



DISTRICT OF SUMMERLAND

AGRICULTURAL PLAN

(JULY 6, 2008)



Time to Decide



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	10
1.1 PURPOSE	10
1.2 THE VISION.....	10
1.3 THE GOALS.....	10
1.4 PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN	11
1.5 PLANNING HORIZON	12
2.0 AGRICULTURE TODAY	13
3.0 STRATEGIES FOR LAND USE	14
3.1 COMPATIBLE STRATEGIC LAND-USE PLAN	14
3.2 TEMPORARY FARM WORKER HOUSING.....	17
3.3 BUFFERS/SETBACKS ADJACENT TO AGRICULTURAL LAND	19
3.4 ZONING FOR CLEAN AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRIAL PARK	21
3.5 PARCEL AMALGAMATION.....	23
3.6 FARM RESIDENTIAL FOOTPRINTS	25
4.0 STRATEGIES FOR WATER USE	27
4.1 WATER SUPPLY/DEMAND RISK ASSESSMENT.....	27
4.2 SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PLAN.....	30
4.3 DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN	32
4.4 IMPROVED WATER USE INFORMATION FOR FARMERS	34
4.5 COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN	37
5.0 STRATEGIES FOR AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT	39
5.1 INCREASED AWARENESS	39
5.2 INCREASED UNDERSTANDING	42
5.3 INCREASED SUPPORT.....	44
6.0 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING FINANCIAL RETURNS	45
6.1 MANAGEMENT SYNDICATES	45
7.0 STRATEGIES FOR BETTER FARMLAND & URBAN/RURAL RELATIONS.....	46
7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLANS.....	46
7.2 STERILE INSECT RELEASE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION	48
8.0 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS.....	50
8.1 PRINCIPLES.....	50
8.2 POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS	53
9.0 SUMMERLAND AGRICULTURAL HISTORY	56
10.0 SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES	57
APPENDIX A – AGRICULTURE TODAY: RESOURCES, ECONOMICS & POLICY	61
A.1 HISTORY	61
A.2 LAND USE.....	61
A.3 WATER.....	62
A.4 CLIMATE AND LAND CAPABILITY.....	62
A.5 SUMMERLAND’S AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY	63
APPENDIX B – AGRICULTURE TODAY: COMMUNITY INTERESTS.....	64
B.1 PUBLIC PROCESS	64
B.2 FIELD TOUR	65
B.3 INTERVIEWS.....	66
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS	67

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The community of Summerland was founded as an agricultural community in 1902 and the importance of agriculture remains. As the population of the community increases, agriculture still plays a central role in its economy and landscape.

The history of agriculture in this area has been varied. Cattle initially was the dominant industry. As the fruit industry matured, there still remained an important dairy and poultry industry. Then, in the early 1980s, estate wineries came into existence.

The citizens of the District of Summerland value agriculture and the agricultural community. Besides its historical significance, they appreciate its role as an important economic contributor to the community, and the ambience and lifestyle that its presence provides. The District is committed to protecting and enhancing agriculture, and ensuring its viability where possible.

Among the key findings in the background study was the prevalence of small farm parcels as a distinguishing feature of agriculture in Summerland. It was also identified that agriculture in Summerland benefits from good soil and climate conditions, and adequate but potentially underdeveloped water resources. The most dominant use of the agricultural landscape is the production of tree fruits, however, significant contributions are made by other sectors including, but not limited to viticulture, plant nurseries, vegetable crops, and even some specialty livestock.

The agricultural industry must be reassured of the sustainability of its soils and supply of water and protection from the urban and rural growth pressure.

Issues and Opportunities

Public processes identified a number of issues in the community relating to agriculture. These included:

- concerns over the availability of land, water, and labour for agricultural production;
- concerns with respect to the financial viability of their industry;
- concerns with respect to boundaries between agricultural and non-agricultural land use;
- issues of awareness, understanding, and support between the agricultural and non-agricultural residents of the District of Summerland.

Participants also identified several potential opportunities for the industry to thrive and grow, including international niche marketing, small scale food processing, development of a centre of excellence for sustainable agriculture and nurturing new agri-food and agricultural ventures, and rural-tourism and wine-tourism.

The role of this plan is to address these issues and opportunities with strategies that are founded in principle, guided by a clear vision and goals, and monitored for success.

Vision and Goals

The vision for agriculture in the District of Summerland is that of an industry that is sustainable both economically and environmentally. Improved cooperation between urban/rural land uses and farming activities is also sought.

The plan is to achieve this objective through the realization of four goals.

1. Creating the environment to foster an economically viable and sustainable industry.
2. Fostering harmony between farmland and urban/rural development.
3. Encouraging participative planning for sustainable agriculture.
4. Creating the environment to foster an environmentally sustainable agriculture.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for the creation of strategies to promote the goals can be summarized as:

1. Recognition of agriculture as the dominant use of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), and support for the integrity and stability of the ALR.
2. Agricultural economic growth is the best way to promote and sustain agriculture in Summerland.
3. The District of Summerland will support farmers in the District with the necessary bylaws, policies, services and infrastructure to promote their success.
4. Residents of the District should be encouraged to learn more about local agriculture and support it.
5. Effective and positive communications with the general public and the agricultural sector should be a priority.



6. Decision makers shall take into consideration all impacts on the agricultural sector.
7. The District of Summerland recognizes the importance of the quality of air, water and soils on agriculture.

Land Use Strategies

Seven strategies were developed with respect to the agricultural land base within the District of Summerland. The issues that each strategy attempts to address or resolve is discussed in brief followed by specific recommendations. The goals that each strategy promotes in realizing the overall vision are discussed along with specific implementation notes and considerations, and finally, a monitoring or success measurement strategy. For land use, the strategies can be summarized as:

1. The creation and adoption of an effective strategic land use plan within the Official Community Plan.
2. Encourage the farming community to construct temporary seasonal accommodation to meet their needs as part of their farm operations.
3. Specific recommendations with respect to the establishment of secondary dwellings on farms within the District.
4. Specific recommendations on the adoption of buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.
5. The zoning of land for the creation of a clean agri-food industrial areas to accommodate agri-food business within the District and foster new forms of agri-business.
6. A policy of encouraging parcel amalgamation within the District to improve the viability of agriculture.
7. The adoption of provincial guidelines with respect to new farm residences on agricultural land.

Water Use Strategies

The plan sets forth five strategies for water use. Collectively these strategies move the District from a state of having a better understanding of threats and risks associated to both the quantity

and quality of water in the District for agriculture, to a state of action in addressing both issues. These strategies can be summarized as follows:

1. The District of Summerland should ensure the long term sustainability of the water system and understand the impact of water shortages on agriculture.
2. The District should periodically review its Watershed Risk Assessment Plan.
3. The District of Summerland should create and periodically up-date a Drought Management Plan.
4. The District of Summerland should advocate best water management practices and education for water use within the community. This should include the creation of a Water Conservation Bylaw.
5. The District of Summerland should maintain and periodically update a community Master Water Plan to ensure the supply and affordability of water for agriculture.

Awareness, Understanding, and Support Strategies

The District's farmers need to feel that the non-farming residents and visitors are aware of the presence and prominence of agriculture in the District, understand it, and support it in their decision processes. Each requires its own distinct strategy.

1. Increased awareness – signage and appropriate materials that clearly communicate the presence and prominence of agriculture to the District.
2. Increased understanding – support of educational opportunities for both residents and visitors to gain a better understanding of agriculture in Summerland.
3. Increased support – process that provides the agricultural community with the confidence that their concerns and recommendations are being heard by local decision makers.

