

Ministry of
Agriculture and Lands

2008/09
Annual Service Plan Report



Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Integrated Land Management Bureau's *2008/09-2010/11 Service Plan* identified strategic priorities and key initiatives. The Ministry focused on promoting economic development and environmental sustainability for the natural resource, agriculture, and food sectors as well as the administration of Crown land and natural resources. This Annual Service Plan report details the results achieved between April 2008 and March 2009.

Accomplishments in agriculture include a more flexible outcome-based framework established through the national bilateral agreement, *Growing Forward*. Signed by the Province on March 23, 2009, *Growing Forward* emphasizes long-term profitability. The five-year \$553 million agreement provides the agriculture industry income stability and insurance against losses through business risk management programs. An additional \$78 million will be invested in a number of new programs helping farmers and producers build their business through innovation, commercialization and sustainability.

The Ministry is working with cattle and hog producers to provide income stability and to build their businesses. In addition to support provided by business risk management programs, the Ministry has provided financial support for age verification in cattle and market differentiation in hogs. This renewed focus is designed to provide the sectors with greater opportunities both domestically and internationally.

We have worked hard to ensure effective and efficient detection for animal diseases and as a result British Columbia is one of the leading provinces in Canada in bio-security. This was evident by the immediate response of industry, federal government and the Province to an outbreak of Avian Influenza last January, supported by B.C.'s Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Strategy.

The strategy is supported by construction of the new Animal Health Centre, an accredited Containment Level Three Lab in Abbotsford, which was completed in December 2008 and came in under budget at \$14 million. This full service diagnostic lab is one of only two laboratories in Canada accredited by the Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians and has been nominated for LEEDs silver certification recognizing its green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions.

In September 2008 a challenge of the Province's management and regulation of the aquaculture industry was heard in B.C. Supreme Court. On February 9, 2009 Justice Hinkson found that finfish farms on the coast of B.C. are a fishery that falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of the

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federal parliament. The Ministry is leading the provincial work with the Federal government to clarify changes in responsibility regarding the management and regulation of the industry, and in determining how to implement these changes.

The Ministry supported the Integrated Land Management Bureau in the successful implementation of an ecosystem-based management system for Coastal B.C. through the amendment of legal objectives for the Central and North Coast planning areas. This work supported the Bureau in protecting First Nations cultural values, important fisheries, watersheds and bio-diversity objectives.

The Ministry and the Integrated Land Management Bureau collaborated on the successful clean-up of Ladysmith Harbour to remove unauthorized structures from this historic site as part of the Brownfield program. The Ministry also received recognition from the Premier for the success of a shared project that will mitigate the risk of flood and debris damage from Fitzsimmons creek to the Resort Municipality of Whistler. These successes demonstrate that the Province is developing innovative partnerships to successfully tackle complex local issues with respect to brownfields in rural communities.

Progress has continued on remediating contaminated sites including Ocean Falls, Millstream Meadows, Bralorne Takla Mine and Yankee Girl Tailings at Ymir. The Ministry unveiled the new B.C. Brownfield Renewal Strategy eliminating red tape, streamlining administrative processes and increasing knowledge and awareness of redevelopment opportunities for local government and communities. The \$1.8 million made available through the Brownfield Renewal Funding Program encourages redevelopment in communities across the province.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands 2008/09 Annual Service Plan report compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's *2008/09-2010/11 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results as reported. As of June 10, 2009, the Integrated Land Management Bureau reports through the Minister of Forests and Range.

On a final note, I want to acknowledge the significant contributions of the late Honourable Stan Hagen who served as Minister in 10 ministries between 1986-2009, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. His dedication and commitment to the people of British Columbia will always be remembered.



Honourable Steve Thomson
Minister of Agriculture and Lands

July 24, 2009

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Highlights of the Year

Building a Better Future for Agriculture and Food

The signing of the new national bilateral agreement, *Growing Forward*, has enabled British Columbia to secure \$331.8 million over a five year period from the Federal government. The Province commits \$221.2 million, based on a 60:40 federal-provincial cost share. *Growing Forward* provides more flexibility in programming to the Province than did the preceding Agricultural Policy Framework agreement.



