



# REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

## AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA

THURSDAY, September 7, 2017

<u>PAGE NO.</u>		<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>AGENDA – September 7, 2017</u>	Approve
	<u>Supplementary Agenda</u>	Receive
	<u>MINUTES</u>	
3-9	Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes - June 8, 2017	Receive
	<u>REPORT</u>	
10-11	Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development – Connecting Consumers and Producers	Receive
	<u>CORRESPONDENCE</u>	
12-13	Northern Development Initiative Trust -Agriculture Coordinator – Pilot	Receive
14-16	Northern Development Initiative Trust/ Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako -Media Release – Bulkley-Nechako Farmers Get a Helping Hand	Receive
17-23	Co-existence Discussion – May 18, 2017 -Glenwood Hall Smithers	Receive
24-30	Laurie Gallant – Bulkley Valley Food Security Forum -Update #1 – June 30, 2017 -Update #2 – July 25, 2017	Receive
31-35	Laurie Gallant – Final Farm School Program -August 8, 9, 10, 2017	Receive
36-37	Plant and Animal Health Strategy of Canada -FPT Ministers of Agriculture Endorse the Plant and Animal Health Strategy for Canada	Receive

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO**

**AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**(Committee Of The Whole)**

**Thursday, June 8, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Chair Mark Parker

Directors Taylor Bachrach  
Eileen Benedict  
Shane Brienen  
Mark Fisher  
Tom Greenaway  
Rob MacDougall  
Bill Miller  
Rob Newell  
Jerry Petersen  
Darcy Repen  
Gerry Thiessen – arrived at 11:20 a.m.

Directors John Illes, Village of Burns Lake  
Absent Dwayne Lindstrom, Village of Fraser Lake  
Thomas Liversidge, Village of Granisle

Alternate Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle  
Directors Susan Schienbein, Village of Burns Lake

Staff Melany de Weerd, Chief Administrative Officer  
Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning – arrived at 11:04 a.m.  
Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer  
Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development  
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Other John Stevenson, Regional Agrologist, Sector Development  
Branch, Smithers, Ministry of Agriculture

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

**AGENDA**

Moved by Director Miller  
Seconded by Director MacDougall

**AG.2017-4-1**

"That the Agriculture Committee Agenda of June 8, 2017 be adopted."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MINUTES**

**Agriculture Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**-April 20, 2017**

Moved by Director Brienen  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

**AG.2017-4-2**

"That the Minutes of the Agriculture Committee Meeting of April 20, 2017 be received."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **1. Agriculture Coordinator**

Director Miller, RDBN staff and Chair Parker met with Susan Stearns, General Manager, Community Futures Fraser-Fort George regarding a Beyond the Market Program update. Community Futures Fraser-Fort George spoke to the departure of its Beyond the Market Coordinator and receiving grant funding from the Rural Dividend Fund. The funding focused on the Fraser-Fort George region and they wouldn't be providing the outreach to the RDBN as they had in previous years. There was discussion in regard to:

- The ability to deliver the program as before:
  - A cross regional program;
  - At funding levels that were previously provided from the RDBN to the Beyond the Market Program;
  - If the RDBN contributed dollars - could potentially do some work in the RDBN.

In the discussion regarding the RDBN considering an Agriculture Coordinator Position, Community Futures Fraser-Fort George indicated that they felt it would be better for the RDBN to have its own program similar to Beyond the Market. Community Futures Fraser-Fort George (CFFFG) would continue to provide support and communicate to address cross regional topics and issues. CFFFG is moving its focus to export based production but continues to be available to support producers in the RDBN.

### **Agriculture Coordinator Position**

- Chair Parker provided direction to staff to investigate potential funding sources for an Agriculture Coordinator;
- Although outside Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) Board policy, RDBN staff are recommending submitting an application to NDIT. Proposal could include:
  - A 2 year pilot project;
  - A grant request of 2/3 of the project cost.

### **Budget**

- Could potentially utilize the \$5,000 from the RDBN budget that had previously been used for the Beyond the Market program;
- If the Agriculture Committee recommends moving forward with an Agriculture Coordinator a full job description/salary/competencies etc. would move to the RDBN Executive Committee for consideration and the RDBN Board of Directors;
- Currently the Agriculture Coordinator is based on receiving grant funding – further consideration by the Regional Board would need to take place if the funding is not available.

### **Potential Coordinator Tasks**

- Concern:
  - Don't want to take away from the support provided to local agriculture groups currently in place;
- Want to ensure an Agriculture Coordinator assists to empower, encourage, support groups that are currently in place;
- Want to also have the ability to provide grant funding assistance where applicable to agriculture groups along with in-kind works;
- Community and volunteer groups work hard to grow and enhance agriculture in the region.

Director Repen mentioned that it is important to move forward with support for the agriculture tasks. He noted that the agriculture industry creates a high level of financial contribution and there needs to be recognition of the positive impact agriculture has in the region. Director Repen spoke to the necessity of creating an agriculture research facility in the region in order to assist in the development of agriculture growth, knowledge and technologies for sustainable production similar to the Summerland Research and Development Centre.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS (CONT'D)**

### **1. Agriculture Coordinator (Cont'd)**

Discussion took place regarding NDI's policy in regard to funding salaries. NDI has funded Grant Writer, Intern and Economic Development Positions and RDBN staff believe that there is a strong case to pursue funding for an Agriculture Coordinator.

Chair Miller mentioned that while in attendance at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference on June 1-4, 2017 in Ottawa, Ontario discussions took place regarding food security and supplying food to domestic markets. He reported that there was strong messaging in regard to the world demand for food increasing and domestic food production is also a growing market. He also noted that in 2011 the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC) formed the Northern Agriculture Research Initiative (NARI) and work was completed to improve the capacity and profitability of the agriculture and agri-food sector of northern B.C. He noted that many of the projects that were completed and are being completed in the Agriculture sector are working in isolation of one another. He commented that it would be beneficial to have an Agriculture Coordinator to leverage opportunities and coordinate activities of groups working in the region. He spoke of attending the Bulkley Valley Food Security Workshop in Smithers and mentioned that a number of the individuals in attendance are involved in other agriculture groups and spoke to having a coordinator that would assist in moving agriculture forward in the region.

John Stevenson, Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture spoke of the parallels in the region similar to the Kootenay region. He has been in conversations with the Columbia Basin Trust in regard to the Farm Business Advisory Services, a Ministry of Agriculture program that provides specialists to assist farming that encompasses human resources, production economics, farm succession, marketing and business planning. The program is cost shared with the majority funded by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The MoA is considering reviewing the qualifications to allow for less restrictions. Challenges have been identified where farmers know the program exists but there is a lack of specialists to provide the services in the north and Kootenay regions of B.C. He mentioned that perhaps through Community Futures there may be an opportunity to have experts come to the region to provide train the trainer workshops to build regional capacity.

Mr. Stevenson also commented that it would be beneficial to obtain and utilize the materials and research completed by Beyond the Market for the region. He commended the Agriculture Committee for recognizing the need for an Agriculture Coordinator in the region and he is fully supportive of the initiative.

Discussion took place regarding a number of the tasks outlined in the draft Agriculture Coordinator Position paper being tasks that were the role of the province of B.C. in the past. The north now receives less services from the Province. There are three Ministry of Agriculture Agrologists in northern B.C. including the Peace River, Fraser-Fort George, Kitimat-Stikine and North Coast Regional Districts.

Chair Parker noted that the potential Coordinator tasks outlined are an initial framework and there is a broad range of potential tasks that can be more clearly established by the Regional Board moving forward.

Director Greenaway spoke of the need to support the agriculture industry as well as the mining and forestry industries due to the possible future changes in both forestry and mining. Chair Miller mentioned in the past 10 years the Agriculture Industry is the only industry that has shown year over year positive growth. He also noted the competitive advantage that is in the region in regard to what is needed for agriculture, energy and water. Director Petersen expressed caution to ensure an Agriculture Coordinator is what is needed in the region. He explained a past situation with an agrologist that was relocated from Vanderhoof to Prince George. Chair Parker mentioned that in attending meetings with different associations in the region they expressed appreciation when they have received assistance addressing such issues as rail crossing blockages. The groups have also been receptive to the RDBN Agriculture Committee.