Improved Financial Viability

Ultimately the District is limited in its ability to assure the success of farming within its borders. Global markets, industry concerns beyond the District's control, and individual farm management practices can and do often play a bigger roll in the financial viability of individual farms. Provincial and federal support must be available to ensure the economic viability of the industry.



Improved Urban-Rural Relations and Environmental Stewardship Strategies

Farmers can work to improve relations with their neighbours and protect the environment and the District can assist them in this.

1. Farmers can be encouraged to participate in environmental stewardship programs such as the Canada-British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan.
2. Farmers can implement Beneficial Management Practices.
3. Farmers can employ good agricultural practices.
4. The District recognizes and supports Right to Farm legislation.
5. The District will continue its support of the Sterile Insect Release program.
6. The District will create and enforce buffering provisions within their regulatory bylaws.

Final Recommendations

The role of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is to support, promote and enhance farming in Summerland, provide sound recommendations to Council and provide leadership to the agricultural sector. This Committee should explore opportunities to enhance all sectors of the agricultural industry in Summerland.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Agricultural Plan is to support, promote, and enhance farming within Summerland. It is also expected that the plan will advance public knowledge of the effects of urban activities on normal farming practices, and the potential impacts of farming activities on urban neighbours. This Plan will provide methods and policies which will protect and enhance the urban/rural and farmland interface.

In the Background Report, the history, resources, and economic contribution of the agricultural sector of the District of Summerland were presented. In the Issues and Opportunities Report, the issues and opportunities facing agriculture in the District were discussed. Stakeholders in each issue were also identified and their interests were briefly discussed.

This report sets forth the agricultural plan for the District. The plan is comprised of a series of strategies, which when implemented, should address the issues identified in the previous report and facilitate the opportunities identified.

1.2 THE VISION

To develop a plan that will establish methods, bylaws and policies that will work toward the creation of a sustainable agricultural industry both economically and environmentally.

1.3 THE GOALS

I. An Economically Viable and Sustainable Industry

Develop bylaws and policies which reflect the value that farming has to the community.

II. Harmony between Farming Operations and Urban/Rural Development

Conflicts can arise between farmers and urban/rural development within the District. Activities in urban/rural areas can adversely impact the farming community. Agricultural activities can



generate noise and fumes that can intrude on urban/rural development. Conflicts usually arise out of a lack of understanding. The District needs to foster harmonious relations between the farming community, and urban/rural development.

III. Participative Planning for Sustainable Agriculture

In developing its long-range vision, bylaws and policies the District must be sensitive to the needs of sustainable agriculture. Farmers need to be involved in providing recommendations to assist in developing policies that might impact farming.

IV. Planning for Environmentally Sensitive Agriculture

Environmental sensitivity is valued by both the farming and non-farming residents of the District, and needs to be reflected in planning for agriculture's future in the District.

1.4 PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN

The following are the guiding principles developed for the plan:

1. The dominant use of the land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the District of Summerland will be for a competitive, diverse and flexible agricultural industry. The stability and integrity of the ALR boundary will be supported.
2. Agriculture must be considered an industry. Agricultural economic growth, innovation, diversification and best practices are the best ways to promote the agricultural industry in Summerland.
3. The necessary support, services and infrastructure that are required to promote the success of their agricultural operations should be a primary goal of the District of Summerland.
4. Public education regarding the agricultural industry should be encouraged. This includes an enhanced understanding of farm operations. Local, provincial and federal initiatives should encourage the concept of buying local food products.
5. Effective and positive communication with the general public and the agricultural sector will be a priority.
6. Decision-making will be coordinated in a consultative manner and will consider all potential impacts on the agricultural sector of the District.
7. Protection of soils, water and air are paramount to maintain and enhance the agricultural sector within the community.

1.5 PLANNING HORIZON

Planning for agriculture in the District of Summerland needs to remain current with the other planning processes within the District. The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the key strategic planning document for the District. This agricultural plan will be an addendum to the OCP once adopted by Council. Concurrent with the next revision to the OCP (circa 2010), the District's Agricultural Plan should also be reviewed and revised as necessary.



2.0 AGRICULTURE TODAY

Two reports were assembled to guide the development of this agricultural plan. The first, *Summerland Agriculture Today: Resources, Economics, and Policy*, is a background document which provides an overview of the resources, economics, and policies that are the context of agriculture in the District of Summerland. The key findings of this report can be found in Appendix A - Agriculture Today: Resources, Economics, and Policy.

Of special note, a key finding that differentiates agriculture in Summerland from agriculture in the rest of the Regional District of the Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) is the parcel size of agricultural operations. In the RDOS as a whole, 56% of farming operations are less than 10 acres (4 ha.) in size. Within the District of Summerland however, 78% of farming operations are less than 10 acres in size. Small farms of this size are susceptible to being purchased for uses other than agricultural use, such as rural residences.

The second, *Summerland Agriculture Today: Community Interests*, is a compilation of the community interests in agriculture in the District. It provides a discussion of the issues and opportunities facing the agricultural sector in the District of Summerland as voiced by the citizens of Summerland in public processes. It also briefly discusses issues discovered during a field tour with the Agricultural Advisory Committee, and in interviews in follow-up to public processes. The key findings of this report can be found in Appendix B - Agriculture Today: Community Interests.

3.0 STRATEGIES FOR LAND USE

Intent: Ensure land is available for agricultural use.

3.1 COMPATIBLE STRATEGIC LAND-USE PLAN

3.1.1 Introduction

Competition for land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a prime issue to the agricultural community. Land within the ALR is too often thought of as only one step away from commercial, industrial, or residential development. That step being the removal from the ALR. Members of the farming community feel that they are in competition for land within the ALR for non-farming use.

Strategy:

1. It is therefore recommended that revisions to the District's Official Community Plan be clear and coherent in its land use plan.

The land use plan needs to be more than just lines on a map. All other planning, policies and bylaws must be consistent with the intended use of each parcel of land within the District. Inconsistencies with the overall planning and direction can result in mixed messages being sent to the farmers, developers, and other members of the community at large. This can impact both the availability of land for the farming community, and the expectations of neighbouring land uses.

3.1.2 Goals To Be Achieved

A clear and coherent OCP will positively impact all goals of the agricultural plan.

1. Creation of an urban growth boundary will assure farmers of the protection of farmland. Farmland will not be considered for the District's residential housing needs in the future.
2. Both farmers and surrounding urban areas should be mutually aware of the impact their respective activities can have on their neighbours. Increased public awareness can minimize conflict and promote harmonious relations. Public education includes the use of effective agricultural barriers and buffers.
3. The creation of the effective land use policies within the Official Community Plan will provide a framework for improved cooperation between farmers and urban development.



4. The land use policies can provide an opportunity to strategically plan for environmental issues such as recognition of wildlife corridors, riparian areas and other environmentally sensitive areas.

3.1.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

A sound OCP will positively address the key concerns of the farming community with respect to where farmland is designated. The creation of a coherent, strategic land-use plan will positively address a number of issues identified by the community.

- Competition for Agricultural Land – A clear and coherent land-use plan communicates to the community where land is available for each particular use.
- Encroachment on Agricultural Land – The plan will help address encroachment.
- Degradation of Farm Land - residents will know the future of their neighbourhood and appropriate programs and measures can be encouraged and implemented to prevent degradation.
- Viability of Small Land Parcels for Agricultural Use – A strong land use plan will provide better direction for determining the use of small, marginally viable parcels for agriculture.
- Farmland and Urban/Rural Development Conflict Issues - A strong, well-communicated land use plan sets expectations for residents helping to mitigate conflict.