Rainbow over Sumas Prairie, Fraser Valley, B.C.

The School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program expanded further last year to include 739 schools throughout the province raising awareness of the benefits of healthy eating. The program has increased demand for B.C. grown fruit and vegetables and also created new opportunities for B.C. farmers to further invest and expand.

The Ministry provided the cattle industry with a \$3 million grant to implement a program supporting

access to international markets requiring evidence that beef products shipped meet age specifications. The program, delivered by the BC Cattlemen's Association, enabled British Columbia to register the second highest level of age verified cattle in Canada with 73 per cent of the herd verified.

The Ministry invested \$2.7 million in the B.C. hog industry to develop options to ensure its long term success. The funding will help the industry to focus on more strategic innovations in product development and promotion.

The Ministry delivered the Production Insurance program, processing a record number of claims this past year. The exceptionally high demand for business risk management programming was delivered in a timely and fair manner to growers.

In June 2008, then Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Honourable Pat Bell led a delegation comprised of Canadian agri-food officials and company representatives to participate in events at the B.C. Canada Pavilion in Beijing to promote B.C. and Canadian agri-food products. The outcome of this successful endeavour was new investment of up to \$15 million in the B.C. seafood industry.

Meeting Environmental and Climate Change Challenges

The Ministry assisted industry to identify and evaluate opportunities to produce and use energy products from biomass feedstocks generated on farms and from agri-food processing (e.g. manure, canola, processing wastes). Funding from the Innovative Clean Energy Fund and the Liquid Transportation Fuels Program was approved for several agriculture projects including a biodiesel plant that will use canola as a feedstock, a geothermal project that will supply energy to a greenhouse and sell excess power to the hydro grid and an anaerobic digester that will produce biogas from manure to sell to Terasen.

Invasive plants and noxious weeds pose a significant threat to B.C.'s resource-based industries and to the environment. A new and innovative approach to managing weeds and invasives was made possible thanks to \$3.5 million in provincial funding. This funding further supported the Ministry to collaborate with ministries of Forests and Range, Environment, Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure and, Tourism Culture and the Arts.

The Ministry's responsibility for establishing and amending legal land-use objectives under the *Land Act* supported the Integrated Land Management Bureau's successful *Mountain Caribou Recovery Implementation Plan* by streamlining existing legal objectives related to mountain caribou habitat. The responsibility for the implementation of this species at risk recovery plan has moved to Ministry of Environment.

The Ministry completed remediation at the Mt. Copeland mine near Revelstoke. A substantial geotechnical upgrade was made to ensure metal laden waste from the mine would not be released, protecting significant fisheries adjacent to the site and ensuring provincial water quality was maintained.

The Ministry worked cooperatively with the District of Fort St. James to remediate two waste wood piles at the Fort St. James All Nations Forest Corporation sawmill operation site allowing for sustainable reuse of the land.

A High Performing Organization:

Provincial Premier Award Recipient:

- Excellence and Innovation in Partnership Category - Food Safety Initiative - working with processors, the program helped develop solutions and training that improves the companies' internal food safety programs, enhancing food safety, quality and competitiveness.

Regional Premier Award Recipients:

- Partnership Category - Lower Mainland - The inter-agency agriculture compliance team won silver for their work on enhancing farm workers' safety.
- Innovation Category - Lower Mainland - The Water Balance Model won silver for the development of an easy to use tool that is able to calculate in minutes what previously took

days. This tool enables urban planners, engineers and developers to quantify the impact of site development on rainwater runoff.

- Innovation Category - Lower Mainland - The Fitzsimmons Creek land slip hazard resolution received an honourable mention. The innovative partnership resolved a long standing land-use concern, while simultaneously addressing an environmental and public safety hazard.

Dr. Ron Lewis, Chief Veterinarian, received the Minister's Award of Excellence recognizing 28 years of service with the Province. Dr. Lewis is recognized within the veterinarian field for enhancing the public image of the profession.

A brownfield website ¹ was launched as an information resource for local governments, land owners and developers. The website will help build capacity and awareness of redevelopment opportunities and tools.

¹ www.brownfieldrenewal.gov.bc.ca



Early morning in Fraser Valley fields, B.C.

