



DRAFT Regional Agricultural Strategy

Prepared for: Regional District of Central Okanagan
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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
BMPs	Beneficial Management Practices
COEDC	Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission
EA	Electoral Area
EFP	Environmental Farm Plan
Ha	Hectare
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
WFN	Westbank First Nation
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.

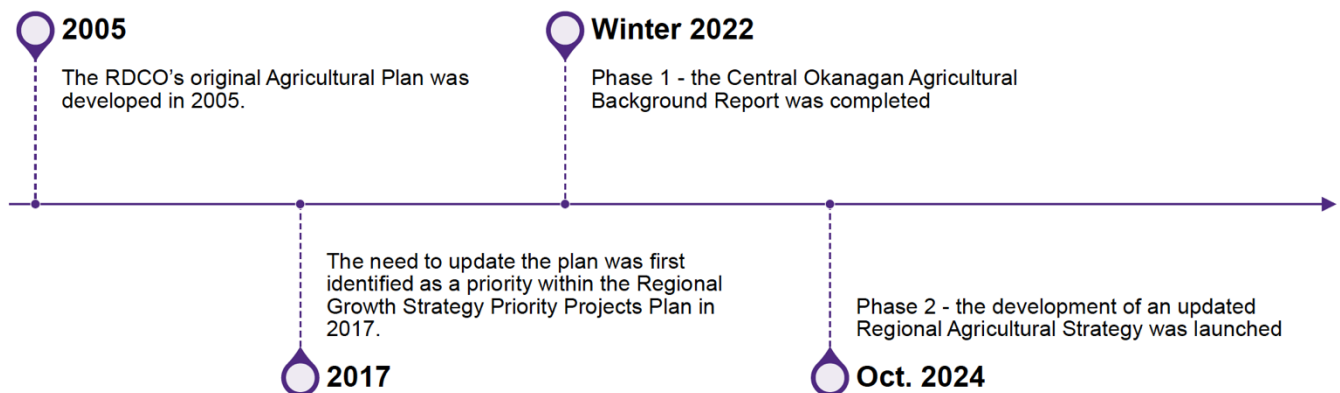


Figure 1: Regional Agricultural Strategy Process

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. 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 and cider industry. In 2021, total farm revenue for the region



was 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.