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**DISCUSSION ITEMS (CONT'D)**

**1. Agriculture Coordinator (Cont'd)**

Discussion took place in regard to organizations such as the Cattlemen's Associations being pioneers and leaders in their areas of expertise but there are a number of emerging agriculture sectors that require support and coordination of services. Director Repen mentioned the importance of investing in an industry that is in demand. Mr. Stevenson spoke to the agriculture sector gaining a higher profile. He commented that there is such a varying degree of operations investigating and researching options in farming such as a haskap berry orchard looking at the long term possibility of a distillery and grain producers investigating options for malting barley. He expressed the need for assistance in further developing agriculture in the region.

Discussion took place in regard to the need for political will from upper levels of the provincial government for the agriculture industry.

Director Miller mentioned that NDIIT has provided support in the forestry sector and is now investigating options for agriculture sector initiatives. Chair Parker commented that the cost for the agriculture coordinator would be shared by the Regional Economic Development and Planning Departments. Jason Llewellyn, Director of Planning indicated that one of the Agriculture Coordinator tasks for the Planning Department would be to process the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) applications and provide reports in regard to crown land grant applications.

Corrine Swenson, Regional Manager of Economic Development spoke to clarifying how the Regional Board sees the position working, what kind of tasks the position should include and what success will look like after the two year period for the NDIIT application. Discussion took place about changing the title of the Agriculture Coordinator to Agriculture/Economic Development Officer. Melany de Weerd, CAO commented that the information will be beneficial for the Regional Board also to build successes moving forward. The position may provide a better opportunity for information to be provided to the Regional Board in its consideration of applications regarding agriculture.

Ms. Swenson noted that in developing and producing the Connecting Consumers brochure feedback has been very positive from the various farming groups in regard to having on the ground contact and support in promoting their organizations, businesses and operations. Ms. Swenson mentioned that the Agriculture Coordinator will continue to build relationships and determine what is required in the region for the agriculture sector and take the initiatives to develop projects and further funding opportunities.

Director Brienen mentioned the need to develop an inventory of specialists to improve resources and capacity in the region.

Director MacDougall commented that in the past the municipalities have provided support to Beyond the Market. He suggested that a letter be sent to the municipalities requesting support for an Agriculture Coordinator for the region.

Moved by Director Miller  
Seconded by Director Repen

AG.2017-4-5

"That the Agriculture Committee recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors direct staff to investigate potential funding sources and research an Agriculture Coordinator Position; and further, that an application to Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) be drafted including comments from the RDBN Board of Directors in regard to the Agriculture Coordinator position; and further that the draft NDIT application be brought forward to a future RDBN Board meeting for consideration."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**DISCUSSION ITEMS (CONT'D)**

**1. Agriculture Coordinator (Cont'd)**

Director Thiessen commented that there is a need to build education and capacity in regard to agriculture. Discussion also took place in regard to the success measurements for the project/position.

The Regional Board can provide input to staff in regard to the Agriculture Coordinator Position. The timeline for the application to be submitted to NDIT staff and Board of Directors and the RDBN Executive and Board of Directors was discussed.

**2. UBCM – Session Proposal – Agriculture**

Director Fisher brought forward the possibility of developing a session proposal for the 2017 UBCM convention. He spoke to determining if the Agriculture Committee is in favour of submitting an Agriculture session proposal, timeline to develop a session and whether it should be a clinic or workshop. Director Fisher mentioned that staff workloads may be full to provide a submission for this year. Director Parker also noted his schedule is very full at this time. The deadline for submission is June 23, 2017. Ms. de Weerd mentioned that if the Regional Board moves forward with an Agriculture Coordinator they may be able to assist in developing a very well prepared application for a future UBCM workshop. Discussion took place in regard to time constraints for both staff and the Regional Board of Directors.

**UBCM Agriculture Session Proposal - 2018**

Moved by Director Repen  
Seconded by Director Miller

**AG.2017-4-4**

"That the Agriculture Committee recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors submit an agriculture session Proposal for the 2018 Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Correspondence**

Moved by Director Miller  
Seconded by Alternate Director McGuire

**AG.2017-4-3**

"That the Agriculture Committee receive the following: correspondence:

- Beyond the Market – Annual Report 2016/2017;
- A Guide to On-Farm Demonstration Research;
- Vancouver Sun – B.C. Real Estate: Speculators Target Farmland After Foreign Buyer Tax Introduced;
- BC Farmers Eligible for Funding – BC's Buy Local Program."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Convention – June 1-4, 2017 – Ottawa, ON

Rural Town Hall

Director Miller attended the Rural Town Hall Workshop while in attendance at FCM June 1-4, 2017. The panel of rural leaders and experts included MP Francis Drouin (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, ON). He serves as a member on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. Chair Miller mentioned that Mr. Drouin has a very strong agriculture background. During the session export issues, marketing, farming products, food sustainability and security was discussed. At the end of the session Chair Miller had an opportunity to speak about the foreign land ownership issue in the RDBN, agricultural lands being planted with trees for carbon offsets. He also brought forward the issue in regard to the accumulation of large tracts of agriculture land for industrial export projects and the impacts to local markets. He spoke of being open to investment but outlined the concerns in regard to the impacts to the region. He brought forward the BC Government's tax on urban real estate having an impact to agricultural lands. He provided an outline of the Regional Board's desire for a national strategy in regard to foreign ownership. Mr. Drouin requested the background information that Chair Parker and Director Thiessen presented to the Senate Committee on Agriculture. Mr. Drouin spoke of the Senate Committee needing to move the information forward to the House of Commons. Chair Miller spoke with Scott Ross, Director of Business Management and Farm Policy. He provides background information and research to the Federal Government. He also requested the RDBN background information in regard to foreign land ownership. He is currently working with UNBC and two other Universities across Canada in regard to agricultural land development. Chair Parker noted that he will provide the information to Mr. Drouin and Mr. Ross. Director Parker will also contact David Connell, Associate Professor, UNBC.

Director Thiessen mentioned that there is a need for the RDBN to develop a policy in regard to an agriculture development strategy in the region. He spoke of the impacts of large tracts of lands being owned by companies and individual owners. Director Thiessen noted the benefits of small scale farmers. Chair Miller mentioned that the Universities are working on the issue and commented that it would be helpful to have Mr. Connell attend a future meeting.

Director Repen spoke of identifying areas in the region for small plot intensive farming, range lands, etc. and quantifying the information to bring forward to the ALR and the Ministry of Agriculture. Mr. Llewellyn mentioned that small plot farming lands is the most comprehensively discussed issue during an Official Community Plan (OCP) review and when completing the Agriculture Land Use Plan for the region. He noted that the potential negative impact in the long term prevents the debate from moving forward. He commented that in 10-15 years 80-90% of small plot lands will be owned by non-farmers and that is one of the reasons the ALR hesitates to move forward with any changes to allow small plot farming. Mr. Llewellyn indicated that solutions have been brought forward utilizing covenants on property titles when subdividing parcels that would identify that the property could only be used for agriculture purposes. The ALR indicated they would object to an OCP that includes such a proposal. Director Repen spoke to protecting the land and encouraging high intensity production.

Mr. Stevenson mentioned that there is soil capability rating data available. It could be used to determine the best crop for the best capability and location. It would assist Planners to identify the best use and capabilities for pockets of agricultural lands. He mentioned that it could also be a tool used by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Crown Land division.