3.1.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

1. District bylaws including the zoning bylaw need to be reviewed and amended to be consistent with the direction contained in this Plan as well as the policies and objectives contained within the updated Official Community Plan.
1. Where appropriate and necessary, covenants should be required to help protect the farming community. As an example, covenants should be required to ensure that required buffers to separate agricultural lands from other land uses are maintained.
2. All policies and bylaws that pertain to the protection of agriculture lands and assorted businesses need to be effectively communicated to the community.
3. Signage along ALR boundaries should inform residents and prospective purchasers of the proximity to active farm operations. Suggested wording for the ALR signs could be:

FARMING

You are entering an active farm area. Please respect the farming community and their activities.

3.1.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

There are several potential indicators to the success of this strategy which are as follows:

- The monitoring of complaints pertaining to activities along the farmland and urban/rural boundaries.
 - The selling price of raw agricultural lands.
 - The number of ALR exclusion applications located adjacent to the farmland and urban/rural boundaries.
 - The amount of hectares of vacant agricultural lands that are brought back in to agricultural use.
 - The effectiveness of the agricultural buffers.
-



3.2 TEMPORARY FARM WORKER HOUSING

Intent: To minimize conflict from secondary housing on farms within the District of Summerland and minimize the impact of temporary farm worker housing on agricultural lands.

3.2.1 Introduction

Both the farming and non-farming community have expressed concerns about on-farm labour housing and secondary dwellings. In too many instances, old trailers, and other forms of housing initially established for farm labour have become rental accommodations unrelated to the operation of the farm itself. In some instances, these accommodations have also become unsightly. This is one area of potential conflict between farmers and urban development

Strategy:

1. It is recommended that municipal bylaws with respect to temporary farm worker housing (TFWH) on farms, be amended to limit them to bunkhouse-style accommodation.
2. The farming community with the assistance of the Agricultural Advisory Committee can create and maintain an inventory of TFWH. Since the shortage of TFWH occurs during pre-harvest, a list of individual housing after crop harvesting is complete can be made available. One farmer can then rent another farmer's housing to provide accommodation for their workers.
3. TFWH should be defined as housing consisting of individual sleeping areas which may include washroom facilities. Cooking facilities shall be provided in another building central to all the TFWH units.

3.2.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Amending bylaws to limit TFWH on farms as recommended can positively impact several goals.

1. It assures that farmers in the future who do need temporary farm worker housing for their operations will still have the ability to establish this accommodation.
2. It reduces the potential for conflict with neighbours and the broader community, promoting harmonious relations.
3. It improves the sustainability of farming within the District by decreasing the degradation through the urbanization of small rural properties.

3.2.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

The key issue addressed by these bylaw amendments will be the issue of TFWH becoming rental accommodation.

3.2.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

In implementing or amending bylaws with respect to TFWH, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration.

1. Zoning bylaws A1-Agriculture and A2-Agriculture should be edited appropriately to the intent of this strategy. The objective being to mitigate impacts on agricultural land.
2. All other accommodations for seasonal farm labour should be reflected in the municipal bylaws as TFWH (see previous definition).

3.2.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- Current municipal bylaw enforcement should provide a means to both implement and monitor this strategy.
-



3.3 BUFFERS / SETBACKS ADJACENT TO AGRICULTURAL LAND

Intent: To promote effective buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural land to reduce conflicts.

3.3.1 Introduction

Buffers and setbacks between farm and non-farm land uses have been repeatedly cited as a necessity to mitigate conflict. Conflict can be aggravated in either direction. Non-farming residents might take offence to spraying activities or the use of noise devices for warding off wildlife from orchards or vineyards. In the instance of land used for industrial uses, fumes can impact agri-tourism activities, farm workers, and animals on farmland. Vandalism of property and crops is also a concern of the farming community.

New recommended buffer standards have surpassed current Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) recommendations which are often inadequate, expensive and utilize too much land.

The unique agricultural situation in Summerland dictates that not all generalized solutions to buffering issues uniformly apply. For example, chain link fences and deciduous plantings, do little to reduce orchard spray drift where sprays are applied before leafing of shrubs.

Strategies:

1. It is recommended that municipal bylaws need to be implemented and enforced to promote effective buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses. These buffers should be a condition of any new development for non-agricultural use and should be situated on the land designated for non-agricultural use.
2. It is recommended that where application processing legally permits, a covenant under Section 219 of the Land Titles Act be required to be registered against the title of the subject lands noting that development of the property is conditional upon installing and maintaining the required buffer. This covenant should also include a notation that the property borders an active farming area.

3.3.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Creating effective buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural uses for land will help ensure harmonious relations between farmland and urban/rural property owners.

3.3.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

Municipal bylaws shall address the issue of buffering and covenants.

3.3.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

In implementing or amending bylaws with respect to buffers between agricultural land and other uses, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration.

1. The BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands indicated that the most effective buffer combines separation, vegetation and fencing.
2. Buffers designed for new developments bordering agricultural land should be designed by qualified staff or qualified persons. Buffering requirements should include the following criteria:
 - Be a minimum effective height of 4.6 metres (15 feet) and have an effective width of 4.6 metres (15 feet).
 - Include a 1.8 metre high (6 foot) chain link fence (not a wood fence).
 - Not be broken by walkways or driveways.
 - Be an effective barrier to prevent transmission of harmful matter. Examples of an effective barrier include cedar and/or juniper hedges or other dense vertical evergreens. The hedge needs to be centred on the 15 foot width of the buffer to minimize shading and invasive rooting.
3. Development applications where buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural are identified as necessary should be granted only on the establishment of a covenant for the required buffer, its maintenance and the existence of neighbouring farm operations

3.3.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

Over time, there are two primary means of monitoring success with respect to buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.

- Neighbourhood development plans and applications for development should provide a means to measure the development of buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural land.
- Complaints and incidents related to a lack of effective buffers should be mitigated.
- A record of registered covenants with respect to land developments.



3.4 ZONING FOR CLEAN AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRIAL PARK

3.4.1 Introduction

Intent: To create an area within the District to facilitate value-added opportunities, and spin-offs from research and development at PARC and UBCO.

One of the suggestions identified in focus groups and subsequent discussions was the creation of a clean agri-food industrial park. Potential food processors and other agricultural value-added enterprises could benefit with a designated area within the District where they can be assured of clean water, air, and soil, with good access to infrastructure. This type of space can also be utilized for the establishment of new commercial enterprises resulting from research activities at Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre (PARC, commonly referred to as the ‘Research Station’) or from the possibility of an Okanagan College agricultural facility. Summerland is unique as one of the few municipalities in Canada with a research facility such as PARC. PARC along with Okanagan College have tremendous opportunities for the creation of commercial spin-off enterprises.

Strategy:

1. The District consider adding additional lands to one of the District’s existing Industrial Parks for the exclusive use of businesses involved with primary and secondary processing of agricultural products.

3.4.2 Goals To Be Achieved

The establishment of a clean agri-food industrial park will facilitate the goal of economic viability and sustainability for agriculture in Summerland. It also has potential to help address improved economic efficiencies by having like businesses located in one area.

3.4.3 Implementation Notes and Considerations

There are a number of things to consider in the creation of a clean industrial park for agri-food.

1. The park should be located in good proximity to Highway 97 to provide transportation infrastructure while minimizing impacts on the rest of the District. But the location shall be compatible with the goals of the OCP, which states “no commercial ventures along Highway 97”.
2. The selected site should not be adjacent to land uses incompatible with this function.

3.4.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

There are several potential indicators to the success of this strategy.

