RAS goals provide specific directions for realizing the vision of the plan. These seven goals are based on a synthesis of research, data analysis, key player engagement, public consultation, and industry best practice

Goal 1: Increase Water Security for the Agri-Food Industry

An increasing population and a changing climate are adding pressure to water systems, impacting both water availability and quality for agriculture. As agricultural practices continue to shift towards the adoption of water conservation techniques and technology, the sector requires water security in order for farms to withstand drought and wildfires while respecting aquatic ecosystem needs and provincial legislation.

Goal 2: Preserve and Protect the Agricultural Land Base

Pressures on agricultural land within the Central Okanagan come from residential and infrastructure development, as well as transitions to processing, agri-tourism, and other non-farm uses. There has been a notable shift towards grapes for wine production within the region, as well as an increase in hobby farms and residential estates. There is an interest from farmers and the public to protect agricultural land for future generations to ensure a robust agricultural sector.

Goal 3: Prepare for Emergencies with Agriculture in Mind

The impacts of climate change are acutely being felt by the Central Okanagan agricultural sector. This includes increasing extreme heat conditions in the summer, a longer and more persistent wildfire season, and changes to rain and snow patterns leading to flooding and/or drought. Preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies that impact agriculture requires a regional response. Similarly, adapting to climate change pressures will be critical to the sector's success.

Goal 4: Address Regional Soil Removal and Deposit

There are challenges across the region with soil and/or fill being removed from, or deposited onto, agricultural lands, particularly given the provincial priority on the development of new sites in urban areas for housing. This is compounded by a lack of authorized deposit sites or low capacity within existing sites. Most municipalities have soil deposit and removal bylaws, but there is a lack of regional oversight and/or consistency on this issue within the RDCO. Soil and fill that moves across municipal boundaries creates challenges for effective tracking, compliance, and enforcement, often resulting in illegal deposits on agricultural land. A regional approach is required to address this issue for clarity, fairness and consistency.

Goal 5: Attract Farm Labour and Create Certainty for Temporary Farm Worker Housing

Labour issues and a lack of housing for farm workers within urban areas is a key issue in the Central Okanagan as much of the agriculture sector relies on temporary foreign workers to harvest crops and work in food processing. Building farm worker housing either in urban areas and on the farm requires a lengthy permitting process involving all levels of government. This can impact the success of farm businesses as well as sector growth. There are inconsistencies between member municipalities' zoning bylaws related to farm worker housing within the RDCO, which is problematic, particularly for farms across jurisdictional boundaries. This creates a lack of predictability for farmers that may unintentionally stifle agricultural growth and development. Attracting Canadian labour into agriculture is another key topic to address labour issues in agriculture. Member municipalities have indicated an interest and willingness to come to the table and seek a more aligned approach in relation to this issue.

Goal 6: Provide Education and Communication Around Central Okanagan Agriculture and Food Systems

Residents of the Central Okanagan largely express an appreciation for the presence of agriculture in the region as it pertains to the availability of food and the visual appeal of landscapes. However, those moving into agricultural areas may complain about normal farm practices, creating an opportunity for more public and industry education.

Goal 7: Support Economic Development Initiatives for Agriculture

The RDCO's economic development service, the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (COEDC), plays a key role in supporting the agriculture sector. Agriculture is identified as a key sector in the COEDC Strategic Plan 2025–2030, highlighting its importance to regional economic resilience. A dedicated Agriculture Support Specialist connects the COEDC with local producers, providing tailored business support and gathering insights to inform responsive programming. The agriculture sector also has representation on the COEDC Advisory Committee, ensuring that industry perspectives help shape regional economic priorities. Through initiatives like the OKGo campaign, which promotes the region's agricultural strengths, and the gathering and sharing of agriculture-specific data, COEDC helps elevate visibility, attract investment, and support informed decision-making.



4. Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Increase Water Security for the Agri-Food Industry

Strategy 1.1 Partner with interested groups on developing and/or supporting agricultural water planning in the region.

Strategy 1.1 actions include:

- 1.1.1 Meet with Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA), Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), Westbank First Nation (WFN) and member municipalities to discuss issues of common interest around water and agriculture and discuss how to align priorities and initiatives. Build and support existing, related plans and initiatives such as the Syilx-led [Okanagan Similkameen Collaborative Leadership Table](#) the [ktúsxñítk w\(Okanagan Lake\) Responsibility Planning Initiative](#) and the City of Kelowna's [Water Security and Responsibility Plan](#), and recognize Syilx water rights in water planning.
- 1.1.2 Engage with producers around the region to understand the water needs of various crops, sectors and geographical areas as a baseline for developing water management regulations such as water allocations.
- 1.1.3 Explore embarking on a wider Water Sustainability Plan in partnership with the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), Indigenous communities, and groups of interest in the region, to develop a regional framework for establishing water-use priorities. This would include examining the needs of water for agriculture, considering ecological requirements, and helping guide decision-making around land use into the future. This would also include discussing shared water utility management and agricultural water demand with WFN, ONA, and OKIB.
- 1.1.4 Formalize support for efforts around water conservation by working in alignment with the initiatives of the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB), such as the Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy.
- 1.1.5 Encourage commercial and residential water conservation initiatives and other demand-side water conservation efforts across the region, in order to support water availability for agricultural purposes, particularly during times of drought.
- 1.1.6 Seek funding for a feasibility study to explore alternative regional agricultural water supply options such as large-scale on-farm water storage options, community- level irrigation systems, or reservoirs.
- 1.1.7 Develop clear communications regarding the RDCO's role and regulatory abilities with regards to issuing residential building permits, water sources, and watershed planning, in order to provide clarity to the agricultural community around roles and responsibilities in issuing water licences and permits.

