

KEEPING IT RURAL 2024



AGRICULTURE

Growing Forward:
Sustainable Practices in Rural
Agriculture

Organic BC

Keeping it Rural Conference

May 2024





OUR PURPOSE SINCE 1993:

To build healthy soil,
ecosystems, people and
communities. **Together,**
we're raising the standards
for organic agriculture and
transforming agriculture's
impact on the planet.


ORGANIC BC



Organics Principles

Organic Agriculture Should . . .

Health

. . . sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible.

Fairness

. . . build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.

Ecology

. . . be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.

Care

. . . be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment.



Our Organization



Accreditation

For certification bodies in the BC Certified Organic Program.

Representation

To provincial and federal governments.

Networking

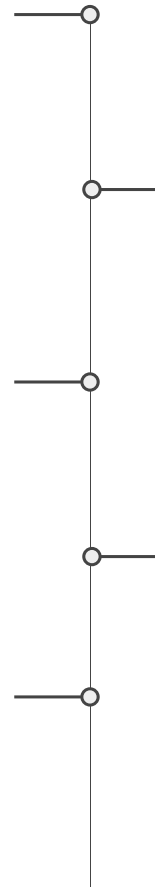
For the agriculture community, members and producers through hosting events.

Leadership

In national organic standards.

Support

By publishing a sector magazine, podcasting, field days, videos, up-to-date industry information, an event calendar, and job board.



Organic Accountability

A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a white flower with yellow stamens. The bee is positioned in the center-left of the frame, facing left. Its body is covered in black and yellow fur. The flower's stamens are prominent, with bright yellow tips. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Standards

Organic agriculture in Canada is governed by rigorous standards that outline the principles, practices and permitted substances used in organic production systems. All products certified under the Canada Organic Regime and the BC Certified Organic Program must meet or exceed these standards.

Certification

Producers and processors apply for organic certification through a Certification Body, who will assess compliance with the Canadian Organic Standards and provide a verification officer to complete an on-site inspection.



800+

11% of Canadian organic operations

**ORGANIC BC**



Organic commodities produced
Nearly every type of
crop and livestock

Marketed at

Farmers' markets,
CSA, supermarkets,
wholesale, export




ORGANIC BC



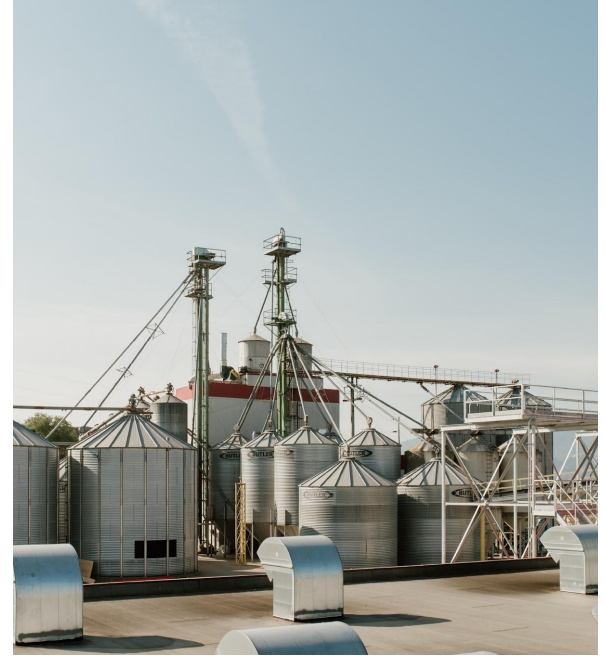


Organic agriculture is resilient, regenerative, and its positive impact is growing

When it comes to improving soil health, organic farmers are experts.



Cultivate something resilient






ORGANIC BC



Thank you!

organicbc.org

[@thisisorganicbc](https://twitter.com/thisisorganicbc)

 **ORGANICBC**

Sources

Canada Organic Trade Association (2021). <https://www.canada-organic.ca/en/what-we-do/research>

Grist. New research: synthetic nitrogen destroys soil carbon, undermines soil health (Feb. 2010).

<https://grist.org/article/2010-02-23-new-research-synthetic-nitrogen-destroys-soil-carbon-undermines/>

Kerlin, K. Compost key to sequestering carbon in the soil (Aug. 2019). <https://climatechange.ucdavis.edu/news/compost-key-to-sequestering-carbon-in-the-soil/>

The Organic Center. Organic soils sequester carbon to combat climate change (Dec, 2017).

