

Regional Agricultural Strategy Background Report

Regional Board Meeting
December 15, 2022

1450 K.L.O. Road
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rdco.com



Proposal

To provide an update to the Regional Board regarding the status of the Regional Agricultural Strategy and present the Background Report

Regional Growth Strategy (2014)

- Long-range planning tool
- Coordinate future for our communities
- Address regional issues that cross local political boundaries
- 10 identified regional issue areas

Regional Growth Strategy Priority Project Plan (2017)

- Developed from issue areas and policies of RGS
- Five (5) year action plan that outlines priority initiatives
- Nine (9) projects have been identified
- Seven (7) projects have been completed

New Priority Project Plan to be developed in 2023

Regional Agricultural Strategy

Purpose:

Support knowledge sharing, joint investments, developing regionally consistent policies, and coordinate implementation of other Agricultural Plans

Regional Agricultural Strategy

2022

Phase 1: Project Initiation, Background Scoping, and Agricultural Profile



Phase 2: Engagement Strategy, Public and Stakeholder Engagement



2023

Phase 3: Develop and Finalize Strategy



Upland Agricultural Consulting

Examples of past work:

- District of Lake Country Agricultural Plan (2020)
- City of Kelowna Agricultural Plan (2017)
- Westbank Centre Agricultural Plan (2016)
- RDNO Regional Agricultural Plan (2015)

RDCO Agricultural Strategy

Background Report

RDCO Board Meeting | December 15, 2022



The RDCO Agricultural Strategy is led by the Regional District of Central Okanagan



The RDCO agricultural strategy project is funded in part by the local government partnership program, with funding provided by agriculture and agri-food Canada and the government of British Columbia through programs delivered by the investment agriculture foundation of BC

DELIVERED BY:

FUNDING PROVIDED BY:



The RDCO Agriculture Background Report was prepared by Upland Agricultural Consulting and Urban Food Strategies



upland agricultural consulting



Introductions

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- Urban Food Strategies
 - Janine de la Salle, RPP, MCIP - Engagement Lead

- Upland Agricultural Consulting
 - Ione Smith, PAg - Project Lead
 - Kazlyn Bonnor, PAg - Research Coordinator
 - Sydney Hnatiuk, Agroecologist - Data Analyst

- Licker Geospatial
 - Aaron Licker - GIS and Mapping Specialist

Outline

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- Purpose
- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Next Steps



Purpose

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1. Provide a detailed overview of the agricultural conditions and policy framework in the region;
2. Create an agricultural profile for the region;
3. Engage stakeholders to identify and understand the challenges being experienced by the agricultural community.

Why a regional Ag. Strategy?

- Provide a coordinated strategy to tackle issues that cross municipal boundaries.
- Strive for consistency within the region on issues such as agri-tourism, farm worker housing, water management, urban growth boundaries, emergency planning, and others.
- Acknowledge unique characteristics between agricultural centres.

Project Process

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**1. Review and assess data,
maps and reports**