Strategy 1.2 Work with the province to update agricultural water demand modelling and support an expedited processing of agricultural water licences.

Strategy 1.2 actions include:

- 1.2.1 Work with Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) and OBWB to update the Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model on a regular basis (e.g., every five years) to obtain a more accurate estimate of agricultural water needs. This may require ensuring that the AWDM is updated with the most recent ALUI data.

- 1.2.2 Advocate to WLRS and/or other Provincial agencies for agricultural water licences to be fast-tracked through FrontCounterBC.
- 1.2.3 Work with OBWB to ensure that the collection and tracking of water use data is effectively communicated to illustrate the impact of different land uses on water resources.

Strategy 1.3 Encourage on-farm water storage and water conservation.

Strategy 1.3 actions include:

- 1.3.1 Ensure that local policies and bylaws encourage and allow on-farm water storage.
- 1.3.2 Encourage AF and WLRS to support a pilot watershed project to experiment with best practices for storing and conserving water in agricultural areas within the Central Okanagan.
- 1.3.3 Encourage AF to run workshops regarding dugouts, storage ponds, rainwater collection tanks, and other forms of water storage.
- 1.3.4 Advocate to WLRS and AF to reduce administrative and regulatory barriers to building on-farm water storage facilities.

Goal 2: Preserve and Protect the Agricultural Land Base

Strategy 2.1 Continue to support, develop, and update policies to protect agricultural land for agriculture.

Strategy 2.1 actions include:

- 2.1.1 Maintain and enhance agricultural land protection policies in the RGS.
- 2.1.2 Maintain and update (as needed) long-range policies and bylaws for protecting farmland such that housing is not prioritized at the expense of agricultural land. This may include OCPs, ZBLs, urban containment boundaries, and Regional Context Statements.
- 2.1.3 Prepare and apply (as needed) an Agricultural OCP land use designation that is aligned with an Agricultural Zoning Bylaw designation to farmland within the ALR, as well as policies that permit and prioritize agricultural uses on land with agricultural viability that may be outside the ALR. Land use designations and zoning must be consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the ALR Use Regulation and ALR General Regulation.
- 2.1.4 Maintain and develop (as needed) policies for best practices regarding edge planning and subdivision near agriculture. This may include adopting and/or endorsing measures outlined in the AF publications *Guide to Edge Planning*, *Guide to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas*, and *Subdivision Near Agriculture- A Guide for Planners and Approving Officers in BC*.
- 2.1.5 Encourage municipalities and the Electoral Areas to update (as needed) zoning and related bylaws to be consistent with current ALC rules and regulations and sector-wide best practices.

Strategy 2.2 Recognize the many ways agricultural land is a community-wide environmental asset.

Strategy 2.2 actions include:

- 2.2.1** Explore the role that a Central Okanagan regional conservation fund could play to support the agri-food sector in protecting urban areas from fires and floods, including the restoration and maintenance of ecological goods and services on farmland. In addition to the benefits of flood and wildfire mitigation, urban areas benefit from farmland that supports biodiversity, water quality, and air quality. Examples of similar existing initiatives include Payment for Ecosystem Services programs (such as the Agri-Ecosystem Stewardship Initiative, formerly known as Farmland Advantage). Another example includes regional conservation funds such as the [South Okanagan Conservation Fund](#) and the [North Okanagan Conservation Fund](#). While both the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen and the Regional District of North Okanagan have conservation fund programs no such program yet exists in the Central Okanagan.

Strategy 2.3 Support actions to curb and eliminate invasive species and noxious weeds affecting agricultural land.

Strategy 2.3 actions include:

- 2.3.1** Work with the Invasive Species Council of BC to update the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and the Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw to include current noxious species and diseases. Continue to work with member municipalities to enforce the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw. Consider informing residents seasonally through a press release.
- 2.3.2** Coordinate with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) to include the treatment of noxious weeds and invasive species in roadways and ditches within Electoral Areas to prevent the spread into agricultural land.
- 2.3.3** Continue to participate in regional pest management programs such as the Okanagan Sterile Insect Release (OKSIR) program.
- 2.3.4** Work with WFN and other communities of interest to identify species that are culturally significant food and/or medicine plants.
- 2.3.5** Address and treat invasive species and noxious weeds on public property within Electoral Areas.



Goal 3: Prepare for Emergencies with Agriculture in Mind

Strategy 3.1 Ensure that agriculture is integrated into regional emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans.

Strategy 3.1 actions include:

- 3.1.1 Meet with members of the agricultural community to discuss experiences with past emergencies and how to learn from those events.
- 3.1.2 Keep the Regional District of Central Okanagan Emergency Management Plan up to date including emergency plans for agriculture, where appropriate.
- 3.1.3 In accordance with the Emergency Disaster Management Act (EDMA), create an Agricultural Emergency Plan for on-farm emergencies that speaks specifically to livestock relocation needs.
- 3.1.4 Expand the Agriculture Wood Waste Chipping Program to meeting demand and work with producers to create conditions on agricultural lands that can serve as a wildfire buffer in emergency planning, such as adopting agro-forestry practices, rotational or targeted grazing, or by seeking support through the BC FireSmart [Farm and Ranch Wildfire Preparedness](#) program.

Strategy 3.2 Integrate climate change adaptation strategies into agricultural planning.