Purpose of Ministry

The mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands is to enable economic and social development and environmental sustainability for the agriculture, aquaculture and food sectors, supporting them in delivering safe, healthy and high-quality food and to manage Crown land in an innovative manner that contributes to the goals of government. This mandate supports the major changes in direction taken since 2001. Crown land policy, agriculture, aquaculture and food policies, programs and services of the Ministry have shifted from primarily a revenue and economic outlook to one that incorporates economic, environmental and social objectives, which is known as triple bottom line reporting.

When the *2008/09-2010/11 Service Plan* was published in February 2008 the Integrated Land Management Bureau reported through the Ministry. Effective June 10, 2009 the Bureau reports through the Minister of Forests and Range. The Bureau's *2008/09 Annual Service Plan Report* is now published with the Ministry of Forests and Range.

The legal and regulatory environment that guides the work of the Ministry includes some 47 statutes which relate wholly or primarily to the Ministry and a further 101 regulations relating to the Ministry. A complete list of legislation for which the Ministry is responsible is available at www.leg.bc.ca/PROCS/allacts/al.htm

The Ministry provides guidance for Crown land management by maintaining a land-use and allocation policy framework for the Province. The Ministry provides leadership in the management of contaminated sites on Crown land and facilitates the redevelopment of brownfields² on both Crown and private land. The Ministry is also responsible for managing and resolving complex, high value land disposition proposals involving multiple government agencies and parties.

²Brownfields are defined as abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized commercial or industrial property where past actions have resulted in actual or perceived contamination and where there is an active potential for redevelopment.

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The agriculture and food sectors are managed using an array of collaborative federal-provincial-territorial agreements. The most comprehensive agreement related to the agriculture and food sectors to date, *Growing Forward*, is the next generation of policy framework. *Growing Forward* enables industry and government to focus on building a competitive and innovative sector by proactively managing risks and ensuring the sector contributes to society's priorities.

New and existing strategies of the Ministry support the *British Columbia Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for B.C. Families*. The plan is a roadmap to sustain and facilitate the growth and diversification of the industry, while further increasing public awareness, understanding and support for the agriculture sector. The *B.C. Agriculture Plan* priorities have been integrated into Ministry strategic planning and are an integral part of our business.

The Ministry provides leadership and technical support to partner ministries and coordinates the planning and administration of invasive plant programs on Crown land to detect, eradicate and contain evasive plants.

The Ministry also relies on inter-agency partnerships such as those with the Agricultural Land Commission and the B.C. Farm Industry Review Board. The Commission is an administrative tribunal responsible for administering the Agricultural Land Reserve, a provincial land-use zone that recognizes agriculture as a priority use. The Commission operates independently but derives funding through the Ministry. The Farm Industry Review Board is a statutory appeal body with additional responsibilities for the general supervision of commodity boards and commissions.

The Ministry, in partnership with the B.C. Agriculture Council and other stakeholders, enables the agriculture sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through programs such as the Environmental Farm Plan program. Programs like this enable farmers and ranchers to adopt beneficial management practices such as nutrient management through an incentive program made available through federal-provincial funding agreements.

The Ministry works closely with other provincial agencies, such as the Integrated Land Management Bureau and the ministries of Forests and Range, Environment, Transportation and Infrastructure and Healthy Living and Sport, to fulfill its mandate. The mandates of these agencies connect in key areas such as climate change, food safety and quality, support for local food, land and resource use, commitments to First Nations, invasive plant and pest management, environmental issues and promotion of B.C. agriculture products.

The Ministry also relies on partnerships with various levels of government, First Nations, industry and non-government organizations in terms of funding, collaboration and service delivery to implement Ministry strategies. The Ministry works with these partners to improve the sectors' capacity to act strategically and promote its own interests.