- Direct indication of the success of the park will be evident through its occupancy.
 - Indirect indications of its contribution to the success of agriculture within the District should be evidenced through the Irrigation Roll and the Water Conservation Officer's database in the form of new commodities and varieties for processing and value added input to the park.
-



Intent: To promote consolidation of farms into larger, more diversified operations.

3.5 PARCEL AMALGAMATION

3.5.1 Introduction

Summerland is very unique in the size of its farm operations. The vast majority are less than 10 acres in size, and grow only one commodity. This presents two challenges to their long-term survival and viability. The first is a lack of scale in economy. The second is an increased exposure to financial risk due to limited ability for commodity diversification.

Strategy:

1. It is recommended that the District encourage the amalgamation of parcels where possible into larger farming operations to increase the long-term viability of agriculture in the District.

This should include a review and streamlining of parcel amalgamation processes and procedures within the District for amalgamations where land is purchased. It should also facilitate land amalgamation through rental or leases.

It should be noted that currently about 40% of farms below 10 acres in size have leased their property to other operators. Leasing is particularly advantageous in that commercial farm operators leasing land are not being forced to bear the debt load and servicing costs that they would through direct ownership. However, leases need to be of significant duration (up to 10 years or more) to provide farmers with the incentive to invest and re-invest in their operations.

3.5.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Larger, more diversified agricultural operations are going to have a better probability of survival over the long-term.

3.5.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

The key issue addressed will be the viability of small parcels.

3.5.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

There are several things to consider in streamlining parcel amalgamation within the District.

1. What has been the experience of landowners in the past decade who have attempted to amalgamate property within the District? Can improvements be made to speed up and streamline this procedure?

2. To facilitate leasing, the Agricultural Advisory Committee may assist by providing a registry of available farmland available for lease.

3.5.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- The number of parcels of agricultural lands that have amalgamated within the District's boundaries.
-



3.6 FARM RESIDENTIAL FOOTPRINTS

3.6.1 Introduction

Intent: To encourage the preservation of farmland within the District for farm use.

As previously discussed, Summerland is very unique in the large number of small farming operations it possesses, typically less than 10 acres. Operations of this size tend to be very vulnerable to acquisition by individuals solely for the purpose of acting as residences and not as farms. There is concern that when this occurs, a farm can be degraded for future use because of the location of construction of a new residence or other buildings on the property.

Strategies:

1. It is recommended that the OCP and the zoning bylaw encourage the establishment of a farm residential footprint (sometimes referred to as a ‘home plate’) for the establishment of residential buildings on farms that is conducive to the future use of the land for farming.
2. Encourage the provincial government to review taxation policies to consider removal of farm status for areas where active farming or minimal farm operations no longer exist. Explore other operations which encourage the establishment of active farm operations

This essentially means encouraging the development of any new residence or building not related to agricultural activities on the property either immediately next to a road, or on a piece of the property not conducive to agriculture such as a rock outcrop.

3.6.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Establishment of a farm site footprint policy should improve the availability of land for agriculture in the District. In the short term, this may take the form of more land for leasing. In the long term, this may take the form of farms available for purchase that maximize the availability of good land for agricultural use.

3.6.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

The key issue if not addressed will be the degradation of farmland.

3.6.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

The “home-plate” guidelines are in the development stage by the Agricultural Land Commission.

3.6.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- The issuance of construction permits and the enforcement of bylaws should provide an indication as to whether a successful policy has been established to encourage the preservation of farmland through a “home plate” policy.
-



4.0 STRATEGIES FOR WATER USE

4.1 WATER SUPPLY / DEMAND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1.1 Introduction

Intent: A better understanding of the risk to the water supply with each new development in the District.

The District of Summerland is responsible for the supply and delivery of safe potable water and administration of its water licenses. Farmers and non-farmers in the District are concerned about the District's water supply and the integrity of its licenses. Since 2003, a fish flow management plan has been implemented. This fish flow plan was based on a 3-year drought event with an expected calculated recurrence of 1 in 67 year period as well as on demand commitments in 2002.

New development within the District means that this management plan is questionable. The agricultural community is concerned about the potential risk of water shortages based on their current water supply situation. Water shortage is a major risk item to orchards and vineyards, as they are very capital intensive and usually require a minimum of five years for cost recovery.

Strategies:

1. It is recommended that the District revisit the watershed risk assessment study and complete the update of the Master Water Plan. The assessment should consider all three threats to supply: natural events such as drought; inadequate infrastructure development; and water source contamination.

4.1.2 Goals To Be Achieved

A comprehensive risk assessment of the water supply will generate consistent policies that encourage farmers to invest in their operations.

The assessment will also benefit the non-agricultural residents of the District as well, supporting better urban-rural relations. Better decisions can be made about all potential new development in the District and the potential increase of risk associated to each of the new developments.

Water meters in Summerland will provide accurate information on water use. This data will assist in determining the effectiveness of the water management practices of the District.

4.1.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

A comprehensive risk assessment and the implementation of water meters will help address the agricultural community's concerns over both the water supply and competition for that water.

4.1.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

1. The assessment should explore a number of scenarios:
 - a. Examine both situations of increased demand with current supply, and new supplies, including the future use of the Okanagan Lake licenses.
 - b. The potential impacts of catastrophic events such as a wildfire and beetle kill and potential increased erosion, and increased risk of flooding within the watersheds.
 - c. The potential impact of climate change on our water system.
 - d. The impact of logging, grazing, mining, and recreational and agricultural activities.
2. The assessment does not need to identify specific new demands for water supply, but what the implications are of different levels of demand with respect to the probability of recurrence of a drought situation.
3. The risk assessment must consider the potential shortfall of 30% in water supply due to commitments in the Trout Creek Water Use Plan, the potential for climate change, and the situation where all Irrigation Roll commitments have to be honoured. In addition, the assessment must consider the impact of water meters and the information that these meters provide to the community.
4. A Drought Management Plan must identify phases of water demand and availability. A well-defined action plan must exist in order to protect farm operations. This Plan must also provide up-to-date water availability records. The Drought Management Plan must be **effectively communicated to the public.**



4.1.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- Has the water system's quantity and quality been protected?
 - Has the Drought Management Plan been effectively communicated to the public?
-

4.2 SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PLAN

Intent: Better management of risks to the water supply in the source watershed.

4.2.1 Introduction

Farmers have concerns about potential risks in the Trout Creek watershed and Aeneas Creek watershed. These risks include forest fires, pine beetle infestation, chemical contamination, and other events that could have ramifications on the water supply in terms of both quantity and quality. Currently, the Trout Creek watershed supplies the vast majority (91%) of the District's water. The risks to contamination within the watershed always exist, and will continue to do so as more activities including industrial activities share in its use. The District must be directly involved in the protection and management of the Trout Creek and Aeneas Creek watersheds.

Strategies:

1. An update of the Watershed Risk Assessment Study be revisited and where appropriate, amended. The plan should identify all potential risks in both watersheds with respect to supply of water and its quality.
2. The District consider developing a watershed management group that includes agricultural representation.

4.2.2 Goals To Be Achieved

All goals of this plan can be positively impacted through an effective water protection plan.

4.2.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

The key issue is to ensure the availability of a safe, secure and dependable water supply. A higher quality water source can minimize water treatment requirements into the future.

4.2.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

1. The HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) approach should be explored as a management strategy towards source water protection. HACCP incorporates periodic risk assessment and a monitoring program.
2. Appropriate provincial, First Nations and regional district agencies must be involved in the watershed management group. They provide essential information that benefits the process, and assists towards development of the Source Water Protection Plan. This group may include, but not be limited to the BC Ministry of Forests, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and the Interior Health Authority.