Director Fisher brought forward the need to understand the economic impact of small land agriculture. He suggested that taxation could be used for small plot farm lands that are not being used for agriculture to make it prohibitive to use the lands for anything but agriculture. He mentioned bringing the issues forward to a future Agriculture meeting to identify key concerns, items to address those concerns and create an action plan to move forward.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

Frank Leonard, Chair  
Agricultural Land Commission

Director Thiessen mentioned that Frank Leonard, Chair, Agricultural Land Commission will be in the region in the near future. He will be in the Peace River Regional District prior to June 22, 2017. Chair Parker will contact the ALC.

Winter Kill in the Vanderhoof Area

Chair Parker mentioned that there has been approximately 25,000 acres of winter kill of hay crops in the Vanderhoof area. He spoke to the seriousness of the issue and that there are discussions taking place in an attempt to mitigate the impact to the farmers in the area.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Alternate Director McGuire  
Seconded by Director Repen

AG.2017-4-6

"That the meeting be adjourned at 12:31pm."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Mark Parker, Chair

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Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant



**Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako  
Agriculture Committee  
September 7, 2017**

To: Chair Parker and the Agriculture Committee Directors  
 From: Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development  
 Date: August 29, 2017  
 Regarding: Connecting Consumers and Producers

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Please accept this update on the Connecting Consumers and Producers Project.

**Brochure**

The brochure is currently at the printers and will be delivered to the RDBN by August 31. A copy will be available at the Committee meeting. There were 1,500 copies printed and another 500 copies for Regional District Kitimat-Stikine. The brochure will be distributed at Connecting Consumers and Producers events as well as posted on our website at [opportunities.rdbn.bc.ca/agriculture](http://opportunities.rdbn.bc.ca/agriculture).

**Events**

Current events include:

**Village of Granisle – Shop Local Farmer’s Market and Community Lunch September 28, 2017**

- Farmers Market with producers from the Bulkley Valley
- Community Lunch to showcase local producers and encourage residents to “Taste the Difference”

**Nechako Valley Food Network – Harvest Celebration/Preserving Workshop August 30, 2017**

- Harvest Celebration: free community dinner to promote buying, growing and eating locally, includes opportunity for consumers to meet and talk with producers. Local food will be featured during the meal, as well as in prize packages.
- Preserving Workshop: 20 residents will attend a workshop on preserving through drying, canning, pickling and freezing, with locally grown supplies provided.

**Lakes District Fall Fair Association – Children’s Festival September 8-10, 2017**

- Three events featuring locally grown produce:
  - Event 1 is an interactive activity where participants of all ages try to guess the names of an assortment of veg and herbs while learning how to cook them and their health benefits.
  - Event 2 will be the Fresh is Best campaign where participants are given free, local produce as a snack at the registration table.
  - Event 3 will be Local Treats, Healthy Eats, where local producers showcase their products for taste tasting (jams/jellies/zucchini muffins/crackers)

Houston Public Library – Locavore Dinner October 7, 2017

- Dinner featuring local produced food and gift baskets with locally produced products

Houston Link to Learning – Houston Multi-cultural Harvest Festival September 23, 2107

- Final Harvest Farmers Market, local entertainment, activities, games and food booths are planned. One booth will demonstrate how to can and preserve local produce.

Locally Produced Promo Items

This year the locally produced promotional items to be given out at the events include:

- Assortment of flavoured honey from Blue Mountain Honey
- Wild tea from Tilted Heart gifts
- Hot pepper spice from Wild Thyme Farm

Recommendation:  
Receive.

(All/Directors/Majority)

August 17, 2017

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako  
PO Box 820  
Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0

Attention: Chair Bill Miller

Dear Chair Miller:

Subject: Agriculture Coordinator – Pilot  
Competitiveness Consulting Rebate Program  
Northern Development Project Number 5112 20

RECEIVED  
AUG 24 2017  
REGIONAL DISTRICT OF  
BULKLEY NECHAKO

The Northern Development Initiative Trust Corporation was created by the Province to be a catalyst for central and northern BC, to grow a strong diversified economy by stimulating sustainable economic growth through strategic and leveraged investments.

The Competitiveness Consulting Rebate program is designed to provide small and medium sized manufacturers, resource processing companies, and their first line suppliers with affordable and accessible consulting resources that will create jobs, increase productivity, revenues, and profitability for operations within the Northern Development Initiative Trust region.

I am pleased to advise you that your application for your Agriculture Coordinator - Pilot project has been approved for up to \$131,666 on August 10, 2017.

While this pilot project does not contemplate the hiring of a consultant but instead a two-year dedicated staff resource to support the agriculture industry, we believe this will provide value to the small and mediums sized businesses in the agriculture sector and thereby fulfil the spirit of the Competiveness Consulting Rebate program.

Funding is provided as a reimbursement upon completion of your project, final reporting to Northern Development. Reporting must include:

- Coordinator pay stub(s) and copy of employment contract
- Receipts for office equipment
- Written report on the pilot project indicating pilot project effectiveness and results relative to work plan

**Additional Requirements:**

We look forward to you providing us with the final report outlining the success of the program and achievement of objectives and goals set out in your initial application.

Finally, you will be asked to provide a testimonial to Northern Development, articulating the benefits of the project to your organization.

At project completion, please contact our office to discuss project outcomes and to explore any further assistance that Northern Development could provide.

Northern Development is pleased to support the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako in reaching its economic potential and we look forward to being a partner in that endeavor.

Sincerely,



Joel McKay  
Chief Executive Officer

- c: Melany de Weerd, Chief Administrative Officer, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
- Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

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## **Bulkley-Nechako farmers get a helping hand**

**Burns Lake, B.C. – Monday, August 21, 2017 - For immediate release**

Thanks to a partnership between Northern Development Initiative Trust and the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN), a new Regional Agriculture Coordinator will soon be in place to provide much needed capacity to farmers in the Bulkley-Nechako region.

Northern Development has approved \$131,666 in funding to support a two year pilot project. The regional district is contributing support for the position as well, with additional funding exceeding \$65,000. The funding supports ongoing pine beetle recovery initiatives following an expressed desire from communities around the region for increased support for the agriculture industry. The funds will support the coordinator's position and agriculture related project costs over a two year term beginning this fall.

There are currently 1,900 farms within the Trust's service area that produce livestock, and 1,734 that are engaged in producing crops primarily for animal feed. The RDBN has 840 farms operating within its boundaries. The majority of these farms do not have full-time employees, but are instead small-scale, family-run operations employing temporary or contract workers.

Small-scale producers and new farmers continue to express a desire for information about the services and supports that are available to them. In 2012, the RDBN, recognizing the significant importance of agriculture to the region's history, economy and culture, adopted the Regional Agriculture Plan to support and strengthen the agriculture sector. During an Agriculture Forum, hosted by the RDBN in 2016, the need for a regional coordinator to provide information and support services for the industry was identified.

The regional agriculture coordinator will help the farming industry by connecting producers with funding opportunities, identifying challenges, advocating on behalf of the agriculture community and providing information within the region. They will provide capacity to assist with implementation of regional agriculture initiatives that help address the needs of the local agriculture community. They will even be a key resource during flood or fire related emergencies to ensure livestock are safely relocated.

Recruitment for a suitable candidate for the position is currently underway with the coordinator set to begin in October. Further details about the position are available here: [www.rdbn.bc.ca](http://www.rdbn.bc.ca)

## Quotes

### ***Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust***

*2017 is forecast to be the fourth best year on record from the Canadian agriculture industry and northern B.C. is a contributor to that success. Supporting the agriculture industry as part of Northern Development's response to the pine beetle epidemic highlights our region's growing diversified economy. It is another way that we work to respond to the needs expressed by our communities and help to build a stronger north.*

### ***Bill Miller, Chair, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako***

*The RDBN is very excited to be introducing an Agriculture Coordinator staff position to support a growing agriculture community in the region. Through the appointed Agriculture Committee, adopted Regional Agriculture Plan and marketing initiatives, the RDBN Board has a strong history of supporting agriculture endeavors in the region. We are committed to addressing concerns and providing support to the sector.*

### ***Mark Parker, Agriculture Committee Chair, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako***

*Agriculture has been and continues to be integral to the region's economy and culture. We are pleased to be providing this new position and are excited about the opportunity for more support to our producers, organizations and families working in Agriculture.*

## About Northern Development Initiative Trust

Northern Development Initiative Trust combines funding with smart thinking to help Northern British Columbia thrive. The Trust was created for the north and is led by the north. Since 2005, Northern Development has found more than 2,700 ways to say "yes" to economic diversification in our region, attracting more than \$1.3 billion in new investment to the region.