Strategy 3.2 actions include:

- 3.2.1 Encourage the voluntary participation of producers in the provincial Environmental Farm Plan and Beneficial Management Practices program.
- 3.2.2 Encourage producers to work with AF staff and senior levels of government to diversify crops with varieties that are drought tolerant and/or have the ability to withstand extreme temperatures.
- 3.2.3 Include agricultural stakeholders in the development of mapping and resources related to climate change.

Goal 4: Address Regional Soil and Fill Removal and Deposit

Strategy 4.1 Identify strategies for establishing authorized deposit sites and reducing unauthorized deposits of soil and fill.

Strategy 4.1 actions include:

- 4.1.1 Collaborate, advocate, and seek funding to develop a regional soil and fill tracking system in collaboration with member municipalities, WFN, OFN as well as MOE, MCMM and the ALC.
- 4.1.2 Advocate to the MOE and MMCM to work in collaboration with industry to source and register authorized deposit sites that are proximal to development sites and implement initiatives to reduce unauthorized fill and soil deposits.
- 4.1.3 Explore topsoil recycling program opportunities, ensuring clean topsoil is preserved, with partners of interest.
- 4.1.4 Maintain and develop (as needed) information-sharing relationships to disclose any soil and fill movement-related data with WFN in order to support respective policies and decision-making frameworks for protecting farmland.

Strategy 4.2 Consider developing a soil deposit and removal bylaw for the Electoral Areas of the RDCO, in conjunction with education efforts.

Strategy 4.2 actions include:

- 4.2.1** Consider soil bylaw best practices from other regions to set the desired standard for the RDCO and member municipalities. This may include identifying areas where there are gaps or a lack of consistency within bylaws related to soil deposit and removal.
- 4.2.2** Track soil and fill deposit-related complaints received from Electoral Areas by RDCO compliance and enforcement, even if a bylaw does not exist for which the complaints can be logged against.
- 4.2.3** Work with WFN to learn from their respective monitoring / tracking of soil movement from developments.
- 4.2.4** Identify resources needed for compliance and enforcement in the Electoral Areas that align with the ALC.
- 4.2.5** Work with MOE to ensure that a RDCO soil and fill bylaw aligns with provincial soil relocation regulations.
- 4.2.6** Increase public education on soil and fill management by distributing information and posting information online and partner with the ALC to provide “no dumping” signage and outreach to agricultural landowners in the Electoral Areas to reinforce existing provincial rules around soil and fill deposits on farmland. This may involve working with the ALC on language for education material related to the ALR.

Goal 5: Attract Farm Labour and Create Certainty for Temporary Farm Worker Housing

Strategy 5.1 Work with member municipalities to make policies for Temporary Farm Worker Housing(TFWH) consistent across the region.

Strategy 5.1 actions include:

- 5.1.1** Convene a regional planning lab comprised of community partner representatives to explore areas of shared interest in aligning local government regulations regarding TFWH.
- 5.1.2** Build on successes, and identify areas of inconsistency, with member municipalities on where the RDCO should provide region-wide policies.
- 5.1.3** Develop a region-wide framework that sets out principles for regulating TFWH across the Central Okanagan. Refer to the *AF Bylaw Standards for TFWH* as a guide for developing best practices.

Strategy 5.2 Support economic development and industry-led initiatives to attract labour into the agri-food sector.

Strategy 5.2 actions include:

- 5.2.1** Check-in regularly with COEDC to identify ways the RDCO can support promoting the region, understanding the economic opportunities for farm businesses, and attracting and maintaining farm labour.
- 5.2.2** Stay updated on non-profit/academic organization priorities and activities (e.g. Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project, UBCO, Young Agrarians, Small Scale Meat Producers Association, and others) in order to identify ways the RDCO can support the regional agri-food economy.

Goal 6: Provide Education and Communication on Central Okanagan Agriculture and Food Systems

Strategy 6.1 Leverage existing, and create new, ways to expand the understanding and appreciation for regional agriculture. Strategy 6.1 actions include:

- 6.1.1 Expand public awareness around key topics by amplifying the work of existing organizations, creating communications campaigns, and disseminating existing resources, e.g.:
 - o Support community organizations (e.g. the Okanagan Fruit Tree Project, Okanagan Similkameen Stewardship Society, Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program, etc.) to engage and inform the public around agriculture, and the potential for farmland to support ecosystem services.
 - o Promote information campaigns about farming, food security, and water conservation. Examples include expanding the City of Kelowna's agricultural signage initiative into the Electoral Areas.
 - o Provide front counter support through RDCO development services, bylaw, and permitting by promoting and distributing existing resources such as the AF Planning for [Subdivision Near Farmland](#) guide, the [Guide to Edge Planning](#)., and the [Countryside and You](#).
 - o Support the work that AF and the ALC are undertaking with real estate associations in running workshops for real estate agents around managing expectations around the purchase of ALR land for residential purposes. These workshops often benefit from local government staff attendance and support.
- 6.1.2 Grow regional local government knowledge around food and agriculture by learning from local producers and industry associations. e.g.:
 - o Consider re-establishing the RDCO Agricultural Advisory Committee.
 - o Encourage participation in events hosted by industry associations and organizations such as the COEDC and the Cross Commodity Leadership Support Project.
 - o Organize farm tours for elected officials and staff.

Strategy 6.2 Build internal awareness around Indigenous Governance and Culture regarding food and agriculture systems

- Strategy 6.2 actions include:
- 6.2.1 Provide learning opportunities for elected officials and staff around Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty and engage with Indigenous Elders and youth to learn more about Indigenous histories and perspectives on food and agriculture.
 - 6.2.2 Collaborate with WFN, ONA, and OKIB in areas of shared concern such as water resource management, emergency planning, control of noxious weeds, and food security.