4.2.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- Summerland's Watershed Risk Assessment Report should be updated and where appropriate, amended.
 - Water quality is also regularly monitored by the District and can provide indicators as to the effectiveness of a good source water protection program. If the HACCP approach is used, it will identify and incorporate a monitoring system built on the identification of critical control points.
-

4.3 DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Intent: Establish a clear operational plan for the event of a multi-year drought affecting the District's water supply.

4.3. Introduction

Farmers of the District are very concerned about their water supply. The District must have an administrative plan to assist staff, farmers and the public to enact strategies that reduce the social and economic risk due to severe water shortage. Though not technically the result of a drought, the situation of 2003 has alerted the District of the necessity to be prepared in the future.

The BC Ministry of Environment has been encouraging Municipalities through grant programs to create Drought Management Plans (DMP). A DMP is a detailed plan that describes the processes required in various stages of potential or actual drought.

Strategies:

1. Develop a comprehensive effective Drought Management Plan.
2. Develop policies and bylaws in a full consultative approach with the farming community that provide effective tools to manage water supply during drought.

The policies and bylaws should be developed in an inclusive and binding environment.

4.3.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Completion of a comprehensive Drought Management Plan

4.3.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

The agricultural community will be better informed, allowing them to make better business decisions. In the event of water shortages, all stakeholders will have their expectations more clearly defined, improving community relations. All parties will have the opportunity to be involved in the development of the Drought Management Plan.

4.3.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

The formulation of the fish flow management plan for Trout Creek provides an example of an inclusive process for the development of a Drought Management Plan. The District should strongly consider using this approach again. Other considerations should include:

1. The development of objective criteria for determining when the District is in a true drought situation.



2. As the phases of water shortage progress toward drought, the water needs of all subscribers to the Irrigation Roll need to be respected. Each subscriber needs to have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process
3. Better management procedures and processes can be considerably less expensive over the long term than costly infrastructure such as reservoir construction.
4. Water metering and the data received by water meters will assist in more accurate water usage and assist in Summerland's water conservation program

4.3.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- Drought Management Plans that are monitored and reviewed every five years.
 - Data from the water metering program support the phases developed in the Drought Management Plan.
 - Periodic review of the allocation amounts and measurements to ensure the Drought Management Plan is accurate.
 - Adoption of the Drought Management Plan and the adoption of new regulations incorporating water allocation measures in times of drought.
-

4.4 IMPROVED WATER USE INFORMATION FOR FARMERS

Intent: Empower farmers to make better decisions about the water resources they have available to them.

4.4.1 Introduction

In 2004, a consultant laid the groundwork for better information management for both the farmers and the District by establishing an initial database to augment the Irrigation Roll. The District also has satellite imagery and a repository of GIS data on soils, agricultural capability, land, and other infrastructure.

The District has begun a water conservation program to improve both agricultural and urban/rural water use efficiency. This includes the installation of water meters for all water users. The District has not, however, set forth any plan as to how data from water conservation is to be used or how data from water metering is to be used.

Strategies:

1. An important element of the water metering program will be public education programs which include best water management policies that remind everyone that water is a precious resource, and that reduce any practices that waste water.
2. The District must clearly identify the purpose of its water management program, and establish a policy that clearly identifies the beneficiaries, as well as identify those who should pay for the program.
3. The District encourages the implementation of irrigation scheduling programs utilizing and augmenting tree fruit industry weather monitoring data stations, water meter data and the Districts other data resources.

Special Note: One of the provisions of the Trout Creek Water Use Plan is assistance in the implementation of irrigation scheduling programs to compensate for an approximately 10% reduction in water availability to irrigation under the plan.

4.4.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Providing farmers with improved information and educational programs to help address all the goals of the agricultural plan. The farmers will have the opportunity to become more participative in solutions to Summerland's water supply concerns. Farmland and urban/rural conflicts can be mitigated in times of tight water supplies as District staff is armed with better data.



4.4.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

A number of issues will be addressed by this strategy. Farmers will have a better assessment of their water needs, which can have impacts on their supply perceptions. They will be in a more empowered state with respect to competition for water in the District. It will impact their long-term financial success due to a better understanding of their use of water and the potential risks to their supply. The District will also have better information for long range planning, which benefits all.

4.4.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

There are a number of things the District could do to implement this strategy.

1. Processes should be implemented that disseminate and annually update the District's data resources with respect to each farming operation. A possible solution would be to use the District website with a map server.
2. Programs need to be developed and implemented that educate farmers and assist them with operational plans that assist them in improving their water use. This will allow the farmers to proactively better use water.
3. The original database constructed by the consultant in 2004 has already been reconstructed into a more operational mode. This work should continue and be augmented with water meter data and be built upon to improve the breadth of data collected, its quality, and the information it provides to the individual farmer and the District.
4. The District should work in partnership with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Land (BC MAL) to implement education programs that improve irrigation efficiency. Specific consideration should be given to programs such as the National Water Supply Expansion Program, either in becoming involved in current projects, or initiating new projects.
5. The District should work with the Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre (PARC) to develop new irrigation technologies and management practices.
6. Retain expertise specific to irrigation management to assist in implementing programs on the ground with the farmers.

7. Explore and adopt ideas from other irrigation districts such as those in southern Alberta, and collaborate on research initiatives of mutual benefit through organizations such as the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association.

4.4.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- The Irrigation Roll database and the water metering database should reflect the impacts of better information for the farming community. Shifts in crops, irrigation technologies and techniques, and metered water use should be evident.
-



4.5 COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Intent: Provide better long-term assurances to the supply and cost of water within the District for agricultural users.

4.5.1 Introduction

Short and long term infrastructure planning is critical to the long-term sustainability of the agricultural industry. The farmers of the District are particularly concerned about the potential costs of water in the future and how this will affect the economic viability of their operations. The District is contemplating major capital expenditures to expand the water supply, and split the distribution and delivery of potable water from water intended for irrigation purposes. Studies are currently still in progress to determine the best value to the residents of the District.

Strategy:

1. It is recommended that a revised Water Master Plan be developed that incorporates agricultural issues, and is clearly communicated to the residents of the District. The recommendations of the Water Master Plan should be continually reviewed and amended when required.

The Watershed Risk Assessment Plan and the Drought Management Plan should be incorporated into the recommendations of the Water Master Plan. This plan should include a detailed financial plan indicating where funding is to be sourced for implementation of the plan, and the impacts on user rates over the next 20 years.

4.5.2 Goals To Be Achieved

The Water Master Plan will describe future water infrastructure requirements. The Plan will increase confidence for all users in their own strategic investment decisions and help to further the economic viability of agriculture in the District.

4.5.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

The key issues that the Water Master Plan will address are the assurance of a water supply and the costs for water.

4.5.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

1. The plan should identify the best value for the residents of the District, and why it is the best value.

2. The financial implications of the potential infrastructure investments for users should be projected over the next 20 years.
3. The district should endeavour if possible to provide relevant expertise that can advise them on strategic direction within their own operations.
4. The plan and resulting infrastructure must respect the 6.0 Imperial gpm/acre flow allocation for irrigation requirements.

4.5.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- The Irrigation Roll and the water metering database should provide an indication of strategic shifts in either commodities, irrigation technology, or techniques in response to the strategic infrastructure plan for water.
-



5.0 STRATEGIES FOR AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT

The citizens of Summerland have expressed a vision for agriculture as a showcase for farmland and urban/rural cooperation. However, the farming community within the District has expressed strong concerns about the non-farming residents' awareness, understanding, and support for agriculture. Each of these must be resolved if the vision is to be fulfilled. Each is a distinct issue that must be addressed by a specific strategy.