Strategic Context

Global Economy and Competition: B.C.'s economic circumstances were affected by a prolonged U.S. recession, continued turmoil in global financial markets, slower global demand for B.C. products, commodity price volatility and further moderation of domestic demand in B.C. These factors heightened the need for the Ministry to support sustainable economic development in the



Canola Field in Peace River Regional District

agriculture, aquaculture and food sectors and to manage Crown and natural resources strategically. The Province's agriculture and seafood industries compete in international markets where competitors with similar or lower cost structures enjoy greater economies of scale and create downward pressures on food commodity prices. Domestic policy and high levels of subsidy in other jurisdictions have a direct impact on the ability of many B.C. producers to compete. Increases in operating costs and labour shortages also challenged B.C. producers.

Balancing Environmental Concern and Values with Economic Viability: Over the past year scientific evidence continued to mount that climate change has intensified more than expected. This reinforced the need for the Ministry to continue efforts in such areas as water management, crop damage, production patterns and composition, as well as interaction and diversity of plant, animal and aquatic species, populations and ranges. The growing demand for green energy and green alternatives is creating new opportunities which support environmental objectives and the reduction of greenhouse gases. There is also an expectation that environmental values must be balanced with economic viability.

A Focus on Health and Buying Locally: Awareness of the benefits of healthier lifestyles and locally produced food combined with a focus on cost-effectiveness, continued to influence eating habits and consumer preferences. This created opportunities for producers to expand, make new investments and introduce new local food products that are fresh and nutritious.

Urban/Agriculture Interactions: A large portion of B.C.'s most productive farmland is in close proximity to urban development and other sectors of the economy. Odour, noise and dust concerns, competing demands for existing water resources, growing concern over air quality and emissions, as well as the growing pressures from other sectors to make alternate use of agricultural lands affect the overall viability of the agriculture sector. At the same time, the growing success of farmers' markets and other direct farm marketing initiatives offered opportunities to strengthen the connection between those who produce our food and those that consume it.

First Nations Engagement: The Province is committed to strengthen its relationship with First Nations and to close the social and economic gaps that exist between First Nations and other British Columbians. The Ministry continued to work more effectively with First Nations using Crown land and agricultural resources to leverage outcomes benefiting all British Columbians and aligning with broader government objectives.

Revitalizing Communities and Reducing Pressures on Greenspace: The current policy, regulatory and tax environments do not fully encourage redevelopment of some brownfields, and the general level of awareness of the opportunities available in relation to these sites is not widely understood or appreciated. The Ministry is building on the success of the Crown contaminated sites program, going beyond remediation of sites based on risk to human health and the environment, to include the redevelopment of underutilized sites on both Crown and non-Crown land through the B.C. Brownfield Renewal Strategy.

Strategic Crown Land Dispositions: In many B.C. communities, Crown land represents the best available source of land for community economic growth and diversification. Major Crown land sales and transfers continue to be evaluated based on their ability to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits. There are opportunities to support government's objectives and to meet community needs through the utilization of Ministry expertise in resolving complex land dispositions.



East Kootenays, B.C.

Report on Performance

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: Agriculture, aquaculture and food sectors, and Crown land-use contribute positively to the economic well-being of the province For greater detail see pages 14 to 16	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
1.1 Strategic growth of the agriculture, aquaculture and food sectors Ratio of Ministry expenditures on investment versus income stabilization.	45:55	47:53 EXCEEDED
1.2 Animal, fish, plant and human health are safeguarded Compliance with fish health management plans.	100%	100% ACHIEVED
Goal 2: World-leading environmental stewardship in Crown land management, agriculture, aquaculture and food practices For greater detail see pages 16 to 19	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
2.1 Effective management of environmental risks Industry compliance with finfish aquaculture licensing and regulatory requirements	97%	99.25% EXCEEDED
2.2 Risks created by the historical use of land are managed to minimize risks to human health and the environment and facilitate the restoration of land Number of program sites for which remediation is underway/completed.	62	67 EXCEEDED
Goal 3: Socially responsible management of land and water resources For greater detail see pages 19 to 22	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
3.1 Create a positive urban/agriculture relationship to facilitate sustainable growth for farms while enhancing the overall quality of life for British Columbians Public Perception of agriculture industry in British Columbia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with agriculture in B.C. • Importance of agriculture's contribution to the social, economic and environmental well-being of British Columbia 	65%	61% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED 83% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goal 1: Agriculture, aquaculture and food sectors, and Crown land-use contribute positively to the economic well-being of the province



Farmer's Market

Agriculture and Crown land are resources that British Columbians increasingly expect to be utilized in a manner that best responds to current and emerging needs.