Goal 7: Be Supportive of Economic Development Initiatives for Agriculture

Strategy 7.1 Work to create diversity within agriculture in the regional economy.

Strategy 7.1 actions include:

7.1.1 Encourage opportunities for producers to diversify crops and agricultural related income streams using creativity and innovation, while aligned with rules and regulations that apply within the ALR. This may include crop trials, business strategy development, taking advantage of emerging markets and consumer trends, and cautiously adopting agri-technology opportunities.

7.1.2 Support producers in achieving direct to consumer sales. This may include support for locating farmers markets in secure, year-round, permanent locations, supporting campaigns and/or industry initiatives to help direct consumers towards local food products, and celebrating local harvests. Examples include:

- Launching a “Buy Okanagan” campaign and/or an Okanagan Agriculture Day to celebrate and recognize local farmers.
- Advocating to the public for a shift of a portion weekly grocery spending to local products.
- Support linking producers with provincial initiatives such as [Buy BC](#), [Feed BC](#), and [Grow BC](#).

7.1.3 Ensure that local zoning bylaws and permitting processes support agri-food activities for small and medium scale enterprises, such as food hubs, canning, processing, packing and sorting facilities in the Central Okanagan, with preference given to areas outside of, but proximal to, agricultural zones. If these uses are within the ALR they must be consistent with ALC regulations or may require an application. This may also apply to agri-tourism and related uses.



5. Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan classifies each of the actions within the RAS using the following information categories:

- RDCO department lead
- RDCO supporting department(s)
- External supports: member municipalities, First Nations, NGOs, provincial agencies, or others
- Priority level:
 - High
 - Medium
 - Low
- Timeline for commencing the action:
 - o Ongoing (already underway)
 - o Short (1-2 years)
 - o Medium (3-5 years)
 - o Long (6-10 years)
- Cost estimate:
 - o \$ (<\$50k)
 - o \$\$ (\$50-\$100k)
 - o \$\$\$ (> \$100k)
- External resources required:
 - o Yes
 - o No

The full implementation plan is provided in a table format in Appendix B, and a summary is provided here. Of the 54 recommended actions included in the RAS, the following observations can be made:

- The RDCO Development and Engineering Services Department will lead most actions (43 of 54 actions).
- About half are considered High Priority actions (26 of 54 actions). However, half of those High Priority actions (13 of 26) are already underway (Ongoing).
- There are seven actions that are considered High Priority and Short Timeline (1-2 years). They are:
 - o 1.1.6 Seek funding for a feasibility study to explore alternative regional agricultural water supply options such as large-scale on-farm water

Implementation Plan (continued)

- o **1.2.2** Advocate to WLRS and/or other Provincial agencies for agricultural water licences to be fast-tracked through FrontCounterBC.
 - o **2.3.1** Work with the Invasive Species Council of BC to update the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and the Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw to include current noxious species and diseases. Continue to work with member municipalities to enforce the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw. Consider informing residents seasonally through a press release.
 - o **2.3.4** Work with WFN and other communities of interest to identify species that are culturally significant food and/or medicine plants.
 - o **3.1.3** In accordance with the Emergency Disaster Management Act (EDMA), create an Agricultural Emergency Plan for on-farm emergencies that speaks specifically for livestock relocation needs.
 - o **4.1.2** Advocate to the MOE and MMCM to work in collaboration with industry to source and register authorized deposit sites that are proximal to development sites and implement initiatives to reduce unauthorized fill and soil deposits.
 - o **5.1.1** Convene a regional planning lab comprised of community partner representatives to explore areas of shared interest in aligning local government regulations regarding TFWH.
- Of those seven High Priority, Short Term actions, only two would require significant (over \$100k) external resources (action 1.1.6 and action 3.1.3) and funding opportunities for these actions exist through external granting agencies.
 - Of the 54 recommended actions, nine are listed as potentially requiring external resources. Whenever possible, external funding opportunities have been identified and listed in the Appendix.



6. Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework is helpful in guiding progress of the implementation of RAS actions and in measuring success. Table 1 presents descriptions of six indicators along with examples of success (what is being measured), evaluation mechanisms (how it is being measured), and data sources for each.

The indicators are presented as “performance” or “process” related:

- “Performance” indicators note the overall success of the plan as actions play out on the ground.
- “Process” indicators” signal the overall implementation of specific actions over time.

Table 1. Monitoring and Evaluation: Performance Indicators.

Indicator	Measure of Success	Evaluation Mechanism	Data source	Frequency of Reporting	Baseline Data
Performance Indicators					
1. Total farmed area and number of farms (on ALR and outside ALR)	Increase in farm activity on parcels available for farming.	Track the area of farmland under production: - Total area in production - Average # of acres/farm - # of farms year over year	Farm classified area from Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture BC Assessment ALUI updates ALC website	Five years	ALUI Census of Agriculture BC Assessment
2. Integrity of the ALR and agriculturally-zoned lands	Number of hectares maintained in ALR (except for pre-approved historical exclusions) and other zones designated as agriculture.	Comparison of ALR characteristics over time: - ALR application decisions	Development application data	Annually	ALUI ALC website Zoning changes to agricultural land.
3. Increased water resilience	Number of farms that have on-farm water storage, upgrades to distribution infrastructure; updates to water plans.	Communication with farmers and with AF; communications with RDCO staff.	AF	Annually	Not yet available

Table 2. Monitoring and Evaluation: Process Indicators.