5.1 INCREASED AWARENESS

Intent: Increase the awareness and sensitivity of residents and visitors to Summerland's agricultural sector.

5.1.1 Introduction

A lack of awareness of the importance and prevalence of agriculture to the District of Summerland was repeatedly identified as an issue by members of the agricultural community. A lack of awareness is the first condition for potential conflict. Residents, particularly new arrivals, and visitors may be unaware of the existence and prominence of agriculture and agricultural activities in the District. This could result in a high probability of conflict.

Strategy:

1. It is recommended that an agricultural awareness program be developed and implemented by the District in partnership with the industry and provincial agencies to ensure that all residents and visitors are clearly aware of agriculture's presence and prominence within the District.

5.1.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Raising awareness of agriculture's presence within the District is the first step to achieving more harmonious farmland and urban/rural relations.

5.1.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

As previously discussed, the key issue which this strategy should address is the lack of awareness of agriculture and agricultural activities in the District by the public

5.1.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

1. Improved signage at all entrances to the District should be implemented to raise the awareness of the presence of

agriculture to the current residents, and visitors to the District. These should be large, preferably mural sized signs at each entrance to the District.

2. Signage should also be implemented along roadways at all land use.
3. Transitions to agriculture from non-agricultural land uses. These signs should be prominent and clearly inform travelers that they are transitioning into an area where agricultural practices take place.
4. Within the town core, where possible, murals should be encouraged which reflect the agricultural heritage and nature of the District.
5. The District has defined a clear guideline with respect to the exterior design and aesthetics of buildings in the downtown core. Similar guidelines should be developed with respect to previously discussed agricultural signage. All new signage should bear a proud and positive witness to the presence of agriculture.
6. The District's internet homepage should also place a stronger emphasis on the agricultural heritage and presence in the District with appropriate graphics.
7. The District maintains a tourist information center. Appropriate interior signage and brochures should be developed and made available to raise awareness of agriculture as a prominent component of Summerland.
8. The District is resident to some of the best fresh fruit stands in the Okanagan Valley. Where possible, these should be supported by the District.
9. The District should foster more local events, such as commodity specific harvest festivals, which raise the awareness of the commodities grown within the District, and also increase opportunities for rural-tourism.
10. Where possible, local events such as sporting activities, festivals, and public meetings should be encouraged to use local produce and value-added products for refreshment, and that these products be explicitly recognized.
11. The District should work in partnership with organizations within and external to the community where possible to implement this strategy.



5.1.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- The main indicator of success with respect to this strategy is the number of registered complaints to the District about farm operations on an annual basis, particularly by new arrivals to the District. An improved awareness should generate a change in expectations and mitigate these.
 - Agricultural signage in appropriate areas.
 - Increased promotion of agriculture at the Tourist Information Centre.
-

Intent: More harmonious relations between urban and rural residents through an improved understanding of agriculture in the District by non-farming residents and visitors.

5.2 INCREASED UNDERSTANDING

5.2.1 Introduction

As previously discussed, awareness of the presence of agricultural activities does not necessarily imply understanding. Understanding is the product of education.

The provincial Farm Practices Protection Act assures farmers of their rights to conduct the activities required for them to operate. However, residents and visitors not knowledgeable of this Act or lacking understanding in the necessity of certain farm practices will at times be disturbed by these practices. Clarifying the need for these practices and the rights of the farmer involved in advance of any conflict is the preferred approach to improving relations between urban and rural residents.

Strategy:

1. It is recommended that the District in partnership with the agricultural industry and other provincial organizations support educational opportunities to increase understanding among residents of farming and farm practices within the District.

5.2.2 Goals To Be Achieved

The key goal achieved will be improved farmland and urban/rural relations. Increased understanding by urban residents should help reduce conflicts between the farming and non-farming residents of the District.

5.2.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

Summerland's residents and visitors should have a much better understanding of agriculture within the District. They will have a much better opportunity to interact with the farming community and learn about it.

5.2.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

There are a number of things that both the District and the farming community within the District can do to increase the understanding of agriculture.

1. The District should consider moving the Fall Fair to a later date more convenient to the agricultural residents of the District. Many participants in the farming community itself are not available for the fair during the first week of September due to harvesting operations. This limits their ability to interact with



the urban residents and contribute to their understanding of farming in the District.

2. The District should encourage and facilitate open houses on farms at least once a year, perhaps in conjunction with the Fall Fair. This will provide the urban residents with the opportunity to visit a farming operation and become familiar with the practices on farms within the District and their necessity.
3. The District, where applicable, should cooperate with the implementation of the Agriculture in the Classroom program.
4. The District should provide some leadership and direction with respect to the Farmers' Market. Although the Farmers Market allows sale of locally grown food products, the current markets are not effective in engaging the community. The District could ensure that as part of participation in the market, vendors of processed goods are BC FoodSafe certified.
5. Local realtors and land developers should be encouraged to increase their education and understanding of agriculture in Summerland to better inform their clients of the implications of living in an agricultural community.

5.2.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- As with increased awareness, the mitigation of conflicts and complaints with respect to agricultural activities should decline with improved education and understanding.
-

5.3 INCREASED SUPPORT

5.3.1 Introduction

Farmers in the community sense a lack of support by the urban residents for the agricultural sector. They need to feel they have a voice and representation in the planning of the District.

Intent: Provide an improved sense of support for agriculture in the District.

Strategies:

1. The Agricultural Advisory Committee should continue to provide advice to Council on land use issues and economic development matters important to the agri-business community.
2. That a review process of council considerations be implemented which records the advisement and recommendations of the Agricultural Advisory Committee for Council's consideration.
3. The District encourages the creation of a Farmers' Institute as a forum for the agricultural sector.

5.3.2 Goals To Be Achieved

The key goal in which progress will be made is agriculturally inclusive planning. Farmers should have a better sense that they are being heard for the record, and their concerns are being considered in the planning processes within the District.

5.3.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

As previously discussed, the main issue this will address is the perceived lack of support for agriculture in the District.

5.3.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

These strategies should be amended to the terms of reference for the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

5.3.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- Upon future revisions to the Agricultural Plan, the farming community should be included in processes to determine whether it is felt at that time that there has been an improvement in community support for agriculture in Summerland.



6.0 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING FINANCIAL RETURNS

The strategies previously revealed were all within the control and jurisdiction of the District of Summerland. For a number of the issues and opportunities identified in the Issues and Opportunities report, there are strategies beyond the scope of this plan. One is discussed here briefly, and the District is encouraged where possible to encourage these strategies. A strong recurring issue for farmers within the District is their economic viability. The plan has previously set forth strategies to assist them in this regard with respect to land and water availability, and fostering a readily available supply of labour. There are other issues, however, such as international competition, and increases in the costs of fuel, fertilizers, chemicals and other inputs. Farmers need options that can help them meet these challenges.

Intent: Recognize strategies which farmers can implement independent of the District to achieve the goal of economic viability through improved financial returns.

6.1 MANAGEMENT SYNDICATES

Management syndicates or clubs have proven extremely popular and successful in the province of Quebec and other jurisdictions as a means of improving the technical, financial, and environmental performance of farms. A typical syndicate will consist of between 20 and 40 individual farmers, usually from a common commodity group. Each syndicate retains a dedicated full-time agrologist to assist them individually and to facilitate the syndicate. Syndicates have been very successful in collaborating on common marketing and distribution.