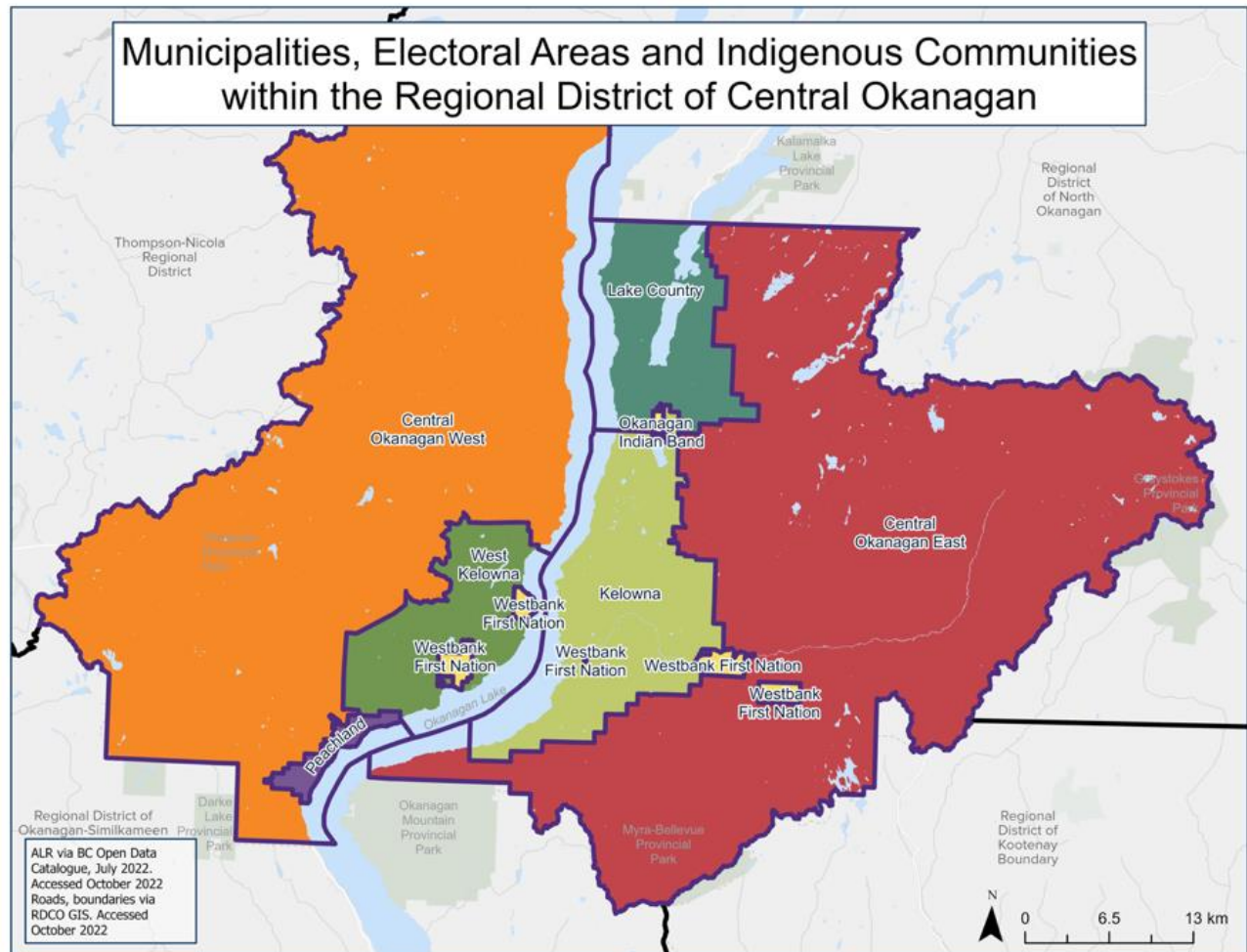


Figure 2. Municipalities, Electoral Areas, and Indigenous Communities in the RDCO

¹ Census of Agriculture, 2021. Statistics Canada.

The Role of Regional Districts in Agricultural Planning

About Regional Districts

Regional Districts are a federation of municipalities, electoral areas, and First Nations, which each have representation on the Regional District Board of Directors.² Regional Districts 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 Agriculture Advisory Committees

Regional districts 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. The [RDCO AAC](#) is currently on pause until a review is completed.

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 collection. 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 the regional districts 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.

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

Roles for Regional Districts in agriculture planning and implementation

Regional Districts (RDs) play an important role in agricultural planning. Often times, RDs 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:

- **Develop a vision:** RD's 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 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 purpose of RAS goals are to 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 housing development. This is compounded by a lack of legal 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. Soil and fill that moves across municipal boundaries creates challenges for effective tracking, compliance, and enforcement, often resulting in illegal dumping 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 result in a bottleneck for the success of farm businesses as well as the growth of the sector. Farm worker housing inconsistencies exist between member municipalities' zoning bylaws within the RDCO, which is problematic particularly for those with farms that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Attracting Canadian labour into agriculture is another key topic in order to address labour issues in agriculture.

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 are often the source of complaints about normal farm practices, creating an opportunity for more public and industry education.

Goal 7: Be supportive of economic development initiatives for agriculture

Although the RDCO does not directly manage an economic development service, other entities such as the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (COEDC) are undertaking many initiatives, some related to agriculture. The RAS identifies ways the RDCO can support other entities in economic development for agriculture activities.

4. RAS Strategies and Actions

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

Strategy 1.1 Partner with interested groups on developing a *Water Sustainability Plan* for agriculture the region. Strategy 1.1 actions include:

- 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 on existing, related plans (such as the [*klúsñítkw^w* \(Okanagan Lake\) Responsibility Planning Initiative](#) and the City of Kelowna's [*Water Security and Responsibility Plan*](#)).
- 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.
- Explore a regional framework for establishing water-use priorities, including prioritizing water for agriculture, considering agricultural and ecological needs, that can help guide decisions during water shortages.
- 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*](#).
- Encourage commercial and residential water conservation initiatives and other high-value areas of demand-side water conservation.
- Explore options such as large-scale on-farm water storage options, community-level irrigation systems.
- Recognize Syilx water rights in regional water planning.
- Develop clear communications regarding the RDCO's role and regulatory abilities with regards to issuing residential building permits, water sources, and watershed planning.