## About the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

Located in the heart of British Columbia and home to 8 unique municipalities, 7 electoral areas, and 13 First Nations, the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako boasts extraordinary natural beauty, vibrant small town culture and exciting business opportunities. Quality of life is highly valued; the natural amenities of the region and family values are an integral part of life in the RDBN. The region offers world class fishing, hiking, mountain biking, skiing, snowmobiling and camping near the many lakes and within the endless outdoors. Culture and history are important in the RDBN, where a strong agricultural heritage and natural resource economy from forestry and mining are the foundations of its welcoming, family friendly communities.

## Contacts

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Director of Marketing and Communications

Northern Development Initiative Trust

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**Mark Parker**

Chair Agriculture Committee

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako

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**Melany A. de Weerd**

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## **Co-existence discussion.**

**May 18 2017. Glenwood Hall. Smithers**

### **Summary.**

In May of 2017 the Regional District of Bulkely Nechako held a discussion around the concept of co-existence in agriculture, specific to the Bulkley Valley (RDBN Area A).

The RDBN was responding to requests from both producers as well as concerned community members to better understand the 2013 RDBN resolution concerning GMOs. While the Regional District has no authority over agriculture practices, its goal is to support agriculture. That is, to facilitate the growth of the industry while acknowledging the challenges of both the industry itself, as well as impacts the industry may have on the community (e.g. pesticides, solid waste issues, etc.). The RDBN recognizes that issues of coexistence with GMO cultivations have been left unaddressed and invites all sides to a discussion towards finding solutions acceptable to all.

The goal of this meeting was to:

- Help understand some of the challenges of the agriculture sector in the BV.
- Help agriculture producers understand some of the public concerns with agriculture.
- Better understand 'best practices' with regard to pesticide use in the Bulkley Valley, and if there is more that could be done to support farmers using these best practices.
- Explore the concept of 'co-existence' and agree on a working definition.
- Better understand regulation and tools (e.g. buffers, notification flags, stewardship agreements, Strengthening Farm Program, etc.) available to farmers that can help with the concept of 'co-existence'.
- Identify areas other ideas and actions that both producers and the public can take to co-exist.

It was decided to keep the meeting small, with representatives from all BV agriculture associations as well as individuals who had expressed interest in this type of discussion or were involved with the GMO issue in the BV. This created a space for people to express their concerns and frustrations of how personal, business, and community relations have been challenged over the last few years.

It was a challenging meeting, as it is a topic that can be divisive, and information is often conflicting. It was a discussion that needed to be had, but no-one wanted to have it. Participants were open and honest however, and that in itself made the meeting successful. There were elements of healing and relationship building, as well as more rational components such as information sharing and a focus on how the community can move forward together. Obviously not everything was perfect, but the first step was taken. More work needs to be done, action items need follow up, so that communication is improved, best practices are supported and enhanced, community norms and legal requirements are understood and enforced. Many options were discussed that will help

different types of agriculture operation co-exist with each other and the public. A clear plan to follow up was not made but rather left to the group and/or the community at large.

The following notes are divided into two section – flip chart and verbal transcripts. Neither fully capture the discussion but rather give some idea of the proceedings.

## **Flip Chart Notes**

### **1. Introduction**

#### Schedule

1. Introductions, agreements, goals
2. Lunch and 'seeding' exercise (on flip chart paper throughout the room, write down individual and personal thoughts related to the statement on the flip chart paper)
3. Summary of seeding exercise
4. Concept of co-existence
5. Tools/regulation/best practices
6. 'Now what' (ideas and action)

#### Agreements / Goals

- support agriculture
- recognize RDBN resolutions but also their capacity / authority
- recognize the 'can of worms' and challenge of opening this discussion
- understand peoples concerns as well as possibilities
- take it from the personal to the community (broader issue / norms)
- respectful dialogue

**2 / 3. 'Seeding exercise'** – words or statements on flip chart paper throughout the room. Participants asked to comment with a word, a thought, building off of the original word/statement or on what someone else wrote.

#### 1. 'CO-EXISTANCE'

- o you need to be respectful even when you disagree
- o land owners who lease out land to farmers should know that they can say whether the farmer may spray or do GMO. Its up to the farmer if he accepts to land owners wishes whether he leases or not.
- o Organic, conventional, homegrown and GMO, we are all farmers. We need to work together to help each other and embrace our differences. Diversity is key.
- o Concerns over well contamination through run off from sprayed fields. This year was a prime example of extreme run off due to frozen ground. Not always the same every year.
- o Everyone loses when you go to war!

- Multiple advantages to stakeholders (i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> cut or delayed hay harvest)
- Essential missing ingredient, which has been missing with BV GMO growers and BC Ministry of Agriculture.

## 2. 'PRODUCER'

- should be willing to inform the consumer about their practices
- need to remember they are in the business of feeding consumers
- try to deliver in an increasingly difficult / understood production system

## 3. 'CONSUMER'

- expect
- should ask more questions
- people vote as citizens but purchase as consumers. Are customers willing to pay more? Some yes, most no.
  - double standard
- consumers need to remember that farmers exist for the sole purpose of feeding consumers!

## 4. 'COMMUNITY HAS A ROLE IN AGRICULTURE'

- we need to work together to show a consistent message regardless of your type of practice.
  - Yes! All farmers need to support each other. It is difficult industry without arguing amongst ourselves
    - Strongly agree. No judgment.
- regional and local support versus (and/or) export
- sustainability
- lack of representation of many small producers mean they have little voice in decision making
  - yes but as with everything, needs to be informed which is difficult with all the conflicting info out there
- people want to know where their food comes from
- more communication (respectful!) among community members
- community needs to understand the impacts that a 'fad' may have on the livelihoods of people farming
  - more information from practicing farmers would help alleviate this

## 5. 'FARMING OPPORTUNITIES THAT AFFECT FARMING PRACTICES'

- broiler barns and intensive production
- more interest in organic products so new opportunity for farmers to change in that direction
- leasing land from landowners to farm, should be open communication about farming practices. Zero till? Organic? GMO?
- Small scale / intensive affects land parcel size, number of people living in rural area, type of machinery, etc.
  - Agree – small intensive (organic) farming you can get more off a small area

## 6. 'FARMING CHALLENGES THAT AFFECT FARMING PRACTICES'

- weeds
- weather
- regulations
- pressure from people to farm in a certain way but not putting their wallet where their mouth is
- education about different farming practices
- education about GMO's and fertilizers long term effects
- if a neighbor uses something on their property that negatively impacts my property and inhabitants and local ecosystem
- conflicting studies on safety of some agricultural practices
  - science not always accurate if looking for something you'll find it
- attitudes and opinions from people who don't actively farm
  - also live on ALR land or farmable land and do not use it as such
- GMO farming is incompatible with organic or other forms of farming
- GMO = lots of Round Up.
  - GMO not only crops that use chemicals!!!
- GMO need to be zoned away from non GMO and other forms of agriculture. Petition in BV gathered > 500 signatures against it
- Sporadic weather changes drought /flood
  - No predictability or security

## 7. 'PUBLIC TRUST'

- lots of food available without full description of agriculture practices
- limits on corporate lobbying groups
- misinformation
- more transparent government funded agricultural research!
- In days of internet bad stories and press spread, only showing one side of the story
- we want to be healthy
- knowing what neighbours are doing, transparency
- lots of misinformation spreading via social media (i.e. every farm is a huge corporate company abusing their livestock)
- T.O.E. (tri-axle of evil) – fertilizer, seed, chemical corporations
  - Judging one another creates problems
- Customer is always right (even when they're wrong)

## 4. Concept of co-existence

### Definitions.

- Dozens of definitions online.
- USDA – 'concurrent cultivation of conventional, organic, identity preserved (IP), and genetically engineered crops consistent with underlying consumer preferences

and farmer choices. In other words, existence of different types of production at the same time and in the same area.