Funding and support opportunities are available for the establishment of syndicates within British Columbia through:

- the Canadian Farm Business Management Council
- the Renewal component of the Agricultural Policy Framework
- potentially the Community Futures Development Corporation Okanagan Similkameen.

7.0 STRATEGIES FOR BETTER FARMLAND AND URBAN/ RURAL RELATIONS

Intent: Promote strategies that assist farmers in becoming more environmentally sensitive and help to achieve improved harmonious farmland and urban/rural relations.

7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLANS

7.1.1 Introduction

Under the Agricultural Policy Framework, the province of BC has entered into an agreement with the federal government to encourage voluntary environmental farm planning.

Strategy:

1. It is recommended that the District assist and facilitate farmers in the development of Environmental Farm Plans.

7.1.2 Goals To Be Achieved

Creating and implementing an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) provides the farmer with the opportunity to have an independent assessment done of environmental issues on their farm, including those issues that might affect neighbours, wildlife, and the environment.

7.1.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

Completing and implementing an EFP can help farmers reduce degradation to their land from chemical and other spills, mitigate conflicts with neighbours through reduced noise and fumes, and promote environmental sensitivity.

7.1.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

1. The district should encourage and foster environmental farm planning where possible. A key to this might be in strategy 4.2 Improved Water Use Information for Farmers.
2. The District has recently completed aerial photography and GIS data that could be of benefit to the development of EFPs. Policies should be implemented to ensure that this data is accessible.
3. Work with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and other government agencies, and the BC Agricultural Council to facilitate EFP development.
4. Cooperate with delivery agencies such as the BCFGA.



7.1.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- Currently all data with respect to EFPs is confidential. However, databases are being designed and constructed to monitor the program. The BC Agricultural Council could potentially release aggregate statistics as a means of monitoring success in the District.
-

7.2 STERILE INSECT RELEASE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Intent: Facilitate programs that benefit farmers and are environmentally sensitive.

7.2.1 Introduction

Another means by which urban-rural relations can be improved is through continued participation and cooperation in programs such as the Sterile Insect Release (SIR) program for control of codling moth.

The goal of the Okanagan-Kootenay Sterile Insect Release Program (SIR) is to control codling moth populations to the point where no additional control interventions are required. This coordinated program exists in the Okanagan, Similkameen and Shuswap Valleys.

SIR is a highly successful initiative that applies an environmentally friendly technology to control codling moth populations. The codling moth has been the BC tree fruits' most damaging pest. Previous control methods included the use of azinphos-methyl, now considered a highly toxic spray. This chemical was applied up to five times annually.

Health and environmental concerns are becoming more public and widespread especially with increased urban encroachment into farmland. The SIR has a proven track record for codling moth population reductions but this program demands the cooperation of farmers AND backyard fruit growers and the general public.

Strategy:

1. The District should continue to support the SIR program and its current funding source through the Regional District Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) budgetary process.

7.2.2 Goals To Be Achieved

The SIR program results in the use of fewer pesticides, having a positive effect on the environment. Reduced spraying also mitigates urban-rural conflict and fosters better relations at the urban-rural fringe. The program is also financially beneficial relative to the spraying of pesticides. The program has the potential to differentiate not only Summerland, but also all Okanagan apples in their marketing from competitors.

7.2.3 Issues and Opportunities Addressed

Participating in the SIR program has helped foster some sense of awareness and education about agriculture. It also has proven to assist the economic viability of farmers by decreasing dependence on chemical alternatives.



7.2.4 Implementation Notes and Considerations

The District should continue to support the SIR program and its current funding source through the RDOS budgetary process.

7.2.5 Monitoring and Success Measurement

- The SIR program has its own monitoring.
-

8.0 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Aside from previous recommendations made in this report, what else can the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) do to fulfill the vision for agriculture in the District? There are a number of potential activities that the AAC could take a leadership role in, or assist in facilitating. These activities can assist in achieving several goals and objectives of this plan. They include building better relationships between the urban and rural citizens of the District, improved branding for agricultural produce from the District, and ultimately an improved quality of life for all citizens.

It might even be argued that facilitation of the following activities are very much one of the key roles of an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC).

8.1 PRINCIPLES

Successful execution of activities and events that will help achieve the goals of the Agricultural Plan will require adherence to a guiding set of principles, which include but are not limited to the following.

8.1.1 Inclusivity

Success in today's business world is less about pure competition and more about building relationships that contribute to common goals and values, and in the process creating competitive advantages. There are a number of potential partners to the success of agriculture in the District of Summerland. Where possible, these should be included.

- **Summerland Chamber of Economic Development and Tourism.**
- **UBC Okanagan (UBCO)** – the arrival of UBC in the Okanagan presents a number of opportunities for the agricultural community. The potential for better interaction with the students of agricultural sciences being only the beginning. Other components of UBCO which could be involved include:
 - The Faculty of Management with interests in agri-business, rural-tourism, and agri-food.
 - The Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies with potential interests in rural-tourism through both fine arts and dramatic arts.
- **Arts Community** – The Okanagan is resident to many artists. Engaging this talent pool can be of benefit to both the



agricultural community thriving to create a richer rural-tourism experience, and to the artistic community through new opportunities to demonstrate and exhibit their work.

- **Seniors** – The Okanagan is a retirement destination. Many seniors are interested in maintaining active, involved lifestyles. Providing them with the opportunity to be involved as volunteers or through other arrangements is of benefit to all.
- **Sports groups** – The Okanagan is home to many athletics groups that can benefit from collaboration with the District's agricultural sector.
- **Ethnic and Religious groups** – Involving ethnic and religious communities can also help create a richer environment.
- **Youth** – There are several avenues by which youth can be included. One is through local schools. Others include organizations such as 4-H. Their involvement not only benefits agriculture and the community, but can also represent an excellent personal growth and learning opportunity.

8.1.2 Diversity

Improving on agriculture within the District will also require nurturing diversity.

- Employment and volunteer opportunities need to be developed that span the complete year, and not just the growing or harvesting seasons.
- Opportunities need to be created that appeal to all skill and income levels, and to volunteers.

8.1.3 Grassroots and Organic

The AAC needs to ensure that initiatives aimed at enhancing and promoting agriculture in the District are created and nurtured locally to ensure success.

8.1.4 Environmentally Sensitive

The AAC should help to ensure that activities to enhance and promote agriculture within the District are sensitive to the environment.

8.1.5 Sustainability

The AAC should ensure that activities to enhance and promote agriculture within the District are also sustainable. This means that the governance of these activities is in place to continue these activities into the future.

8.1.6 Promote agriCULTURE

Finally, the AAC needs to ensure that these activities embrace and promote agriculture as a central component of the District's culture. A good local example to the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen is the manner in which the annual Ironman competition is a part of the culture of Penticton and the Okanagan-Similkameen. Every person in Penticton understands the importance of Ironman to the local economy. Likewise, every citizen of Summerland must understand the importance of agriculture to the District's economy.

8.1.6 A Living Document

Agriculture in Summerland is continually changing to meet the needs of a changing marketplace. Over the last few years some changes have included an expansion of the wine industry, silviculture, food processing and agri-tourism. To ensure that the Agricultural Plan remains relevant it must be viewed as a living document. Annual review and recommendations by the Agricultural Advisory Committee to Council must be in the Committee's Terms of Reference. In addition, the AAC should continue to provide information and recommendations to Council on emerging food products.



8.2 POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS

What are some of the potential activities that the District and the AAC could promote or facilitate to bridge the urban and rural citizenry? The following are just a few ideas that the AAC could look at or facilitate with interested community partners.