Objective 1.1: Strategic growth of the agriculture, aquaculture and food sectors

The Ministry promotes sector profitability and self-reliance through programs and services that

improve market access, foster innovation and efficiency across the value chain and provide farmers with the tools they need to sustain their businesses in the face of environmental and market risk.

Strategies

- Promote, deliver and improve national risk management programs and services.
- Facilitate industry transformation to new market opportunities through investment in innovation, promotion and market development.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2007/08 Baseline	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Ratio of Ministry expenditures on investment versus income stabilization	40:60	45:55	47:53 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Discussion of Results

The 2008/09 target was exceeded. The results of this measure indicate a transition of fiscal resources towards investment activities relative to income stabilization. This reflects a broader strategic shift the Ministry wishes to achieve towards an agriculture sector that is increasingly profitable and self-reliant. This shift was supported by a number of factors, most notably the new Agri-invest program which provides producers with flexible coverage for small income declines

as well as support for investments to mitigate risks or improve market income. British Columbia dedicated \$4 million towards this joint federal-provincial program in 2008/2009.

In addition, the shift from support to investment was strengthened by other initiatives including investment missions to the burgeoning Asian market, development of innovative new bio-economy opportunities and continuing to build consumer awareness and demand for locally produced products.

Objective 1.2: Animal, fish, plant and human health are safeguarded

The Ministry focuses on services and initiatives that support British Columbia in continuing to be recognized as a producer of safe food, aquaculture and agriculture products, and supports producers in the development of healthy nutritious local food. Effective management of food safety, plant, livestock and fish health risks throughout the value chain contribute to positive public health and are critical to maintaining consumer confidence.

Strategies

- Implement and deliver comprehensive provincial-level programs for animal, fish and plant health which support national objectives to manage risks of disease and invasive species.
- Enable sector to contribute to government’s priority for healthy British Columbians and capitalize on new market opportunities.
- Continue to work with industry groups to identify and implement bio-security strategies that will reduce the risk of foreign animal disease incursions and outbreaks.



Examining pepper leaves for pest damage in the Ministry's Plant Diagnostic Laboratory in Abbotsford, B.C.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Compliance with fish health management plans	100%	100%	100%	100% ACHIEVED

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Discussion of Results

The 2008/09 target was achieved. All salmon farming companies are compliant with reporting requirements and no incidents regarding fish health or sea lice management required fisheries enforcement in order to achieve compliance. A Fish Health Management Plan that meets all

provincial requirements is maintained by individual salmon producing companies. The plans are living documents, and efforts are made annually to review and revise them as our understanding of aquaculture grows.

The Ministry undertakes random audits of all commercial salmon farms quarterly to ensure compliance with each fish health management plan. All commercial salmon farms are required to have a fish health management plan that meets requirements in place as a condition of their licence. The plan outlines the procedures that finfish operators must use at their facilities to reduce the risk and impact of disease in fish and minimize the spread of disease, including key controls for bio-security and reporting of fish health events.

Objective 1.3: Crown land dispositions that support government's strategic objectives and provide the greatest economic, social and environmental benefits

For complex and large scale Crown land dispositions, the Ministry utilizes a framework of legislation, policy, guidelines and tenure requirements, as well as principle-based decision making tools to allocate Crown land to advance governments' priorities providing broad public benefits.

Strategies

- Provide leadership in identifying how B.C.'s Crown land can best be used to respond to current and emerging needs, and how the development and marketing of significant Crown land can support broader government objectives.
- Respond to specific requests, derived externally from the Province, for Crown land in relation to major development proposals, ensuring that social, economic and environmental benefits are optimized.
- Develop Crown land inventory tools and products to align the availability of land with the demand from local government, First Nations, communities and other stakeholders.
- Coordinate with local government, First Nations and provincial ministries regarding use of Crown land that creates mutually sustainable benefits.

Goal 2: World-leading environmental stewardship in Crown land management, agriculture, aquaculture and food practices

Environmental stewardship, active risk management and addressing climate change are essential if British Columbia is to achieve a sustainable flow of benefits from its limited agricultural land base and diverse Crown land base.