- Webster's Dictionary – act or state of co-existing; policy of living peacefully with other nations, religions, etc. despite fundamental difference.

## **5 (Tools / Regulation / Best Practices) and 6 ('Now What' ideas and action) and 'Parking Lot (for future discussion) combined.**

- Strengthening Farm Program (provincial)
- FIRB
- Formal communication that people can access for information. Must be someone who is paid (RDBN?) as well as media
- Communication Protocol (based on application guidelines) with enforcement
- Educational workshops (science based) about specific agriculture practices and their intended and unintended impacts
- Existing organizations - must clarify rolls, what is within their mandate to do in terms of support / regulation
- Who – need to get industrial nurseries and other industries in discussion
- Create a best practice handbook for the BV (including testing techniques)
- Higher level advocacy and enforcement
- What is contamination mean? Define
- GMO Canola – what is the affect on brassicas?
- GMO Alfalfa – get accurate info and how it may affect ability of RDBN farmers from all regions to export
- Communication – neighbor to neighbor didn't work in BV. Other options – sign on farm? Through Ministry of Agriculture? Referral / Arbitrator, Volunteer flaggers?
- Labeling !!! All sides want it.
- New Farmers – BV farming 101 (what are the norms, concerns, opportunities, etc.)
- Split the required buffer, onus not only on one person
- Increasing all ag sectors in the area – increases economies of scale and ability to work together with others with similar practices.

## **Transcript notes**

Mark F – intro to meeting format / schedule. RDBN Area A Director.

Mark F – Fraser Lake RDBN Director, Chair of Ag committee. Producer. History of RDBN resolution. Brought by Telkwa to RD in 2013. Does not reflect what RD wants after review. All new board now. RD has no jurisdiction in ag. Goal of board is to promote all aspects of agriculture and for businesses to profit. Lives in Fraser Lake and wants just to listen and try to understand. Explained Telkwa rescinded their resolution a few months ago.

Participants gave introduction. Participants: Les Yates (BV Cattleman, producer), Lindsay/Janik Herr (BV Dairymen, SFI, producers), Alain Labrecque (gmo producer), Curt Gesh (Newsletter, hobby producer), Josette Wier (neighbor to GMO farmer), Kala Hooker (producer), Brian Swansburg (SFI), Marlene Thimer (organic producer), Megan D'Arcy (SFI, BC Ag Council, producer), Peter/Anika Gattiker (organic producer), Heather Sosnowski / Ian Bissonnette (BV Beekeepers, producer), Joe Hug (organic producer), John Stevenson (Min of Agriculture), Brent Barclay (Min of Agriculture), Rayner Ooserhoff (BV Dairymen, producer), Eric Anderson (BV Beekeepers, producer), Jessy Chaplin (bobby farm, citizen science), Jeremy Row (BV Dairymen, gmo producer).  
Late intro – Lori Knorr (beekeeper).

Regrets – Northwest Invasive Plant Council, Nathan Cullen, Doug Donaldson.

#### Roundtable discussion notes.

- concern with GMO corn/canola, more GMO alfalfa in AB
- be careful where draw the line, Vanderhoof sells hay overseas, if we talk, pass info, big producers have opinions on GMO. We may be more in common than opposed. Share info. Get accurate info.
- AB producers resisting GMO Alfalfa coming west because it will impact the export market
- more education is required, lots of conflicting info
- communication hasn't been working well. What other methods could be used? Regional Board? Posting at farm? Good to say lets communicate but how?
- beekeepers affected by all crops.
- can gmo canola cross pollinate with other brassicas?
- Communicate - have been farming ag trails of GMO corn. Need to tell neighbours / communicate. Had asked for buffer but no. Want to know when spraying. Who will arbitrate? What is role of Min of Ag?
- science and marketing important, science is confusing, public is making up their own minds (ex. Gmo free corn biggest sales in US / Kellogs want to sell gmo free cereal). Personally wants consumers to know what they have in beef. Market drives what gets grown.
- market demands will sort it out (e.x flax was GMO, sales fell flat)
- Dairy farmers milk in BC is all co-mingled. Dairy farmers work together. Co-existence comes down to respect. Witch-hunt in newspaper is hard on everyone (all farmers) in valley
- hard to come today but brave of everyone to come. Express feelings but keep to purpose. Purpose is that all can thrive.
- certified organic farmers have to give up land for buffers. Labeling non gmo is tricky. Most people don't know what is gmo/non gmo
- consumer drive happens but is slow. Could be too little too late. Q – what is definition of 'good' food?
- want people to know how horrible and hurtful the conflict has been
- some gmo operations down the road from organic, possible to switch a few farms to organic but limitation is milk truck to make delivery, thanks to Min of Ag for direction, co-existence is possible and do-able
- why are we targeting 1 variety?

- GMO canola found 2.5 km in ditches on Telkwa High Road, seeds coated with neonicotinoids
- yes, stops pests, gone in 12 days
- strengthening farm program is on BC website. Felt concerns ignored, Tried FIRB with no success
- FIRB reviews cases. If not resolved option is to go to court
- in AB intervener in civil case can be funded, here no relief, spent \$25,000
- specific grievances and conflict need to leave room, this conversation has to move to the community interest and co-existence
- newsletter in BV started to fill gap. Want farm organizations to inform consumers, producers, neighbours, etc.
- lets focus on solutions. Bees at risk, they fly around, nionicotinoids on seed in plant and flowers, also issue with glyphosate, new case against Monsanto about cancer from it
- buffer zones a concern, run off this year a concern, wells contaminated??? Have to know what is used in your area
- gmo vast subject, not well understood, cross pollination, organic inspections very strong about not having gmo
- would like to know if neonicotinoids being used as a beekeeper
- Farmers Institute is neutral and provides all farmers support, farmers and community need to support and learn
- Tools – in OK Valley, if there is a radio announcement when growers spray (and other communication) then complaints were reduced
- Flags can be posted when spraying with info on what is sprayed
- Cowichan RD have good publications
- Wash vehicles – may be small step but still good
- In AB have beekeepers and canola. Can they co-exist?
- Coating lasts 10d, can co-exist
- Brown mid-rib corn is gmo, helps corn stalks be more palatable (for cow fodder) so gmos can be good
- Have to do your own research, self educate
- Need to bring in science, buffers, density of operations, Canada is 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> producer of gmo crops in world
- This group has a unique advantage, has diverse opinions, has passion and knowledge base to have productive agricultural community. Could have working group to examine practices (no till) and experiment (with buffers, etc.
- What is the roll of RD, province, what goals do we pursue?
- Just a start. Will go forward but will depend on this group and/or community.

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REGIONAL DISTRICT OF  
BULKLEY NECHAKO

**From:** Laurie Gallant <gallantlaurie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** June 28, 2017 7:24 PM  
**To:** Laurie Gallant  
**Subject:** Re: Bulkley Valley Food Security Forum Update June 28, 2017  
**Attachments:** June 30, 2017.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Greetings,

As promised I am sharing an update on actions taken since our gathering on May 19. The account of progress made and dovetailing of projects already underway is actually quite long and fills four pages. I hope you will also find this update inspiring and feel confident that the momentum we need to achieve sustainable food security really exists. The next phase of the project will be challenging without a paid coordinator however, we are a resourceful bunch and I'm sure we will find a solution.