Indicator	Measure of Success	Evaluation Mechanism	Data source	Frequency of Reporting	Baseline Data
Process Indicators					
4. Number of educational events hosted with the agriculture and food sector.	An increase in events held in the agriculture and food sector.	Comparison of event numbers annually.	Events calendars, newsletters	Annually	COEDC, Cross Commodity Leadership, etc.
5. Number of RAS recommended actions completed	50% of actions completed within 5 years of adoption (Excluding ongoing actions)	Tracking of actions completed over time.	Updates and amendments to bylaws and other RDCO policies.	Annually	An evaluation of the actions completed to date.
6. Number of RDCO community plans and projects that intersect with agriculture	100% of new plans endorsed or adopted include local agricultural perspectives.	Tracking of the engagement and final recommendations of new plans, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change action plan • Tourism plan • Transportation plan • Others 	Any new projects emerging from the RAS. RDCO plans and projects	Annually	An evaluation of plans completed to date.
7. Annual Budget allowance for continued RAS implementation	Budget allocated each year for RAS implementation.	Track budget allocations for RAS actions as well as budget for specific projects related to RAS actions.	RDCO Board commitments for budget.	Annually	RDCO budget commitments.

7. Appendices

Appendix A: Advocacy-related actions

These goals and actions require advocacy on the part of the RDCO on behalf of industry, community, and the environment to ensure that the Central Okanagan remains an agricultural hub for future generations. The actions are provided in the table below by goal area as well as whom the advocacy would be targeting.

RAS Advocacy Areas by Goal	Province of BC	Government of Canada	Industry	Local Government
Goal 1: Increase Water Security for the Agri-Food Industry.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate to WLRS and/or other Provincial agencies to identify specific ways the Province can support water licensing, agricultural water supply options, and water conservation for agriculture.	X			
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate to WLRS and AF to reduce administrative and regulatory barriers to building on-farm water storage facilities.	X			
Goal 2: Preserve and Protect the Agricultural Land Base.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage municipalities and the Electoral Areas to update (as needed) zoning and related bylaws to be consistent with current ALC rules and regulations and sector-wide best practices.				X
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) to include the treatment of noxious weeds and invasive species in roadways and ditches within Electoral Areas to prevent the spread into agricultural land.	X			
Goal 3: Prepare for Emergencies with Agriculture in Mind.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that local governments are aware of their responsibilities set out by EDMA (e.g. local governments are required to have emergency plans that consider all animals including livestock).				X

RAS Advocacy Areas by Goal	Province of BC	Government of Canada	Industry	Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage the participation of producers in the provincial Environmental Farm Plan and Beneficial Management Practices program.	X		X	
<input type="checkbox"/> Encourage producers to work with AF staff and senior levels of government to diversify crops with varieties that are drought tolerant and/or have the ability to withstand extreme temperatures.	X		X	
Goal 4: Address regional soil removal and deposit				
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate, advocate and seek funding to develop a regional soil and fill tracking system in collaboration with member municipalities, WFN, OFN as well as MOE, MCMM and the ALC.	X		X	X
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate to the MOE and MMCM to work in collaboration with industry to source and register authorized deposit sites that are proximal to development sites and implement initiatives to reduce unauthorized fill and soil deposits.	X		X	X
Goal 5: Attract Farm Labour and Create Certainty for Temporary Farm Worker Housing				
<input type="checkbox"/> Check-in regularly with COEDC to identify ways the RDCO can support promoting the region, understanding the economic opportunities for farm businesses, and attracting and maintaining farm labour.			X	
Goal 6: Provide education and communication on Central Okanagan agriculture and food systems				
<input type="checkbox"/> Grow regional local government knowledge around food and agriculture by learning from local producers and industry associations.			X	X
Goal 7: Be supportive of economic development initiatives for agriculture				
<input type="checkbox"/> Support producers in achieving direct to consumer sales. This may include support for locating farmers markets in secure, year-round, permanent locations, supporting campaigns and/or industry initiatives to help			X	X

RAS Advocacy Areas by Goal	Province of BC	Government of Canada	Industry	Local Government
direct consumers towards local food products, and celebrating local harvests.				
Other advocacy topics that arose during engagement				
General				
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate for changes to farm tax status thresholds to encourage more farming and discourage inactive farmland.	X			
Food security and sovereignty				
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate for increased household and community food security funding.	X	X		
<input type="checkbox"/> Support community-based food sovereignty initiatives.	X			X
Advocacy on behalf of producers				
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate to AF for continued funding of the SIR program	X		X	
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate to MOTT for road maintenance to better accommodate agricultural vehicles.	X			
<input type="checkbox"/> Advocate to the province for resources regarding succession planning and market development for crop diversification.	X			