Strategy 1.2 Work with the province to update agricultural water demand modelling and support an expedited processing of agricultural water licenses. Strategy 1.2 actions include:

- Work with Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) and OBWB to update the ALUI and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model on a regular basis (e.g., every 10 years) to obtain a more accurate estimate of agricultural water needs.
- Advocate for agricultural water licences to be fast-tracked through FrontCounterBC.
- 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:

- Ensure that local bylaws do not prohibit on-farm water storage.

- Prepare a list of vendors that can help producers to install a range of water storage systems (e.g. dug outs, tanks, underground). Provide this list to producers.
- Establish a pilot watershed project to experiment with best practices for storing and conserving water in the Central Okanagan.
- Continue to encourage the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (AF) to run workshops regarding dugouts, storage ponds, rainwater collection tanks, and other forms of water storage.
- Advocate to senior levels of government to reduce administrative and regulatory barriers to building on-farm water storage facilities.
- Provide information regarding funding opportunities and other resources for alternative water collection and on-farm storage, while acknowledging that water quality treatment may be required for some types farming using collected water.

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 developing/ maintaining:

- Policies for maintaining urban containment boundaries.
- Policies to prepare and apply an Agricultural Zone designation to farmland within/outside the ALR.
- Policies for edge planning and subdivision near agriculture. This may include adopting measures and best practices outlined in the AF publication [*Guide to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas*](#).
- Share any soil data with First Nation communities in order to support their respective policies and decision-making frameworks.

Strategy 2.2 Support the continued updating and modernization of policies related to agriculture in OCPs and ZBLs. Strategy 2.2 actions include:

- Encouraging municipalities and the Electoral Areas to shore-up their respective farmland bylaws to be consistent with current regulations and best practices.

Strategy 2.3 Recognize the many ways agricultural land is a community-wide environmental asset. Strategy 2.3 actions include:

- Explore a fund and/or service to support farmers and producers who protect ecological goods and services on farmland. These benefits include flood and wildfire mitigation, biodiversity, water quality, and air quality.
- Work with producers to create conditions on agricultural lands that can serve as a wildfire interface in emergency planning.

Strategy 2.4 Support actions to curb and eliminate invasive species and noxious weeds on agricultural land. Strategy 2.4 actions include:

- As per priorities outlined by member municipalities, work with the Invasive Species Council of BC to update the Noxious Insect Control Bylaw and 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. Coordinate with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit to include the treatment of roadways in Electoral Areas.
- As per priorities outlined by member municipalities, participate in area-wide pest management programs.
- Work with regional First Nations to identify invasive species as to not inadvertently include food or medicine plants with cultural significance.
- Address 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:

- Meet with members of the agricultural community to discuss experiences with past emergencies and how to learn from those events.
- Keep the [Regional District of Central Okanagan Emergency Management Plan](#) up to date including emergency plans for agriculture, where appropriate.
- 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.
- As per the priorities of member municipalities, continue to support wildfire risk reduction initiatives with agricultural stakeholders.

Strategy 3.2 Integrate climate change adaptation strategies into agricultural planning.

Strategy 3.2 actions include:

- Encourage the participation of producers in the provincial *Environmental Farm Plan* and *Beneficial Management Practices* program.
- Encourage producers to work with AF staff to explore climate-tolerant crop varieties.
- Include agricultural stakeholders in the development of mapping and resources related to climate change.

Goal 4: Address Regional Soil Removal and Deposit

Strategy 4.1 Identify strategies for establishing new soil deposit sites and reducing unauthorized soil deposits. Strategy 4.1 actions include:

- Develop a regional soil tracking system in collaboration with member municipalities, WFN, and OFN.
- Advocate to the Province to work with industry to source and register authorized deposit sites and implement initiatives to reduce unauthorized fill and soil deposits.
- Explore soil recycling program opportunities, ensuring clean topsoil is preserved, with partners of interest.