Objective 2.1: Effective management of environmental risks

The Ministry plays a significant role in engaging and supporting the sectors to continue to adopt world-leading practices that will sustain the environment.

Strategies

- Identify and address critical agricultural environmental issues (e.g. nutrient management, environmental farm planning etc.).
- Continue auditing of compliance and enforcement in the aquaculture sector to ensure operators are accountable for implementing environmentally sustainable practices.



Ministry inspection staff monitoring aquaculture operation on the West Coast

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Industry compliance with aquaculture licensing and regulatory requirements	99.7%	94%	97%	99.25% ⁽¹⁾ EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

¹ Estimate - preliminary value based on 2008 calendar year inspections. Final value will be available with the release of Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and Ministry of Environment joint report: "Regulatory Compliance of British Columbia's Marine Finfish Aquaculture Facilities:2008".

Discussion of Results

The 2008/09 target was exceeded based on preliminary data, the overall inspection results for the 2008 inspection cycle is 99.25 per cent. The intent of licensing and regulatory requirements is to ensure that finfish aquaculture operators are demonstrating accountability in implementing environmentally sustainable practices, which includes the prevention of finfish escapes to the environment. This measure provides an indication of the industry-wide compliance with the Province's aquaculture licensing and regulatory requirements based on a calendar year inspection cycle.

Objective 2.2: Risks created by the historical use of land are managed to minimize risks to human health and the environment and facilitate the restoration of land



Restored brownfield, False Creek, Vancouver, B.C.

The Ministry has lead responsibility for fostering a provincial approach to protect the public through remediation of contaminated sites that are the responsibility of the Province, and that pose a risk to human health and the environment. The risk-based approach considers potential health and environmental impacts and the potential benefits associated with the future use of remediated lands.

Strategies

- Remediate Crown contaminated sites that are the responsibility of the Province to protect human health and the environment.
- Identify opportunities to restore derelict, underutilized or contaminated sites back into productive use.
- Remediate program sites utilizing partnerships to leverage expertise, innovation and financing.
- Work with other provincial ministries and agencies to deliver reliable, relevant, accurate and transparent reports on contaminated sites management.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Number of program sites for which remediation is underway/completed ^(1,2)	28	54	62	67 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

¹ Targets have been revised to include sites managed by the Province to fulfill obligations under legal agreements, regulatory orders and other commitments. Results are cumulative.

² Program sites do not currently include pilot projects for remediation of brownfield sites.

Discussion of Results

The 2008/09 target was exceeded. Remediation is underway or completed at 67 sites, which included 10 new preliminary site investigations at candidate sites. Of the 67 program sites, work is completed on 34, with eight sites remediated and 26 determined not to require any further work due to low risk levels. The branch has effectively addressed the risk resulting from historic activity on Crown land at over half (51 per cent) of all program sites and continues to manage an additional 33 sites at this time.

Undertaking remedial management actions of program sites helps to minimize risks to human health and the environment. This measure identifies progress in remediating program sites. Remediation includes site investigation, risk assessment, remedial planning and physical site clean-up. Depending on the nature and extent of contamination, size of site, complexity and regulation requirements, remediation is often a multi-year process.

Goal 3: Socially responsible management of land and water resources

Agricultural (private and Crown) land and water are strategic resources that British Columbians expect will be managed in a manner that is socially responsible and environmentally sustainable, enhancing the overall quality of life for all British Columbians.

Objective 3.1: Create a positive urban/agriculture relationship to facilitate sustainable growth for farms while enhancing the overall quality of life for British Columbians

Agriculture and aquaculture activity occur within communities and depend on good relations with local government and community members. In 1931, Canada's farm population made up 33 per cent of the total population. As of 2006, Canada's farm population significantly decreased to 2.14 per cent of the total population.

B.C.'s farm population has gone from 1.85 per cent to 1.45 per cent (1996 to 2006) of the total B.C.³ population. While preservation of agricultural land in British Columbia is overseen by the Agricultural Land Commission, the Ministry builds on this mandate and aims to create a positive urban/agriculture environment to ensure local government and the public value the contributions of agriculture.