<https://www.organic-center.org/research/organic-soils-sequester-carbon-combat-climate-change>

Qualman, D; National Farmers Union. Tackling the farm crisis and the climate crisis: A transformative strategy for Canadian farms and food systems (2019).

<https://www.nfu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Tackling-the-Farm-Crisis-and-the-Climate-Crisis-NFU-2019.pdf>

Photos

Organic BC, Maylies Lang, Wild Flight Farm, Eva-Lena Lang

Boundary Food Hub



Ministry of Agriculture definition: "...shared-use food and beverage processing facilities that offer food and agriculture businesses access to commercial processing space, equipment, expertise and resources to support business development and growth."

Keeping it Rural Conference 2024

The work



A Sense of Urgency

- Global corporatization of food
- Too many “middlemen”, not enough profit going to those taking the greatest risk
- Barriers to getting local product on chain store shelves
- Lack of transportation in rural areas
- Downturn in Forestry
- Fires, floods, heat, drought, invasive species
- Devastation of tree fruits
- Aging farmers, uncertain succession
- High cost of farmland, processing equipment
- Agricultural land is being purchased and not farmed

Status of our facility in Rock Creek

We are the only Ministry funded food hub with a focus on meat

Construction this Fall

Leveraged funding to increase size by 40%

3 sections:

- Cut & Wrap with large hanging cooler
- Value added processing for multiple products
- Reefer trailer storage & freezers

Funding for a 3rd reefer trailer for carcass transportation

Funding for rentable freezer space

Value added development

Multi-use thermal unit

- hot smoke, cold smoke, roast, bake, dry, ferment
- can smoke 60 hams at once
- **AND** it's self-cleaning!

On our wish list!



Momentum building provincially

BC Food Hub Network: 13 Ministry of Agriculture funded food hubs

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/growbc-feedbc-buybc/bc-food-hub-network/food-hubs-in-bc>

13th is City of Richmond (2nd local government to be directly involved)

Resources:

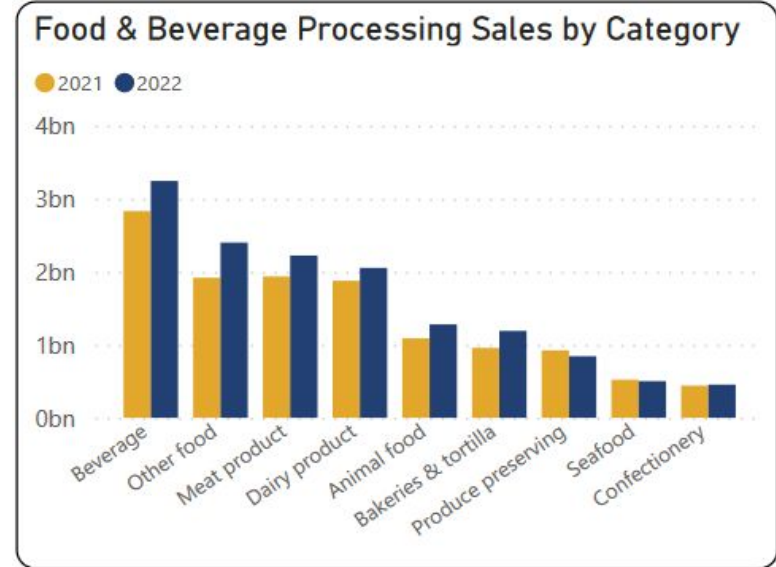
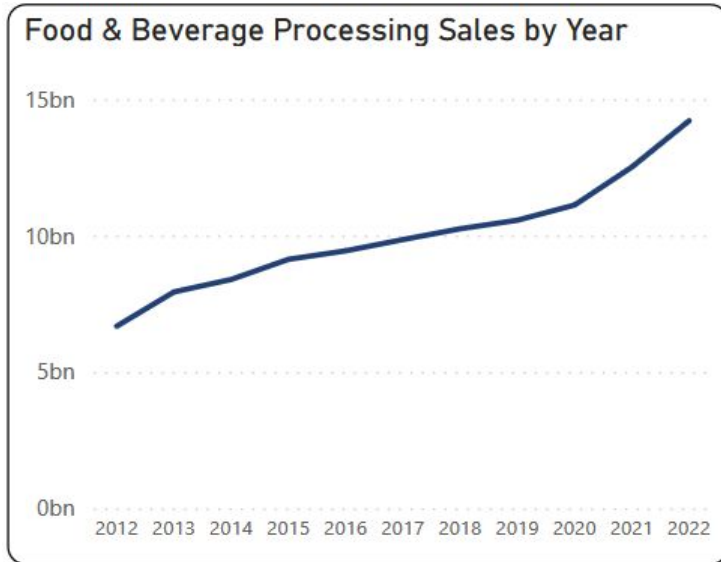
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/growbc-feedbc-buybc/bc-food-hub-network/resources>