For those of you who are new to this group, links to the Food Security Forum report can be found in the Update or just use this one: <http://www.smitherscommunitydirectory.com>

sincerely,

Laurie Gallant  
PO Box 126  
New Hazelton BC  
V0J 2J0  
250-847-1399  
[gallantlaurie@gmail.com](mailto:gallantlaurie@gmail.com)

## BV Food Security Initiative

### Update #1 - June 30, 2017

#### 1. Distribution of proceedings and media coverage

- Direct email to all participants including those who sent regrets and few new recruits for the cause for a total of 53.
- In addition the report is available on these community websites:
  - Bulkley Valley Social Planning Society (BVSPS)  
<http://www.smitherscommunitydirectory.com>
  - Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako - Opportunities - Agriculture  
<http://opportunities.rdbn.bc.ca/agrihiddenmenuitems/agricultural-resources#government-and-other-supports>
  - Northern Health: to be released after the July long weekend, as a blog  
<http://blog.northernhealth.ca/author/mariannebloudoff> and potentially our event will be featured as one of the Homegrown Stories on the BC Food Security Gateway website found here <http://bcfoodsecuritygateway.ca>
  - Publicly shared on social media ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) by Laurie G. and a few others...
  - CBC Daybreak North did a follow up interview Tuesday May 23 with Laurie G. and it's available as an 8 minute podcast here: <http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/951815747573>
  - Upper Skeena Development Centre in Hazelton is reviewing a request to post the document on their website here <http://usdc.ca/community-economic-development/>
- Laurie G. presented on the Food Security Forum and Action Plan to a small group that met for a debriefing following the Ubuntu presentation by Michael Tellingier on June 15 in Smithers. Everybody in this group identified Food Security as a priority community initiative and some people have put their name forward to help with Next Steps.
- Curt Gesch did a feature article in his June issue of Just Farmers which generated two new contacts.
- Emily Bulmer is hoping to have an article published on the Forum in Country Life in BC magazine <http://www.countrylifeinbc.com>
- MP Nathan Cullen is considering using some of the report content and photos for mailouts this summer and potentially turning this into a handout for farmer's markets etc throughout the summer and fall.

#### 2. Updates on Next Steps from p.11

##### 1. Develop and implement a proper Action Plan.

- Liliana D. and Laurie G. are meeting next week to assess resources needed to properly carry on with the work started May 19.

2. Present original proceedings to agencies that make policies - tied to Action Plan above. So far:

- Wendy Hunt reported that she is putting the report on the next agenda for the District of New Hazelton Council meeting (July 10).
- Deklan Corstanje stated he would put the report on the agenda for the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine Economic Development Commission meeting June 23.
- Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board discussed the forum at their May 25 meeting and it was clear that RDBN representatives in attendance thought the Forum had high value and aligned very well with the pre-existing Agriculture Initiative including the idea of an Agriculture Coordinator.
- 

3. Work closely with the Regional Districts to advance the idea of a coordinated approach between the two so that political boundaries do not hinder progress on food security.

- so far we have succeeded in securing collaboration between Economic Development Officers on the next version of the Producer to Consumer Directory planned for August; further gains can be identified in the proposed Action Plan.

4. Organize a follow up forum for the Fall.

- original Action Team is proposing an early November date; anybody wishing to be on the Dinner Planning Crew should contact me ASAP - likely we will book the Old Church again.
- Dan Mesec says he will have some video clips ready to help with promotions by July 15.

5. Create a Toolkit for delivering events in other communities.

- The proceedings contain many of the toolkit items and planning has begun for a September event in Terrace. A team has been struck to plan out that event and details should be announced by July 31.

### **3. Progress on theme specific actions created by Forum Participants:**

#### ***Education***

**RDBN Agriculture Coordinator Position** has been approved by Board and funding now needs to be secured. This position is supported in principle by our regional agrologist, John Stevenson, and will hopefully get financial support from Northern Development Initiative Trust.

**Groundbreakers** has received funding for a Young Agrarians program that will see youth working on select local farms this summer for three days per week. Subsidized labour by enthusiastic youth is always welcome by farmers.

**Permaculture Farm Festival Club** (the same group that administered the Food Security Forum and headed by Laurie G.) is applying for funding to run a 3 day Hazelton Farming School in August. This also addresses the farming mentors action item (Curt Gesch will be an instructor).

**Farm to Table Cooking Lessons** has a second project leader: Kate Denstedt from Bulkley Valley Lamb & Goat - Kate and Marie-Eve Arseneault need to connect and make a plan so we can offer lessons before the year is over.

**Professional Agrologist Yard Crawl** (on bicycle) is happening August 26 and Laurie G. has agreed to accompany them to continue the food security conversation. Ryan Holmes is the contact.

**Hazelton Hops is offering farm tours** starting July 7 and again during their first annual harvest festival September 16 and 17. For details see Events at [www.hazeltonhops.com](http://www.hazeltonhops.com). Two other Hazelton farms - Senden and Michel Simard - will give tours as part of the Hazelton Farming School.

**Wild crafting classes** for the public are offered by Path of the Herbalist - two field classes were offered June 3 and 4 in Hazelton, a medicine making class was offered June 17 in Smithers. The next class is happening August 5. There may be others, please share if you know of any. Contact is Laurie G.

**Producers to Consumers Directory** will now include Hazeltons; contact is Deklan Corstanje, RDKS.

**Presentations on Emergency Preparedness** - Jeremie Beaudoin has agreed to do a presentation on his experiences of managing food supplies when food shipments do not reach destination communities. Laurie G is coordinating this event and has spoken with Smithers Public Library about hosting. Contact Jeremie at 1-250-571-7119 or [ceo@nationalemergency.ca](mailto:ceo@nationalemergency.ca)

## **Infrastructure**

**Identify different infrastructure models** to support producers, individuals and neighbourhoods.

- Laurie G. has contacted BVCU about presenting on Cooperative Business Models as part of the Hazeltons Farming School.
- Kate Denstedt from Bulkley Valley Lamb & Goat and Laurie G. are working on a model for private farms to host community gardens and root cellars.

1. Community Garden at BV L&G - approx. 1 acre with potential for several more; they can supply manure and mulch as well; this could be ready in time for fall planting in 2017

2. Community Root Cellar at BV L&G - 1700 sq feet is possible and it would be add on to a structure being relocated (quotes for moving are in the works); the addition of deep freezers is also possible. Could start with smaller project of 450 sq feet until there is enough interest for larger capacity.

For these projects to work, we will need to develop a business case and a cooperative model of cost-sharing is the preferred path forward.

Immediate needs in the next 2 months are as follows:

- business model
- fundraising dinner (this could coincide with our planned fall event and Katie is willing to help organize and can provide meat as her farm currently sells to BV)

Wholesale)

- invested participants (no exact number yet but we can crunch the numbers and come up with some scenarios)

#### **Community food caches**

- There are conversations about community food security and food caches happening on the Gitksan Territories between local organizations in the Hazeltons. It's early days but we hope to report out more in a future update.

#### **Community root cellar in Hazelton**

- A root cellar was built at the Senden Agricultural Resource Centre a couple of years ago with the intention of providing community access but it is in need of repair because it leaks. Access to funds is a barrier here but perhaps the next step would be to get a quote.

#### **Food Processing Facilities - Drying Kiln**

- Conversations are happening between farmers about opportunities to share commercial scale drying kilns for compatible crops such as brewing hops, garlic and grain. Laurie G. at Hazelton Hops can be the main point of contact for this project - we are looking to buy or build a kiln with a temperature range of 50 -60 degrees Celsius before September. [hello@hazeltonhops.com](mailto:hello@hazeltonhops.com)

*These are the advancements that I know about and I'm sure there are a few more. Any thing that was missed can be reported out in the July newsletter, please send your news to [gallantlaurie@gmail.com](mailto:gallantlaurie@gmail.com). As well, most of these projects and the ones listed in the proceedings likely need more people to help out, so if one grabs you, let me know and I'll do my best to connect people.*

*It seems to me that many of these initiatives could come under the job description of an Agriculture Coordinator which would be wonderful. I look forward to hearing more about that position including timelines.*

*In the meantime, we will continue to make progress and I will remain the main contact for this initiative until further notice.*

**Laurie Gallant**  
[gallantlaurie@gmail.com](mailto:gallantlaurie@gmail.com)  
 250-847-1399

## BV Food Security Initiative

### Update #2 - July 25, 2017

#### 1. Hazelton Farm School August 8-10

An exciting new 3-day program is being offered August 8-10 at two farms in the Hazeltons, Bulkley Canyon Ranch/Hazelton Hops and Senden. An invitation has been sent to everyone on this mailing list and we ask you to please send it around to your contacts. A grant was received through the BC Min. of Agriculture to help cover the costs, allowing us to offer this program for only \$100 per person. Several participants from the Food Security Forum are involved as instructors. For more information, visit this website <https://hazeltonhops.com/events/hazelton-farm-school>.