Urban development alongside agriculture region, Abbotsford, B.C.

Strategies

- Bridge the urban/agriculture divide and ensure local governments value the contribution of farmers and the broader agriculture sector.

³ These are approximate numbers derived from Statistics Canada Census Data. The calculation used is total number of farms multiplied by the average number of residents per farm (three residents). This number is expressed as a percentage of the total population for both the Province of B.C. and Canada.

- Build greater understanding of agriculture and aquaculture’s contribution to the community through youth programs (e.g. 4-H, fairs, “Agriculture in the Classroom”) and other proactive communication strategies.
- Draw upon best practices in other jurisdictions for developing positive relationships between urban and agricultural communities.

Performance Results

Performance Measure		2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Public perception of agriculture industry in British Columbia	Familiarity with agriculture in British Columbia	64%	65%	61% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED
	Importance of agriculture's contribution to the social, economic and environmental well-being of British Columbia	83%	84%	83% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

2007/08 Actual based on a random survey of 1641 respondents; results are a maximum of +/- 2.42% at the 95% confidence level with some variation between questions. For 2008/09 Actual, the survey size was reduced to 800; results are +/- 3.38% at the 95% confidence level.

Discussion of Results

The 2008/09 targets were substantially achieved. Analysis of the survey results should consider changes in sample size and confidence levels. Nevertheless, the results indicate that while the public perception of the agriculture industry’s contribution has not changed since 2007/08, general familiarity with the sector may have decreased. The *British Columbia Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for B.C. Families* was released in February 2008, and sets out an implementation plan for 2008-2011 to sustain and facilitate the growth and diversification of the industry, while further increasing public awareness, understanding and support for the agriculture sector. The Ministry is working in partnership with other levels of government, sector based agencies and producers to support implementation of that plan.

Objective 3.2: Robust economically, socially and environmentally sustainable agriculture and Crown land management practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and assist successful adaptation to climate change

The Ministry, working with the Ministry of Citizens’ Services, is developing an action plan to reduce its own carbon footprint in areas such as employee travel and energy usage in buildings.

The Ministry will also work with industry, other governments, First Nations and non-government organizations on opportunities and projects to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through the most credible, aggressive and economically viable sector solutions.

Strategies

- Support initiatives to reduce and capture methane, carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions from agriculture and other activities on Crown lands.
- Assist clients and stakeholders to reduce use of inputs derived from fossil fuels (e.g. fuels, fertilizers) throughout the agriculture, aquaculture and food supply and distribution value chain.
- Work with the agricultural sector to develop alternative green energy opportunities.
- Investigate opportunities for carbon sequestration in agriculture and on Crown land.

Performance Results

In support of the Province's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Ministry has undertaken a number of actions in support of climate action, key examples include:

- Developing frameworks for meeting provincial greenhouse gas emissions targets in the agriculture sector and for Crown lands.
- Working with inter-ministry colleagues and external groups to understand forest carbon volumes and potential carbon credit opportunities and to implement the Province's announced policy of zero net deforestation.
- Conducting a thorough technical review of the *National Inventory Report* estimates for greenhouse gas emissions from B.C. agriculture, and identifying areas for key improvements that are now being addressed collaboratively with federal agencies. These estimates will be used to set B.C.'s legislated baseline for emission reductions and to track progress.
- Completing agriculture protocols contributing to the establishment of the Pacific Carbon Trust.

Objective 3.3: Crown land policy framework and supporting strategies enable administration of the *Land Act* to achieve government objectives

Allocation decisions and administration of Crown land are guided by a framework of legislation, policy, guidelines and tenure requirements. The Ministry develops, maintains



Unsurveyed Crown land, Rhine Ridge, Tahtsa Lake, B.C.

and supports implementation of this framework for the allocation of Crown Land to ensure that it is responsive to the changing needs and demands of communities, First Nations, industry and the Province's broader strategic objectives.