Funding to support Network development, Community of Practice (about 50 food hubs)

Funding to update business plans

Momentum building provincially

Ministry of Agriculture and Food: Sector Snapshot 2022, Food & Beverage Processing



Financial case

Feed BC Directory: <https://feedbcdirectory.gov.bc.ca/>

B.C. FOOD GROWS LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES

Feed BC is a provincial government partnership initiative to increase B.C. food and beverages in government and public sector facilities, programs and services.

When public institutions purchase more B.C. food, it stimulates domestic supply, creating new B.C. jobs and economic activity. This means that B.C. farmers, food producers and supply chain businesses can grow and support local communities and economies.

Every dollar spent on B.C. food by public institutions brings a two-fold value (2.2 times the expenditure) to B.C.'s economy through new local jobs and GDP.

For more information visit gov.bc.ca/feedbc



EVERY \$1 MILLION

public institutions spend on B.C. food

GENERATES UP TO



\$858K

in new
provincial GDP

(additional value added products)

+



\$598K

in new
annual wages

AND UP TO



13

new food and
food system jobs

feedBC

Bringing B.C. food
to public institutions



Momentum building locally (Boundary)

2 provincially inspected abattoirs with cut & wrap in Boundary

Construction on a 3rd has started (a large Halal facility)

4th has applied for non-farm use

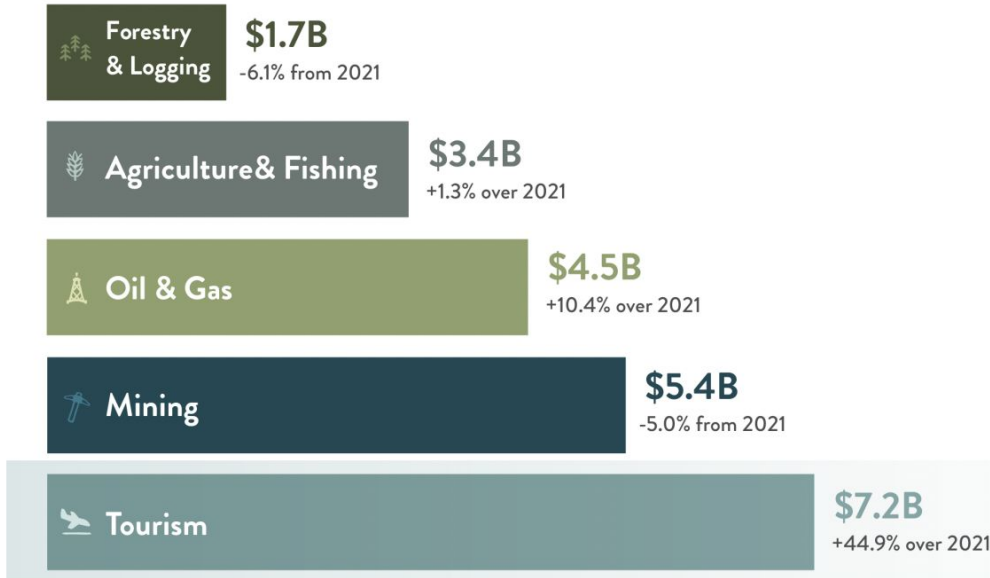
3 Farmgate Plus licences, new butcher shop

More small meat producers

Farmers Market is expanding, succession-bakery, expansion of another bakery

Cross over: Tourism

GDP by primary resource industry (2022)



Straddling both industries

Local food for sale in visitor centres

Food as destination

Promoting Farmers' Markets

Cross over: Emergency Management



We'll have 3 reefer trailers plus shared freezer storage

Benefits of mobile

Already used when a commercial cooler malfunctioned

Potential during broader emergencies

SSMPA Small Scale Meat Producers + Kamloops Food Policy Council work to deploy slaughter trailers through Interior