#### 2. Update from Senden

The Senden Agriculture Resource Centre located in Two Mile in the Hazeltons has recently released their Annual Report and it can be found on their website here: <http://usdc.ca/senden-sustainable-agriculture-resource-centre/>

A video about land-based programming was produced and can be seen here: <http://usdc.ca/senden-sustainable-agriculture-resource-centre/photo-gallery/>

Upper Skeena is happy to host the BV Food Security Forum document and Updates on our website and they are now posted here:

<http://usdc.ca/senden-sustainable-agriculture-resource-centre/food-security/>

Senden has community days, once a month (from June until September) where community members are welcomed to a meal, tour of the gardens, farmhouse and bee-keeping demonstration and to meet the youth in our program. If you are interested in attending, please let me know. The next one is scheduled for Thursday, July 27.

We are working on obtaining funds for repairing and obtaining our community root cellar, which is still functional. We have obtained quotes and are looking forward to keeping you updated about this process and sharing what we have learned.

We are very excited to collaborate and support the food security initiatives that are happening in the North. The Young Agrarian program will visit Senden (and other farms in Hazelton) in August.

#### 3. Updates on Next Steps from p.11

##### 1. Develop and implement a proper Action Plan.

- ▲ Denise Gagnon from Terrace, Laurie Gallant, and Liliana Dragowska are working on a simple proposal to shop around for funding to allow us to move to the next step. Talk of a Highway 16 Task Force has begun in the context of Emergency Preparedness. We are also wondering if the

Agriculture Outreach Coordinator position at the RDBN might be an opportunity to advance specific actions from the Forum that require legwork and research such an inventory of existing infrastructure. Denise has set up a meeting on August 8 with staff at MP Nathan Cullen's office in Terrace. Nathan Cullen and Laurie have also been communicating about future events.

## 2. Organize a follow up forum for the Fall.

- ▲ so many of us are busy with farming projects or on holidays over the summer so work on a Fall event has been put on hold until September. In the meantime, the **Field to Table Dinner** to celebrate the Smithers Farmers Market 25th Anniversary is happening August 7. Tickets are available from Mountain Eagle Books. For more information see [www.bvfm.ca](http://www.bvfm.ca).

## 3. More publicity

Laurie enjoyed an interview with Keira from the BC Food Gateway project and we are hoping to publish a story in early September. This is the website. <http://bcfoodsecuritygateway.ca>

*These are the advancements that I know about and I'm sure there are a few more. Any thing that was missed can be reported out in the August newsletter, please send your news to [gallantlaurie@gmail.com](mailto:gallantlaurie@gmail.com). As well, most of these projects and the ones listed in the proceedings likely need more people to help out, so if one grabs you, let me know and I'll do my best to connect people.*

*In the meantime, we will continue to make progress and I will remain the main contact for this initiative until further notice.*

**Laurie Gallant**  
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[hazeltonhops.com](http://hazeltonhops.com)  
 250-847-1399

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**From:** Laurie Gallant <gallantlaurie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** July 25, 2017 5:57 PM  
**To:** Laurie Gallant  
**Subject:** Hazelton Farm School August 8-10  
**Attachments:** Final Farm School Program July 25.pdf; ATT00001.htm; Farm School Poster July 20 smaller.pdf; ATT00002.htm

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF  
BULKLEY NECHAKO

Greetings,

We're excited to send you this invitation to the first annual Hazelton Farm School August 8, 9, 10. The program is designed for new farmers to the area and to commercial scale agriculture and will cover off a variety of topics chosen to match the growing conditions and opportunities along Highway 16.

Please share this information with your contacts. The class size is limited to 30 people, and the registration fee is \$100, payable through Eventbrite.

For more information and to register, visit <https://hazeltonhops.com/events/hazelton-farm-school>.

Financial support for this unique learning opportunity is provided by Growing Forward 2, a provincial-territorial-federal initiative.

Thank you for helping us to spread the word!

Laurie Gallant  
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New Hazelton BC  
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### Hazelton Farm School Curriculum 2017

Day 1-Tuesday, August 8 9:00 am to 3:00 pm	Day 2-Wednesday, August 9 9:00 am to 4:00 pm	Day 3- Thursday, August 11 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
<b>9:00 Welcome and Introductions</b>	<i>9:00 - 10:00 Tour of Bulkley Canyon Ranch</i>	<i>Senden Farm</i>
<b>10:00 Local Growing Conditions:</b> Comparing Terrace, Hazelton, and Smithers ▲ soil types, avg values for daylight, temperature, precipitation, hardness zones ▲ commercial opportunities ▲ research, innovation, economic development ▲ Min. of Ag services ▲ climate change <i>John Stevenson and Laurie Gallant</i>	<b>10:30 Perennials vs Annuals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brewing hops</li> <li>• fruit and nut trees</li> <li>• berries</li> <li>• Forest Garden techniques</li> </ul> <i>Bill Crosson and Laurie Gallant</i>	<b>9:00 Small-scale grain production</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overview of grain types</li> <li>• growing basics</li> <li>• harvesting</li> <li>• processing</li> <li>• seed saving</li> <li>• markets</li> <li>• report out on trials in the Hazeltons</li> </ul> <i>Lynden Sherman and Michel Simard</i>
<b>11:00 Overview of market gardening Part 1: Soil Preparation, Winter/Spring Preparation, Planting, Weeding</b>  <i>Group discussion with video clips fr. Cam Mather, Sunflower Farm CSA</i>	<b>11:00 Overview of market gardening Part 2: Watering &amp; What works, Insects and Pests, Harvesting and Storage.</b>  <i>Group discussion with video clips fr. Cam Mather, Sunflower Farm CSA</i>	
<b>Brown bag lunch and networking break</b>		
<b>1:30 Fresh produce from harvest to market:</b> hydro-cooling, packaging, pricing and everything in between.  <i>Mark Fisher, HighSlope Acres</i>	<b>1:00 Agri-tourism in and out of the ALR</b>  <i>Laurie Gallant</i>  <b>2:00 Business Considerations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start-up funding</li> <li>• Labour Strategies</li> <li>• Insurance - crop, property, agri-tourism</li> <li>• Organic Certification</li> </ul> <i>Laurie Gallant</i>	<i>Bulkley Canyon Ranch</i>  <b>1:00 A Permaculture Approach to Water Management</b>  <i>Gordon Hiebert</i>
<b>2:30 Group exercise:</b> Inventory of farms, crops, and livestock currently in production and 5-10 year predictions	<b>3:00 Small livestock and grazing</b> <i>Curt Gesch and Harriet Hall</i>  <b>4:00 Wrap-Up</b>	<b>4:30 Next steps and closing remarks</b>
<b>3:00 End of Day 1</b>	<b>4:30 End of Day 2</b>	<b>5:00 End of Day 3</b>

### ***Meet the Instructors***

**Bill Crosson** is Operations Manager at Hazelton Hops and is in charge of layout and construction of the hopyard, haying the field, animal care, carpentry projects and anything else that needs doing. He has a background in silviculture and had done a lot of trail blazing in the backcountry.