Appendix B: Implementation Plan Table

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
Goal 1: Increase Water Security for the Agri-Food Industry	1.1 Partner with interested groups on developing and/or supporting agricultural water planning in the region.	1.1.1	Meet with Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA), Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), Westbank First Nation (WFN) and member municipalities to discuss issues of common interest around water and agriculture and discuss how to align priorities and initiatives. Build and support existing, related plans and initiatives such as the Syilx-led Okanagan Similkameen Collaborative Leadership Table the ktúsxnitk w (Okanagan Lake) Responsibility Planning Initiative and the City of Kelowna's Water Security and Responsibility Plan), and recognize Syilx water rights in water planning.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	Member municipalities, OBWB, WFN, ONA, OKIB	High	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		1.1.2	Engage with producers around the region to understand the water needs of various crops, sectors and geographical areas as a baseline for developing water management regulations such as water allocations.	Development and Engineering Services		AF	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		1.1.3	Explore embarking on a wider Water Sustainability Plan in partnership with the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), Indigenous communities, and groups of interest in the region, to develop a regional framework for establishing water-use priorities. This would include examining the needs of water for agriculture, considering ecological requirements, and help guide decision-making around land use into the future. This would also include discussing shared water utility management and agricultural water demand with WFN, ONA, and OKIB.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	WLRS, AF, WFN, ONA, OKIB, Member municipalities, OBWB	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$\$\$ (>100k)	Yes
		1.1.4	Formalize support for efforts around water conservation by working in alignment with the initiatives of the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB), such as the Okanagan Sustainable Water Strategy.	Development and Engineering Services		OBWB	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
		1.1.5	Encourage commercial and residential water conservation initiatives and other demand-side water conservation efforts across the region, in order to support water availability for agricultural purposes, particularly during times of drought.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	Member municipalities	High	Ongoing	\$\$ (50-100k)	No
		1.1.6	Seek funding for a feasibility study to explore alternative regional agricultural water supply options such as large-scale on-farm water storage options, community-level irrigation systems, or reservoirs.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	High	Short (1-2 years)	\$\$\$ (>100k)	Yes
		1.1.7	Develop clear communications regarding the RDCO's role and regulatory abilities with regards to issuing residential building permits, water sources, and watershed planning, in order to provide clarity to the agricultural community around roles and responsibilities in issuing water licenses and permits.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services		Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
	1.2 Work with the province to update agricultural water demand modelling and support an expedited processing of agricultural water licenses.	1.2.1	Work with Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) and OBWB to update the Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model on a regular basis (e.g., every 5 years) to obtain a more accurate estimate of agricultural water needs. This may require ensuring that the AWDM is updated with the most recent ALUI data.	Development and Engineering Services		AF, OBWB	Medium	Long (6-10 years)	\$\$ (50-100k)	Yes
		1.2.2	Advocate to WLRS and/or other Provincial agencies for agricultural water licences to be fast-tracked through FrontCounterBC.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	High	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		1.2.3	Work with OBWB to ensure that the collection and tracking of water use data is effectively communicated to illustrate the impact of different land uses on water resources.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	OBWB	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
	1.3 Encourage on-farm water storage and water conservation	1.3.1	Ensure that local policies and bylaws encourage and allow on-farm water storage.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		1.3.2	Encourage AF and WLRS to support a pilot watershed project to experiment with best practices for storing and conserving water in agricultural areas within the Central Okanagan.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities, AF, WLRS	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		1.3.3	Encourage AF to run workshops regarding dugouts, storage ponds, rainwater collection tanks, and other forms of water storage.	Development and Engineering Services		AF	High	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		1.3.4	Advocate to WLRS and AF to reduce administrative and regulatory barriers to building on-farm water storage facilities.	Development and Engineering Services		AF, WLRS	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
Goal 2: Preserve and Protect the Agricultural Land Base	2.1 Continue to support, develop, and update policies to protect agricultural land for agriculture.	2.1.1	Maintain and enhance agricultural land protection policies in the RGS.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		2.1.2	Maintain and update (as needed) long-range policies and bylaws for protecting farmland such that housing is not prioritized at the expense of agricultural land. This may include OCPs , ZBLs, urban containment boundaries, and Regional Context Statements.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities, ALC	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		2.1.3	Prepare and apply (as needed) an Agricultural OCP land use designation that is aligned with an Agricultural Zoning Bylaw designation to farmland within the ALR, as well as policies that permit and prioritize agricultural uses on land with agricultural viability that may be outside the ALR. Land use designations and zoning must be consistent with the <i>Agricultural Land Commission Act</i> and the ALR Use Regulation and ALR General Regulation.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities, ALC	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
		2.1.4	Maintain and develop (as needed) policies for best practices regarding edge planning and subdivision near agriculture. This may include adopting and/or endorsing measures outlined in the AF publications Guide to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas and Subdivision Near Agriculture- A Guide for Planners and Approving Officers in BC	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		2.1.5	Encourage municipalities and the Electoral Areas to update (as needed) zoning and related bylaws to be consistent with current ALC rules and regulations and sector-wide best practices.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities, ALC	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
	2.2 Recognize the many ways agricultural land is a community-wide environmental asset.	2.2.1	Explore the role that a Central Okanagan regional conservation fund could play to support the agri- food sector in protecting urban areas from fires and floods, including the restoration and maintenance of ecological goods and services on farmland. In addition to the benefits of flood and wildfire mitigation, urban areas benefit from farmland that supports biodiversity, water quality, and air quality. Examples of similar existing initiatives include Payment for Ecosystem Services programs (such as Farmland Advantage) and regional conservation funds in the Okanagan include the South Okanagan Conservation Fund and the North Okanagan Conservation Fund, thereby creating a gap in the Central Okanagan.	Development and Engineering Services	Financial Services	Member municipalities	Low	Long (6-10 years)	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
	2.3 Support actions to curb and eliminate invasive species and noxious weeds affecting agricultural land.	2.3.1	Work with the Invasive Species Council of BC to update the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and the Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw to include current noxious species and diseases. Continue to work with member municipalities to enforce the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and Noxious Weeds & Grass Control Bylaw. Consider informing residents seasonally through a press release.	Protective Services	Development and Engineering Services	Invasive Species Council of BC, Municipal members	High	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	Yes
		2.3.2	Coordinate with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) to include the treatment of noxious weeds and invasive species in roadways and ditches within Electoral Areas to prevent the spread into agricultural land.	Protective Services	Development and Engineering Services	Invasive Species Council of BC, MOTT, Municipal members	High	Ongoing	\$\$ (50-100k)	Yes
		2.3.3	Continue to participate in regional pest management programs such as the Okanagan Sterile Insect Release (OKSIR) program.	Development and Engineering Services		OKSIR	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		2.3.4	Work with WFN and other communities of interest to identify species that are culturally significant food and/or medicine plants.	Development and Engineering Services	Protective Services	WFN	High	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		2.3.5	Address and treat invasive species and noxious weeds on public property within Electoral Areas.	Protective Services	Parks Services		High	Ongoing	\$\$ (50-100k)	No
Goal 3: Prepare for Emergencies with Agriculture in Mind	3.1 Ensure that agriculture is integrated into regional emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans.	3.1.1	Meet with members of the agricultural community to discuss experiences with past emergencies and how to learn from those events.	Protective Services	Development and Engineering Services	Producers	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
		3.1.2	Keep the Regional District of Central Okanagan Emergency Management Plan up to date including emergency plans for agriculture, where appropriate.	Protective Services	Development and Engineering Services		High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		3.1.3	In accordance with the Emergency Disaster Management Act (EDMA), seek funding to create an Agricultural Emergency Plan for on-farm emergencies that speaks specifically for livestock relocation needs.	Development and Engineering Services	Protective Services		High	Short (1-2 years)	\$\$\$ (>100k)	Yes
		3.1.4	Expand the Agriculture Wood Waste chipping program to meet demand and work with producers to create conditions on agricultural lands that can serve as a wildfire interface in emergency planning, such as adopting agro-forestry practices, rotational or targeted grazing, or by seeking support through the BC FireSmart Farm and Ranch Wildfire Preparedness program.	Development and Engineering Services		Producers	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$\$ (50-100k)	No
	3.2 Integrate climate change adaptation strategies into agricultural planning.	3.2.1	Encourage the participation of producers in the provincial Environmental Farm Plan and Beneficial Management Practices program.	Development and Engineering Services		IAF, Member Municipalities	Low	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		3.2.2	Encourage producers to work with AF staff to diversify crops with varieties that are drought tolerant and/or have the ability to withstand extreme temperatures.	Development and Engineering Services		AF, Member Municipalities	High	Long (6-10 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		3.2.3	Include agricultural stakeholders in the development of mapping and resources related to climate change.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	Producers	Low	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
Goal 4: Address Regional Soil and Fill Removal and Deposit	4.1 Identify strategies for establishing authorized deposit sites and reducing unauthorized deposits of soil and fill.	4.1.1	Collaborate, advocate and seek funding to develop a regional soil and fill tracking system in collaboration with member municipalities, WFN, OFN as well as MOE, MCMM and the ALC.	Development and Engineering Services		MOE, MCMM, WFN, OFN, ALC, Member municipalities	High	Medium (3-5 years)	\$\$ (50-100k)	Yes

