



*The overall goal of this project is to identify economically viable options for new and existing farmers in the Capital Regional District (CRD) to access land for agricultural production.*

### **Concept**

The high cost of land is a significant barrier to the economic viability of farming in the CRD. At over \$100,000 an acre, it is increasingly difficult for people who want to farm to enter the industry, or for existing farmers to access more land to expand their operations. In addition, farmers who are reaching retirement or want to exit the industry are facing the difficult task of farm succession planning. What can we do to make farm land more affordable and accessible? How do we ensure farmland can actually be farmed today and in the future? Our aim is to bring these ideas to the forefront through information sharing and discussion and spark collaborative actions to address the economic viability of accessing farmland within the CRD.

### **Proposed Activities:**

**1. Partners/Advisors Meeting:** *Bringing together the groups, organizations and agencies working directly on these issues together to connect, identify their current work and respective role and discuss/adjust the project as proposed*

### **2. Farmland Forum**

The forum exploring a broad range of potential approaches and solutions to farmland issues in the CRD. This would most likely take the form of a panel of presenters and then allow space for questions and ideas generation around possible obstacles and opportunities. Possible panel:

- A Look at Leasing: Regulations, Opportunities and Models;
- Co-op purchase models,
- Private/ Non-Profit Partnerships and the Community Farm Program;
- Farm Classification and Taxation - What's on the Horizon?;
- Strategies and Tools Municipalities are putting into action; and
- Innovative Approaches for Farm Succession.

### **3. Targeted Workshops:**

- **Workshop #1 - Land Leasing and Sharing Options: "Linking and Leasing" Models:** Land leasing has been gaining interest as an option for accessing land more affordably. Recent changes to the Land Title Act, and the relevance of

programs such as Linking Land and Future Farmers LLAFF would be explored including hearing from farmers and landowners employing this strategy.

- **Workshop #2 - The Future of Your Farm: Emerging Succession Planning and Land Purchase Options:** . Currently there are a number of examples of farm succession and land purchase that involves partnerships including the Co-op Development and Succession Plan for ALM Farm; Haliburton Farm and the Municipality of Saanich; as well as the many initiatives of Community Farm Program (TLC and Farm Folk City Folk). How are these initiatives formed? What are the legal and financial implications and opportunities around these types of models? Can this really work for a retiring farmer?
- **Workshop #3 Planning for Food Production into the Future** This workshop would provide an overview of provincial programs that pertain to farmland including the Agricultural Land Reserve, Strengthening Farming Program, Agricultural Land Use Inventory, Agricultural Area plans, Agricultural Advisory Committees and role and mandate of the BC Assessment Authority. The workshop would also look at how local and regional planning intersects with farmland through Regional Growth Strategies, Official Community Plans, Agricultural Area Plans and Agriculture Advisory Committees.

**4. Communications of Findings:** Newsletters, Report Submissions and Presentations

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