2. Engage stakeholders



**3. Prepare background
report**



Phase 1

RDCO Agricultural Background Report Overview of RDCO Agriculture



Over \$187 million
Gross Farm Receipts per Year



600 ha (1,480 acres)
of grapes



48% of farms are
under 4 ha



40% of farms
sell directly
to customers

TOP CROPS

- Cherries
- Apples
- Grapes
- Hay



LIVESTOCK

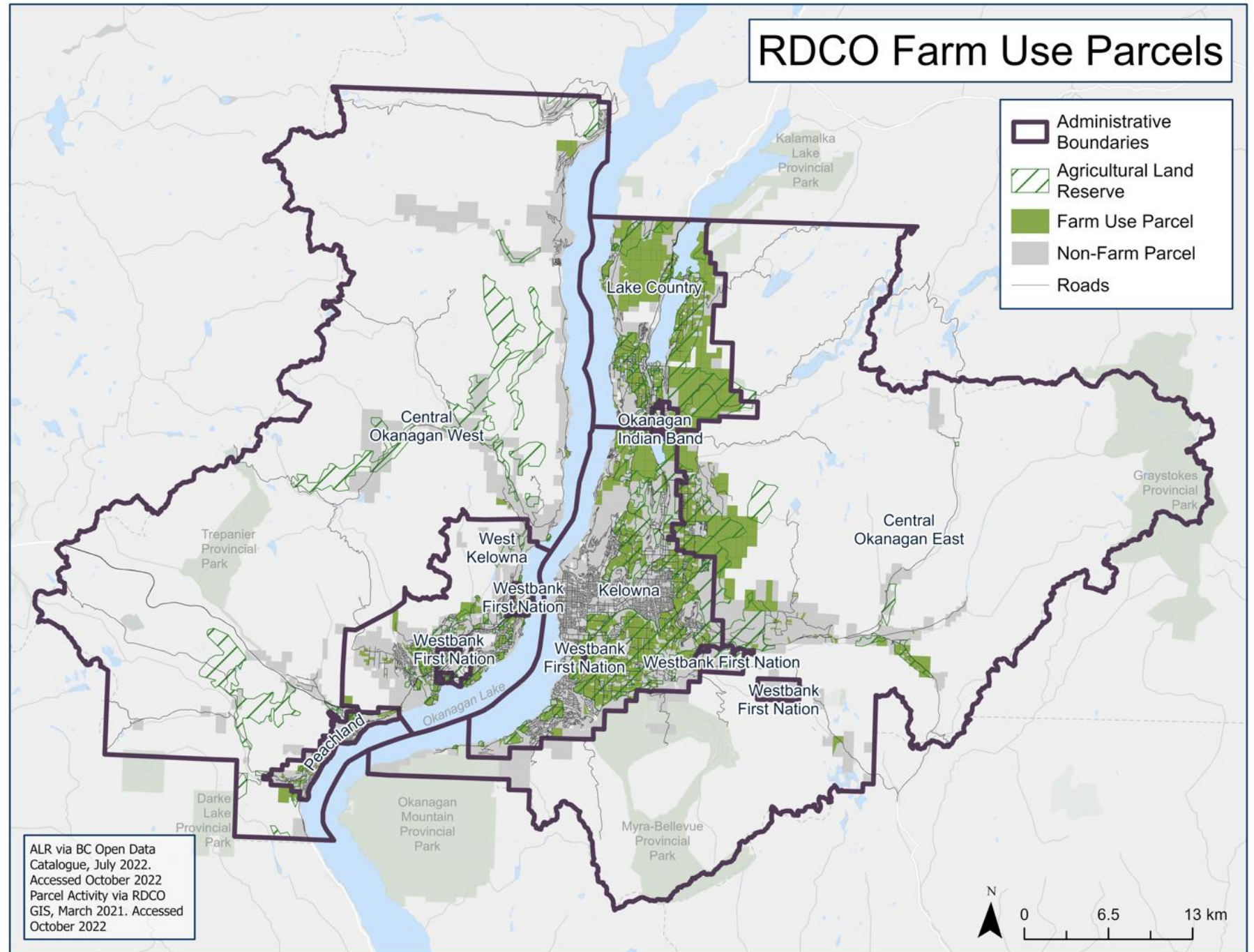
Cattle is most
common, followed
by horses, then
poultry.



Several fruit
processing facilities in
the RDCO support
the sector.

Over 2 million people visit
the Okanagan per year for
reasons directly related to
agriculture.

Phase 1



Key Policy Analysis Results

The top considerations for modernizing local government bylaws in support of agriculture are, among others:

- Recognizing the ALC's jurisdiction within all documents,
- Nesting agriculture within statutory and non-statutory plans,
- Updating permitted residential uses, siting, and sizing on agricultural lands,
- Connecting climate change, environment, and emergency planning policies directly to agriculture, and,
- Raising the profile of compliance and enforcement on agricultural land.

Phase 2

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Engagement included:

- Project webpage through RDCO YourSay website
- Meetings: AAC (2x), and Regional Growth Strategy Steering Committee, WFN EDC
- Interviews: 18 stakeholders (producers, processors, local government staff, and regional organizations)
- Online survey: 115 responses
- Open house: ~50 attendees

What We Heard

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- Identify common goals with WFN and OKIB
- Protect agricultural land for the future of food production
- Plan for a secure water future for agriculture
- Take advantage of regional markets for regional products
- Attract farm workers and address farmworker housing challenges
- Advocate on behalf of producers, processors and RDCO agriculture
- Support public education in food and agriculture

Market Opportunities

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- Increase local food in household purchases
- Cautiously embracing agri-tech
- Emerging markets and consumer trends
- Craft beer and spirits
- Agritourism

Next Steps

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- Phase 3 to be undertaken in 2023

THANK YOU

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Grant Acknowledgement

- \$30,000 from the Investment Agriculture Foundation
- Project scope: Background Report
- Project completion by December 31, 2022

DELIVERED BY:

FUNDING PROVIDED BY:



Recommendation

All Directors – Unweighted Corporate Vote - Simple Majority (LGA s.208)

THAT the Regional Board receive the report Regional Agricultural Strategy – Background Report from the Director of Community Services, dated December 15, 2022, for information.