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
		4.1.2	Advocate to the MOE and MMCM to work in collaboration with industry to source and register authorized deposit sites that are proximal to development sites and implement initiatives to reduce unauthorized fill and soil deposits.	Development and Engineering Services		MOE, MMCM	High	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		4.1.3	Explore topsoil recycling program opportunities, ensuring clean topsoil is preserved, with partners of interest.	Development and Engineering Services		Industry	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		4.1.4	Maintain and develop (as needed) information-sharing relationships to disclose any soil and fill movement-related data with WFN in order to support respective policies and decision-making frameworks for protecting farmland.	Development and Engineering Services		WFN	High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
	4.2 Consider developing a soil deposit and removal bylaw for the Electoral Areas of the RDCO, in conjunction with education efforts.	4.2.1	Consider soil bylaw best practices from other regions to set the desired standard for the RDCO and member municipalities. This may include identifying areas where there are gaps or a lack of consistency within bylaws related to soil deposit and removal.	Development and Engineering Services	Protective Services	Member municipalities	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$\$ (50-100k)	No
		4.2.2	Track soil and fill deposit-related complaints received from Electoral Areas by RDCO compliance and enforcement, even if a bylaw does not exist for which the complaints can be logged against.	Development and Engineering Services	Protective Services		High	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		4.2.3	Work with WFN to learn from their respective monitoring / tracking of soil movement from developments.	Development and Engineering Services	Protective Services	WFN	Medium	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		4.2.4	Identify resources needed for compliance and enforcement in the Electoral Areas that align with the ALC.	Protective Services	Development and Engineering Services	ALC	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		4.2.5	Work with MOE to ensure that a RDCO soil and fill bylaw aligns with provincial soil relocation regulations.	Development and Engineering Services	Protective Services	MOE	High	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
		4.2.6	Increase public education on soil and fill management by distributing pamphlets and posting information online and partner with the ALC to provide “no dumping” signage and outreach to agricultural landowners in the Electoral Areas to reinforce existing provincial rules around soil and fill deposits on farmland. This may involve working with the ALC on language for education material related to the ALR.	Communications and Information Services	Development and Engineering Services	ALC	High	Medium (3-5 years)	\$\$ (50-100k)	Yes
Goal 5: Attract Farm Labour and Create Certainty for Temporary Farm Worker Housing	5.1 Work with member municipalities to make policies for Temporary Farm Worker Housing (TFWH) consistent across the region	5.1.1	Convene a regional planning lab comprised of community partner representatives to explore areas of shared interest in aligning local government regulations regarding TFWH.	Development and Engineering Services		AF, Industry Associations, Member Municipalities	High	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		5.1.2	Build on successes, and identify areas of inconsistency, with member municipalities on where the RDCO should provide region-wide policies.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	Medium	Short (1-2 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		5.1.3	Develop a region-wide framework that sets out principles for regulating TFWH across the Central Okanagan. Refer to the AF Bylaw Standards for TFWH as a guide for developing best practices.	Development and Engineering Services		Member municipalities	Medium	Medium (3-5 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		5.2.1	Check-in regularly with COEDC to identify ways the RDCO can support promoting the region, understanding the economic opportunities for farm businesses, and attracting and maintaining farm labour.	COEDC	Communications and Information Services	Member municipalities	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		5.2 Support economic development and industry association led initiatives to attract labour into the agri-food sector								