Connecting with local government emergency programs

Cross over: Food Security



Food Recovery Program

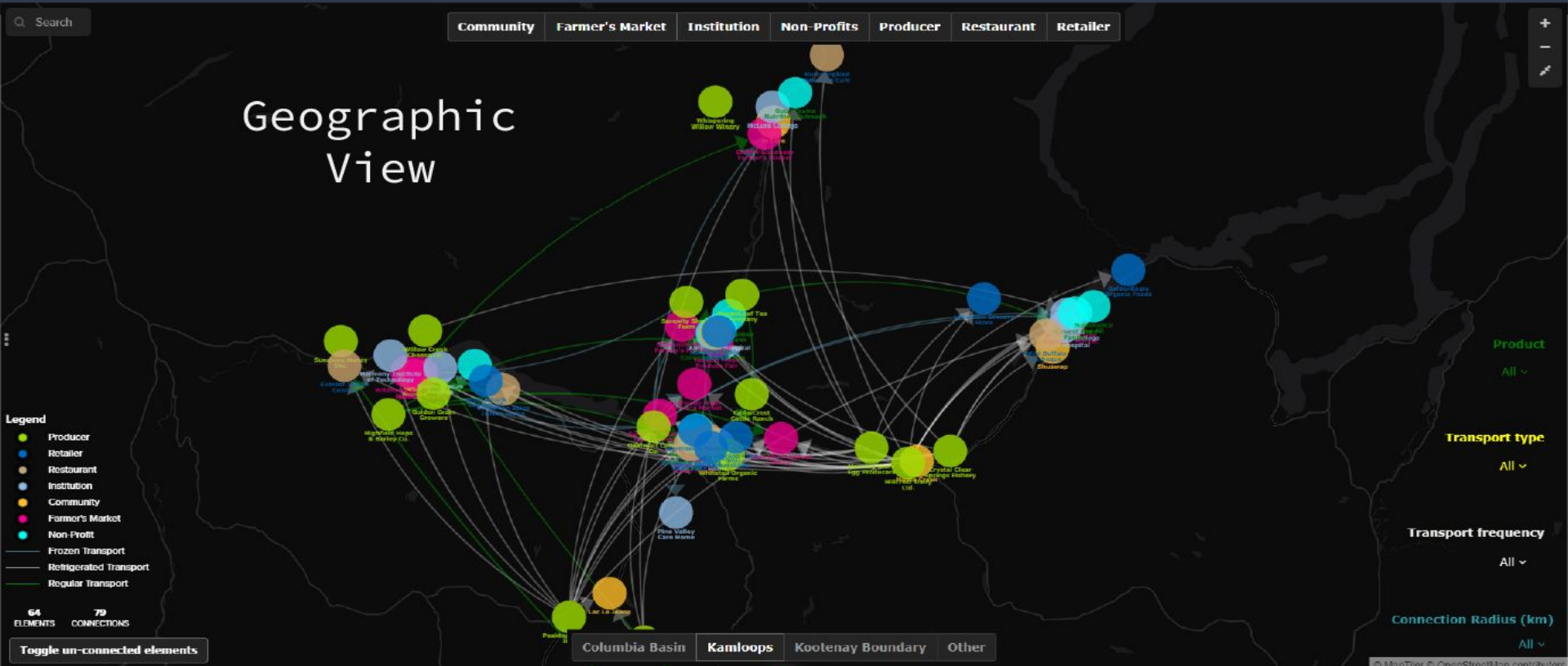
Food recovered in 2023: (and delivered across the region!)

- \$394,177 (**8x** more than what was invested!)
- 160,213 kg GHG diverted

76 cents per \$100,000 of property value 2024

What's the financial impact on waste management?

Collaboration: Supply-Chain Modeling



Collaboration: Selkirk College Summer Intern

Summer Intern through RDKB (Regional District of Kootenay Boundary) focusing on Boundary Food Hub

Survey & outreach, updating database, understanding needs, connecting to food supply chain work

Under supervision of Dr. Sarah-Patricia Breen, Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development

Principle Investigator, Resilience & Alternative Food Networks: Exploring the Roles of BC's Food Hubs

<https://selkirk.ca/about-selkirk/selkirk-innovates/social-innovation/resilience-and-food-systems>

Co-Investigator, Linking alternative agrifood & seafood networks to build food systems resilience

Attach yourself to people who figured out how to do this work

Our Mentor: Sandy Mark

Learning from others and passing on what we learned

Formal & informal collaborations

We aren't in competition



Questions?

Vicki Gee

Cell: (250) 449-8271

vicki@boundarycommunityventures.ca