Strategies

- Support government's commitment to a New Relationship with First Nations.
- Improve Crown land allocation policy and business processes to better serve clients.
- Continue to provide support to the Integrated Land Management Bureau and other government partners that provide Crown land services and land-use planning tools.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

The Resource Summary table below outlines the expenditures by core business area. The summary includes all expenditures for the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and the Agricultural Land Commission. In Fiscal 2009/10, responsibility for the Integrated Land Management Bureau was transferred to the Minister of Forests and Range and results for 2008/09 are presented in the Service Plan Annual Report for the Ministry of Forests and Range.

Core Business Areas	Estimated ¹	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Agriculture and Aquaculture	20,814	—	20,814	22,320	1,506
Risk Management	50,702	—	50,702	47,223	(3,479)
Crown Land Administration	45,505	—	45,505	45,091	(414)
Executive and Support Services	8,478	—	8,478	8,559	81
Sub-Total	125,499	—	125,499	123,193	(2,306)
Agricultural Land Commission	2,435	—	2,435	2,392	(43)
Crown Land Special Account	84,720	—	84,720	80,966	(3,754)
Transfer from Crown Land Special Account to General Account	—	(73,354)	(73,354)	(73,354)	—
Production Insurance Special Account (Net)	11,500	11,888	23,388	23,388	—
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual	—	—	—	(256)	(256)
Ministry Total	224,154	(61,466)	162,688	156,329	(6,359)
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
Agriculture and Aquaculture	168	—	168	168	—
Risk Management	125	—	125	139	14
Crown Land Administration	50	—	50	53	3
Executive and Support Services	13	—	13	12	(1)
Sub-Total	356	—	356	372	16
Agricultural Land Commission	23	—	23	23	—
Crown Land Special Account	—	—	—	—	—
Ministry Total	379	—	379	395	16

Core Business Areas	Estimated ¹	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Agriculture and Aquaculture	1,002	—	1,002	722	(280)
Risk Management	869	—	869	75	(794)
Crown Land Administration	240	—	240	3	(237)
Executive and Support Services	89	—	89	882	793
Sub-Total	2,200	—	2,200	1,682	(518)
Agricultural Land Commission	5	—	5	—	(5)
Crown Land Special Account	—	—	—	—	—
Production Insurance Special Account (Net)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2,205	—	2,205	1,682	(523)
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)					
Agriculture Credit Act - Receipts	350	—	350	284	(66)
Crown Land Special Account - Receipts	70	—	70	70	—
Crown Land Administration Disbursements	(8,250)	—	(8,250)	(757)	7,493
Net Cash Source (Requirements)	(7,830)	—	(7,830)	(403)	7,427
Total Receipts	420	—	420	354	(66)
Total Disbursements	(8,250)	—	(8,250)	(757)	7,493
Total Net Cash Source (Requirements)	(7,830)	—	(7,830)	(403)	7,427

¹ The amounts in the "Estimated" column correspond to the Estimates as presented to the legislative assembly in February 2008.

Comments and Explanations

Operating Expenditure Variances

Other Authorizations includes \$11.9 million under statutory authority for the indemnity payments made from the Production Insurance Special Account.

Actual expenditures exceeded program budgets by \$1.5 million in support of the hogs industry (Core Business Area-Agriculture and Aquaculture). This is offset by \$3.4 million in savings under the Agricultural Policy Framework (Core Business Area-Risk Management), and a \$0.4 million surplus in the Crown Land Contaminated Sites program (Core Business Area-Crown Land Administration).

Capital Expenditure Variances

Variances in capital expenditures are due to reallocations of the capital budget between divisions during the fiscal year. This resulted in overspending in some areas that was offset by underspending in other areas.

Recoveries and Revenue

Through partnerships and other arrangements with various organizations, Ministry Operations provided services and then recovered some or all of its costs. The recoveries amounted to a total of \$9.9 million in 2008/09. Principal items included \$2 million in external funding under the B.C. Orchards and Vineyards Transition Program, \$2 million for Canada/B.C. Wildlife Damage Compensation, and \$3 million for Production Insurance Administration. There was also \$10.6 million in external recoveries to the Production Insurance Special Account for reinsurance proceeds.

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For more information about the British Columbia Agriculture Plan: *Growing a Healthy Future for B.C. Families*, visit the website at: http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/Agriculture_Plan/