



COMMUNITY SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
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Capital Region –  
Food and Agriculture Roundtable

## North Saanich Agriculture Economic Development Strategy Input from Key Stakeholder Groups-November 2011

### **Objective:**

To receive input from key stakeholders about their priorities for agriculture economic development in North Saanich, and learn how they see their role in implementation of this strategy.

### **Process:**

The municipality has authorized the development of the Economic Development Strategy based on previous work undertaken in North Saanich to plan for food and agriculture. This previous work includes:

- North Saanich Land Use Inventory Report (April 2009)
- North Saanich Agriculture Plan (January 2010)
- Growing Towards Food Self Reliance: A whole Community Agriculture Strategy (February 2011)
- North Saanich Agriculture Study (September 2011)

The consulting team has pulled from these strategies and studies the work and recommendations around economic development and viability that support the Vision for Agriculture in North Saanich (as per the North Saanich Agriculture Plan).

These ideas are now being brought forward to key agriculture stakeholders in North Saanich and Capital Region to understand priorities for the strategies and ways to implement it. The focus is on what the Municipality can do to support agriculture development, working alone as well as with partners and other levels of government.

### **Municipal Tool Box:**

Although the Strategy will outline a number of initiatives that will involve a range of players and levels of government, the focus of the plan will be to identify what the Municipality can do to strengthen the agri-food sector within its role and jurisdiction. What do Municipalities have in their toolbox? Generally, the plan will outline what the municipality can do with the following tools:

- Provide resources
- Implement projects and programs
- Create policy, zoning and bylaws
- Advocate to other levels of government or bodies
- Facilitate dialogue and collaborative initiatives

It must be remembered that many aspects that would support sector development and viability will fall outside of the purview of the Municipality.

# North Saanich

*“North Saanich is sustained by a diverse, productive and vibrant agricultural economy that ensures the long-term health and vitality of our community and the neighboring First Nation and municipal communities of the Saanich Peninsula.*

*We actively demonstrate our support for agricultural heritage and economy through our involvement in and responsibility for the ownership and stewardship of our productive lands, the growing production of a diversity of high quality local foods and farm products and by our care and support for those who do this work.*

*In doing so we have created a diverse and exemplary network of positive and supportive economic, social, and ecological relationships and interconnections that sustain strengthen and define our vibrant rural community and its agricultural enterprises”*

*North Saanich Agriculture Vision  
North Saanich Agriculture Plan 2010*



## The Process:

We would ask you to consider the questions below and provide feedback by **December 10, 2011 (meetings, interviews, written submissions possible)**

We will then incorporate this feedback into a draft plan that you and other stakeholders will be invited to review, and further flesh out (identify concrete action items and partners) at a **Workshop in early February 2012. A report will** then be provided to North Saanich Municipal Staff and council for their consideration in **March 2012.**

### Questions for Your Consideration:

1. Do the actions below capture the key components of what an Agriculture Economic Development Strategy for North should contain? Is there anything that is a priority for you that is missing?
2. If you had to prioritize as to what you thought was most important to undertake to strengthen the economic viability of agriculture in North Saanich, what would you choose?
3. What should be the scope of these initiatives? Do you think should be done within North Saanich, or worked on more collaboratively as Regional or Saanich Peninsula wide initiatives?



## Key Objectives and Initiatives for the North Saanich Agriculture Economic Development Strategy

Objective	Action	Priority	Scope	Role
<b>1. Land Base</b>	1. Utilization of municipal land for agriculture			
Ensure that land is accessible (available and affordable) for agriculture uses today and into the future	2. Public Acquisition of new land for agricultural use either municipally or public			
	3. Encourage realtors to market land for farming rather than for urban development			
	4. Provide service that links available farm land with future farmers			
	5. Develop and maintain bylaws that support maintaining the agricultural land base			
	6. Control dumping/land fill			
<b>2. Market Development</b>	1. Use Municipal Webpage to promote agribusiness			
To support the growth of opportunities for selling North Saanich food and agriculture products	2. Support Road-side signage			
	3. Create and promote branding for North Saanich product			
	4. Support marketing campaigns, farm markets and events (eg. Flavour Trail)			
	5. Develop and encourage "Buy Local" Procurement policies			
<b>3. Processing and Infrastructure</b>	1. Undertake Feasibility Study and establish Abattoir/Meat Processing capacity			
Build capacity to process, store and distribute North Saanich products	2. Determine assets/needs and develop better access to Commercial kitchen facilities			
	3. Support the growth of Farm markets – permanent and seasonal locations			
	4. Determine feasibility for a Food distribution Co-op			
	5. Create cold-storage packaging facility or network of sites			
	6. Undertake feasibility study to create an Agriculture Commercial Hub that combines previous objectives			
<b>4. Labour and Sector development</b>	1. Advocacy for appropriate use foreign workers			
Increase access to skilled labour force and capacity building opportunities for N.S. Ag Sector.	2. Support for collaboration on labour market development			
	3. Support Education opportunities for next generations			
	4. Explore and increase Extension service and training opportunities			
	5. Develop Supportive Farm worker Housing bylaws			
	6. Support ongoing network of agri-stakeholders			
<b>5. Economic Viability</b>	1. Municipal support for maintaining or decreasing farm input costs: compost, water, land tax incentives, wild life management support			
Increase the economic viability of farming	2. Regulatory barriers/red tape reductions-key needs?			
Other?				