**Mark Fisher** holds a Bachelor of Public Administration. He has over 20 years experience as a project developer, front line worker, manager, and director of various community-based social services organizations. Mark also has more than 15 years of entrepreneurial experience in food related services and currently owns and manages High Slope Acres, a three-acre market garden and CSA project specializing in garlic, squash, and agro experiences. And if that's not enough, he's also on the Board of Directors for the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

**Harriet Hall** has been developing and honing her shepherding skills for 30 years under the tutelage of some formidable ovine instructors. Starting with 3 "free" pregnant ewes and a ram borrowed from "down the road" she now has a closed matrilineal flock of 50. Several dogs with jobs and a supportive partner help in the endeavour. On Dancingbee Farm, natural management practices are followed and derive from eco agriculture, biodynamic, organic and permaculture philosophies and practices as well as her own experiences and observations.

**Gordon Hiebert** is a owner, designer and project manager at Element Eco-Design. Gordon has received training in Keyline Design and Water Management, Perennial Agriculture, Edible Forest Gardens, Agroforestry, Holistic Land Management, Natural Watershed Restoration, Soil Microbiology and Restoration Agriculture. Prior work experience includes energy efficient building, sustainable building research and development, land development, forest management and road construction. Gordon has worked with clients from many sectors including: agriculture, development, non-profits, tourism and government. Gordon's work experience has allowed him to experience natural environments throughout British Columbia, Alberta and the Yukon.

**Laurie Gallant** loves to collaborate with other community-minded folks to create opportunities for great things to happen. She's general manager at Hazelton Hops and looks after business administration, marketing, hiring, and work planning as well as working in the field and greenhouses whenever possible. She holds a degree in Environmental Studies and a certificate in Permaculture Design. With her partner Bill they started a small forest garden five years ago. Her background is in environmental planning at the community level, reducing waste going to landfill community education and policy making. She is the organizer and co-instructor for a local plant medicine school, and is leading a food security project in the Bulkley Valley.

**Curt Gesch** is a retired schoolteacher who lives in Quick. He is the editor and publisher of the free, bi-monthly e-newsletter, Just Farmers. He and his wife, Betsey, raise a few Dexter cattle and conduct research and experimental plots of forage varieties. Way back in the 1970's he taught a very popular general science course about farming, gardening, and wildlife for grade 11 students. Depending on the day, Curt may look his age (68) or else as young as Betsey.

**Cam Mather** and his wife Michelle live independently off the electricity grid using the sun and wind to power their home and their CSA in Ontario. Cam is working towards the goal of making his home "zero-carbon" and with his extensive garden he aims to grow as much of his own food as possible. He

is a self-sufficiency consultant who has written books, produced videos and does public speaking on how to get started on the path to personal food, fuel and financial independence.

**Lynden Sherman** is Garden Coordinator for Senden Sustainable Agriculture Resource Centre. In this role he is responsible for deciding what to grow in the field and greenhouse, planting, caring for plants, and harvesting. He's very passionate about small-scale grain farming and previously worked at Woodgrain Farm in the Kispiox Valley, an organic vegetable, grain and sheep farm.

**Michel Simard** has been working on farms since he was 12 years old, growing vegetables and working during the hay season for his uncle's farm. He started his own farm when he was 18, farming with horses for many years. He is great at seed saving and is mostly self-sufficient for all his food in the Kispiox Valley. He's experimenting with small-scale grain production including flax, quinoa, buckwheat, rye and barley.

**John Stevenson** is the Regional Agrologist for the BC Ministry of Agriculture in Smithers. He recently presented on Change and Opportunity for Northwest BC Agriculture for the BC Institute of Agrologists, tackling topics such as climate change in relation to Bulkley Valley agriculture, changes to the agriculture land base, and social license.

### About our sponsors

Hazelton Farm School is sponsored by the **Permaculture Farm Festival Club**, a non-profit operating out of Hazelton dedicated to sustainable agri-tourism and food security. The Club is currently incubated by Hazelton Hops and lives on their website [www.hazeltonhops.com](http://www.hazeltonhops.com).

Financial support for the program speakers and other event costs is provided through the Growing Forward 2 program, and our funding proposal was championed by our District Agrologist, John Stevenson. Thanks also to all our instructors, and to Upper Skeena Development Centre and the District of New Hazelton for providing a venue for Day 1 and 2 of our School.



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# Hazelton Farm School

## August 8, 9, 10 2017

### Topics will include:

- Growing conditions in the Hazeltons present and future
- Small livestock and pasture management
- Soil fertility, weeds and pest management
- Planting for Success: perennials and annuals
- Small-scale grain production
- Permaculture and Water Management



Over seven instructors and two farm tours.

Network and plan community-scale projects!

\$100 for 3 days of instruction and course materials.



### Register by August 3, 2017

For more information:  
Laurie Gallant 250-847-1399  
[www.hazeltonhops.com](http://www.hazeltonhops.com)

Growing Forward 2 

A federal-provincial-territorial initiative



Canada 

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geraldine.craven

**From:** PAHS / SSVVA (CFIA/ACIA) <PAHS-SSVA@inspection.gc.ca>  
**Sent:** July 25, 2017 12:34 PM  
**To:** PAHS / SSVVA (CFIA/ACIA)  
**Subject:** FPT Ministers of Agriculture endorse the Plant and Animal Health Strategy for Canada | Les ministres FPT de l'Agriculture approuvent la Stratégie sur la santé des végétaux et des animaux pour le Canada - 6

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF  
BULKLEY NECHAKO

Hello,

We are pleased to announce that federal-provincial-territorial ministers of agriculture have endorsed the Plant and Animal Health Strategy for Canada.

Over the last year, governments, industry, academia and others who play a role in plant and animal health came together to chart a path to collaboratively safeguard Canada's plant and animal resources through development of this Strategy. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this endeavour, including during the most recent consultation in April, from which we received excellent feedback on the Strategy. The Strategy was revised based on your comments and is now available online.

It is now time to set implementation of the Strategy in motion, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve the results identified in the Strategy. A key first step will be establishing implementation coordinating councils to lead implementation, as outlined in the Strategy, focused on plant and animal health, respectively.

We will continue to provide updates as implementation progresses. For more information, please email [PAHS-SSVA@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:PAHS-SSVA@inspection.gc.ca) or visit [www.inspection.gc.ca/CanPAH](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/CanPAH).

Regards,

The Plant and Animal Health Strategy Team on behalf of partners

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Bonjour,

Nous sommes heureux d'annoncer que les ministres fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux de l'Agriculture ont approuvé la Stratégie sur la santé des végétaux et des animaux pour le Canada.

Au cours de la dernière année, les gouvernements, l'industrie, le milieu universitaire et d'autres qui jouent un rôle dans la santé des végétaux et des animaux se sont réunis afin de définir une marche à suivre pour protéger ensemble les ressources végétales et animales du Canada dans le cadre de l'élaboration de cette Stratégie. Nous tenons à remercier toutes les personnes qui ont contribué à cette entreprise, y compris pendant la plus récente consultation en avril, qui nous a fourni d'excellentes rétroactions sur la Stratégie. Celle-ci a été révisée en tenant compte de vos commentaires et est maintenant accessible en ligne.

Il est maintenant temps de mettre en marche la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie, et nous nous réjouissons de continuer à collaborer avec vous pour atteindre les objectifs définis dans la Stratégie. Une première étape clé consistera en la mise sur pied de conseils de coordination de la mise en œuvre pour diriger celle-ci, tel qu'il est décrit dans les grandes lignes dans la Stratégie, axée respectivement sur la santé végétale et sur la santé animale.

Nous continuerons de faire le point à mesure que la mise en œuvre progressera. Pour plus d'information, veuillez écrire par courriel à : [PAHS-SSVA@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:PAHS-SSVA@inspection.gc.ca) ou visitez le : <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/SVACan>.

Cordialement,

L'équipe de la Stratégie sur la santé des végétaux et des animaux pour le Canada au nom de ses partenaires.