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:

- Consider 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 municipal bylaws related to soil deposit and removal.
- Continue to explore options to track soil and fill deposit-related complaints received by compliance and enforcement.
- Work with WFN to learn from their respective monitoring / tracking of soil movement from developments.
- Identify resources needed for compliance and enforcement in the EAs that align with the ALC.
- Work with the Province to ensure that a RDCO soil and fill bylaw aligns with provincial soil relocation regulations.
- Increase public education on soil management and tracking by distributing pamphlets and posting information online.
- Consider “no dumping” signage and outreach to agricultural landowners in the Electoral Areas to reiterate the rules for bringing clean soil onto farmland.

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. This will ensure predictability, fairness, and clarity for both agricultural operators and compliance and enforcement personnel. Strategy 5.1 actions include:

- Convene a regional working group to explore areas of shared interest in aligning local government regulations on TFWH.
- Along-side member municipalities, develop a region-wide framework that sets out principles for regulating TFWH across the Central Okanagan.
- Identify areas of inconsistency and engage with member municipalities on where the RDCO should provide region-wide policies.
- Provide flexibility around location of TFWH on-farms or in other areas, as appropriate.
- Refer to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Bylaw Standards for TFWH as a guide for developing best practices.

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

- Regularly check-in 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.
- Stay up-to-date 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 be an effective support in engaging more Canadians in the agri-food economy.

Goal 6: Provide education and communication around 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:

- Expanding public education around key topics e.g.:
 - Work to inform the community about the potential for farmland to support ecosystem services, and the broad benefits which stem from this.
 - Appreciation for farmers and the bounty of regional agricultural products that are grown, raised, and made in the Okanagan, and their contribution to regional food security.
 - Promote public education campaigns about farming, food security, and water conservation. Look to City of Kelowna's agricultural education initiative (e.g. signage) and build on that work.
 - What it means to live by farmland, the right to farm, and noise, odour, and other disruptions associated with normal farm practices.
- Expanding real estate industry's understanding of agricultural land e.g.:
 - Work with real estate agents to develop educational materials for new homeowners on the realities of buying and living next to farmland.
 - Promote the Planning for [*Subdivision Near Farmland*](#) guide, the [*Guide to Edge Planning.*](#), and the [*Countryside and You.*](#)
- Develop communication and marketing strategies to:
 - Launch a "Buy Okanagan" campaign
 - Establish an Agriculture Day to celebrate and recognize local farmers.
- Grow RDCO internal knowledge base around food and agriculture e.g.:
 - Participate on regional agriculture advisories to grow and maintain connections to the agriculture sector and industry associations to stay up-to-date on what is happening in the industry.
 - Encourage participation of industry advocacy groups such as the Okanagan Cross Commodity Project in AACs.
 - Inform local government staff and elected officials about issues and context relevant to the agriculture sector.
 - Provide learning opportunities for elected officials and staff around Indigenous Government and culture, impacts of colonial histories, and current policy frameworks and their impact on food systems and agriculture.
 - As per the priorities of member municipalities, Consider the opportunity for farm tours for elected officials and staff.

- Consider advocating for agri-food sector issues that are outside of the jurisdiction of the RDCO. Please refer to Appendix A for an inventory of advocacy areas that were identified by participants

Strategy 6.2 Build internal awareness around Indigenous Governance and Culture regarding food and agriculture systems. Strategy 6.2 actions include:

- Provide learning opportunities for elected officials and staff around Indigenous Government and culture, impacts of colonial histories, and current policy frameworks regarding food and agriculture.
- Engage with Indigenous Elders and Youth to learn more about Indigenous histories and perspectives on food and agriculture.
- Discuss shared water utility management as well as demand side management of water in all sectors.
- Collaborate with WFN and ONA 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 with the COEDC and others to create a value proposition for agriculture's fundamental role in the regional economy Strategy 7.1 actions include:

- Support initiatives to help direct consumers towards local products such as fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy.
- Advocate for integrating food and agriculture systems into economic development initiatives to promote sustainable growth of the sector.
- Assist producers in achieving direct to consumer sales by supporting farmers markets in securing a permanent location.
- Support opportunities to develop or maintain canning, processing, packing and sorting facilities in the central Okanagan.
- As per the priorities of member municipalities, create opportunities to increase the contribution of agriculture to local economic development.
- Encourage opportunities for producers to diversify agricultural-related income streams using creativity and innovation, while aligned with rules and regulations that apply within the ALR.