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
		5.2.2	Stay updated on non-profit/academic organization priorities and activities (e.g. Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project, UBCO, Young Agrarians, Small Scale Meat Producers Association, and others) in order to identify ways the RDCO can support the regional agri- food economy.	Development and Engineering Services		Academic and community organizations	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
Goal 6: Provide education and communication on Central Okanagan agriculture and food systems	6.1 Leverage existing and create new ways to expand the understanding and appreciation for regional agriculture.	6.1.1	Expand public awareness around key topics by amplifying the work of existing organizations, creating communications campaigns (e.g. signage), and disseminating existing resources.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	Member municipalities, Industry Associations, community organizations (e.g. Okanagan Fruit Tree Project)	High	Ongoing	\$\$ (50-100k)	Yes
		6.1.2	Grow regional local government knowledge around food and agriculture by learning from local producers and industry associations.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	AF, COEDC	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
	6.2 Build internal awareness around Indigenous Governance and Culture regarding food and agriculture systems.	6.2.1	Provide learning opportunities for elected officials and staff around Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty and engage with Indigenous Elders and youth to learn more about Indigenous histories and perspectives on food and agriculture.	Communications and Information Services	Development and Engineering Services	WFN, ONA, OKIB	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		6.2.2	Collaborate with WFN, ONA, and OKIB in areas of shared concern such as water resource management, emergency planning, control of noxious weeds, and food security.	Development and Engineering Services	Communications and Information Services	WFN, ONA, OKIB	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No

Goal	Strategy	#	Action	RDCO Departmental Lead	RDCO Supporting Depts	External Supports	Priority level	Timeline	Cost	External Resources Required
Goal 7: Be supportive of economic development initiatives for agriculture	7.1 Work to create diversity within agriculture in the regional economy.	7.1.1	Encourage opportunities for producers to diversify crops and agricultural related income streams using creativity and innovation, while aligned with rules and regulations that apply within the ALR. This may include crop trials, business strategy development, taking advantage of emerging markets and consumer trends, and cautiously adopting agri-technology opportunities.	COEDC	Communications and Information Services	AF	Low	Long (6-10 years)	\$ (<50k)	No
		7.1.2	Support producers in achieving direct to consumer sales. This may include support for locating farmers markets in secure, year-round, permanent locations, supporting campaigns and/or industry initiatives to help direct consumers towards local food products, and celebrating local harvests.	COEDC	Communications and Information Services	AF	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No
		7.1.3	Ensure that local zoning bylaws and permitting processes support agri-food activities for small and medium scale enterprises, such as food hubs, canning, processing, packing and sorting facilities in the Central Okanagan, with preference given to areas outside of, but proximal to, agricultural zones. If these uses are within the ALR they must be consistent with ALC regulations or may require an application. This may also apply to agri-tourism and related uses.	Development and Engineering Services	COEDC	Member municipalities, WFN, ALC	Medium	Ongoing	\$ (<50k)	No

Appendix C: Potential Funding Sources

The following are potential funding sources for actions in the Regional Agricultural Strategy.

General Grants

- [Real Estate Foundation of BC Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program Vancouver Foundation](#)
- [Knowledge Transfer and Technology Program Co-op](#)
- [Community Spaces Agri-Spirit Fund Youth Employment and Skills Program Canada Summer Jobs wage subsidy](#)
- [Farm 2 School BC Grants Central Okanagan Foundation Grants](#)

Agri-Environmental Grants

- [Agri-Ecosystem Stewardship Initiative Agriculture Water Infrastructure Program \(Stream 3: Assessments, Studies or Plans\) Climate Agri-Solutions Fund](#)
- [Environmental Farm Plan Scaling the Implementation of Riparian Restoration](#)
- [Okanagan Basin Water Board: Water Conservation and Quality Improvement](#)

Agri-Food Industry Specific

- [Livestock Waste Tissue Initiative Novel Tools and Technology for HPAI Prevention Agri-Stability B.C. Land Matching Program Agriculture](#)
- [Wildlife Program Food Storage, Distribution and Retail Program Food Processing Growth Fund Production Insurance Livestock Price](#)
- [Insurance Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission Business Support](#)



Emergency Planning and Preparedness

- [United Way Disaster Financial Assistance Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program](#)
- [Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Disaster Resilience and Innovation Funding program](#)

Indigenous Applicants

- [New Relationship Trust - Food Sovereignty Fund](#)
- [Indigenous People's Resiliency Fund Telus](#)
- [Indigenous Communities Fund Thriving](#)
- [Indigenous Food Systems Indigenous Pathfinder](#)
- [Service](#)

Loans

- [Community Futures](#)
- [Farm Credit Canada BC](#)