Strategy 7.2 Work with industry associations and economic development groups to increase the market for regionally grown agricultural products. Strategy 7.2 actions include:

- Advocate for growing market opportunities for the food, agriculture, and beverage sectors e.g.:
 - Advocate for a 10% shift to local.
 - Cautiously embrace agri-technology.
 - Support taking advantage of emerging markets and consumer trends.
 - Support linking producers with provincial initiatives such as [Buy BC, Feed BC, and Grow BC](#).
 - Support linking producers with the craft beer and spirits market.
- Support growth in agri-tourism that is aligned with ALC policies and regulations, e.g.:
 - Self-guided farm tours.
 - “Farm Open House” event.
 - Farm to Chef events.
 - Art and culture events.

5. Implementation Plan

[To be completed once the actions are confirmed as part of the Final Regional Agricultural Strategy]

RAS actions to be implemented within **current** capacities and resources

Goal/Action	Departmental lead	Supporting organizations	Funding addressed in another plan	Priority	Timeline	Cost	Funding

RAS actions to be implemented with **additional** capacities and resources

Goal/Action	Departmental lead	Supporting organizations	Additional budget required	Priority	Timeline	Cost	Funding

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6. Monitoring and Evaluation

[To be completed once the actions are confirmed as part of the Final Regional Agricultural Strategy]

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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 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.				
✓ Participate in OBWB initiatives, and build on related existing plans, to develop a Water Sustainability Plan for agriculture the region.	X		X	X
✓ Develop position papers and other communication content on how other levels of government can support the <i>Alliance</i> to conserve and balance multiple water needs during shortages.				X
✓ Meet with Ministers and staff to identify specific ways the Province can support region in sustainable water futures.	X			
Goal 2: Preserve and Protect the Agricultural Land Base.				
✓ Advocate to the Province for greater agricultural extension services and resources for bylaw enforcement.	X			
Goal 3: Prepare for Emergencies with Agriculture in Mind.				
✓ Advocate for continued funding of the SIR program.	X			
✓ Support education programs for sustainable land use.	X		X	
✓ Improve education on food system resilience and sustainability.	X			

RAS Advocacy Areas by Goal	Province of BC	Government of Canada	Industry	Local Government
✓ Ensure that the agricultural sector is included in provincial emergency operations and 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			
✓ Support risk management programs for farmers facing climate-related challenges.	X		X	
Goal 5: Attract Farm Labour and Create Certainty for Temporary Farm Worker Housing				
✓ Advocate for the importance and value of migrant farm workers.	X	X		
✓ Attracting labour to the sector.			X	
Other				
General				
✓ Meet with the Minister of Agriculture and/or the ALC at the Union of BC Municipalities forum on key topics that need Provincial action from the RAS.	X			
✓ Raising min requirement for farm tax status to encourage more farming and discourage estate lots in the ALR.	X			
Food Security and Sovereignty				
✓ Advocate for increased household and community food security funding.	X	X		
✓ Support community-based food sovereignty initiatives.				X
Advocacy on behalf of Producers				

RAS Advocacy Areas by Goal	Province of BC	Government of Canada	Industry	Local Government
<p>✓ Advocate that the Province of BC and Government of Canada to engage in key challenge areas outside of the RDCO's jurisdiction such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Soil and fill issues on farmland. ○ Succession planning. ○ Market development. ○ Navigating groundwater licensing process. ○ Adapting to climate change. ○ Centralizing information dissemination ○ Road maintenance to accommodate agriculture vehicles. 	X	X	X	X