8.2.1 Bard in the Orchard

Many communities across Canada have come up with creative recreations and venues for Shakespeare's work. Examples include the use of the ruins of a convent in Winnipeg, a park in Calgary, and a beach in Vancouver. The District's AAC could help facilitate the creation of a grassroots Shakespeare production in an orchard or barnyard setting. Perhaps even add a 'Bard-B-Q' featuring local agricultural produce. Careful nurturing with local community partners could eventually lead to a tourism experience in the summer months that fosters a greater appreciation for agriculture in the District. The following links provide examples of what other communities across Canada have done and benefitted from through careful nurturing:

<http://www.shakespeareintheruins.com/>

<http://www.shakespearekelowna.org/>

<http://www.curtainrising.com/shakes/shakefest.html>

<http://www.mtroyal.ca/conservatory/sitp/>

Alternatively, the community of Armstrong has demonstrated similar success with its own Caravan Farm Theatre.

8.2.2 Hamani in the Okanagan

How about a Cherry blossom festival in the Okanagan in the spring, in conjunction with the wine festival? Since the seventh century, one of Japan's major festivals each year in the spring celebrates the Cherry blossom. It is a time of many festivities. Is it possible that the District could expand its tourism base in conjunction with the agricultural community through its own festival?

8.2.3 Harvest Runs

Each year on the first Saturday in November, a running relay takes place from Haney to Harrison. Participation is typically over 3000 runners from throughout western Canada and the US Pacific northwest. The route is predominantly through agricultural land at a time of the year when agricultural activities are minimal, but still providing an opportunity for participants to enjoy a unique scenic experience. Can Summerland do likewise? How about in

conjunction with other communities in the south Okanagan? Aid stations could feature Okanagan farms and produce. Local running clubs could be involved in the organization. Perhaps a 'wine marathon' similar to the Marathon du Medoc in France could also be organized. For successful examples, check out the following links:

<http://www.gatecity.org/AF/index.html>

<http://www.bcathletics.org/H2H/>

<http://www.marathondumedoc.com/index.html>

8.2.4 Bicycling Tour Route

Bicycling routes similar to Circuit de Paysan or the Véloroute des Bleuets in Quebec could also be put in place. These would have several benefits. Besides emphasizing the unique beauty of the District, set routes with appropriate signage would also reduce potential conflicts between tourism and agriculture, such as cyclists passing orchardists in the midst of spraying. The KVR is a prime local example to build upon, but the following links also provide good examples:

<http://www.veloroute-bleuets.qc.ca/index.php?id=&lang=eng>

<http://www.circuitdupaysan.com/indexEng.htm>

8.2.5 The First Noel

Could local farmers be partnered with religious congregations to have services in barns and on farms during the Christmas season? This is an increasingly popular activity across North America. The following provides a prime example:

<http://www.nwscape.com/cgi-bin/nwscape/stmichael/info?pg=album&pn=432&bt=1&sa=&action=W>

How about other religious or ethnic traditions? How can the farming community of Summerland accommodate these and benefit in the process?

8.2.6 Farmers' Festival

There have been previous observations and recommendations in this report in regards to the farmers' markets in Summerland. Consideration could be given to making it more than a 'farmers' market'. A prime example is the San Luis Obispo Farmers' Market in California. This is more correctly described as a weekly



celebration of agriculture and farming that is a complete tourism experience. More information can be found at their website.

<http://www.downtownslo.com/farmers.html>

8.2.7 Farm to Fork Days

The District, through the AAC could also facilitate an annual opportunity for the urban population to visit farms and become more knowledgeable in the farming community and practices within the District. A prime example of this is the annual 'Farm to Fork' days sponsored by the Union des Producteurs Agricole du Quebec. More information can be found in the following link.

http://www.hebdos.net/tgh/archives/articles.asp?article_id=101722

8.2.8 Spring and Fall Wine Festivals

An emphasis on participation in the spring and fall Okanagan wine festival in Summerland with special dinners, festivities, etc. in conjunction with other activities in the region.

8.2.9 Apple Harvest and Variety Tasting Events

A strong focus on apple harvest and variety tasting events in late September such as the UBC apple harvest event.

8.2.10 Improved Community and Visitor Awareness of Orchard and Vineyard Festivities.

Banners declaring apple, grape, and other fruit harvests at municipal entrances, and on main street. Banners should be brightly coloured with appropriate graphics of apples, grape clusters, cherries, other fruits and produce as appropriate, and wine glasses.

9.0 SUMMERLAND AGRICULTURAL HISTORY

Commercial agriculture in the Okanagan Valley had its origins in the sale of small volumes of fruit product to mining ventures (Fairview, Rock Creek). But it did not really become a significant industry in the Okanagan Valley until CPR executives in 1895 agreed to buy all agricultural food product from the Coldstream Ranch near Vernon. Three CPR executives were involved, Van Horne, Clouston and Angus. The Angus and Clouston farm houses still exist in Summerland.

The most significant person to establish the fruit industry in the Okanagan Valley, and especially Summerland, was Lord Shaughnessy. He was recognized for his efforts by becoming the honorary president of British Columbia's Apple Show as well as Canada's National Apple Show. He also founded Summerland, as an agricultural community. Within the first year of Municipal Council, Summerland, in 1907, created a civic holiday to honour Shaughnessy (October 18, 1907).



10.0 SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES

Table 9.0 provides a summary of the proposed strategies for the District’s agricultural plan. The table provides an overview of which strategies affect which goals and within whose jurisdiction the strategy falls. In conjunction with the Agricultural Advisory Committee, strategies should be prioritized and timelines developed for implementation.

Table 9.0 Summary of Strategies and Goals Impacted						
		Goals Impacted				Jurisdiction
	Strategy	Economic Viability and Sustainability	Harmony between Rural and Urban Residents	Participative Planning for Sustainable Agriculture	Planning for Environmentally Sensitive Agriculture	
3.0 Land Use	3.1 A Coherent and Strategic Land-Use Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	District of Summerland
	3.2 Zoning for Temporary Farm Worker Housing	✓	✓		✓	District of Summerland
	3.3 Temporary Farm Worker Housing	✓	✓			District of Summerland / Agricultural Land Commission
	3.4 Buffers Adjacent to Agricultural Land		✓			District of Summerland / Agricultural Land Commission
	3.5 Zoning for Clean Agri-Food Industrial Park	✓			✓	District of Summerland / Agricultural Land Commission
	3.6 Parcel Amalgamation	✓				District of Summerland / Agricultural Land Commission
	3.7 Home Plate	✓				District of Summerland / Agricultural Land Commission



	Strategy	Economic Viability and Sustainability	Harmony between Rural and Urban Residents	Participative Planning for Sustainable Agriculture	Planning for Environmentally Sensitive Agriculture	Jurisdiction
4.0 Water Use	4.1 Water Supply / Demand Risk Assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	District of Summerland / BC Ministry of Environment / BC Ministry of Agricultural and Land
	4.2 Source Water Protection Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	District of Summerland / BC Ministry of Environment / BC Ministry of Agricultural and Land
	4.3 Drought Management Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	District of Summerland / BC Ministry of Environment / BC Ministry of Agricultural and Land
	4.4 Improved Water Use Information for Farmers	✓	✓	✓	✓	District of Summerland / BC Ministry of Environment / BC Ministry of Agricultural and Land
	4.5 Comprehensive Strategic Water Infrastructure Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	District of Summerland / BC Ministry of Environment / BC Ministry of Agricultural and Land
5.0 Awareness, Understanding, and Support	5.1 Increased Awareness		✓			District of Summerland / others
	5.2 Increased Understanding		✓			District of Summerland / others
	5.3 Increased Support		✓			District of Summerland / others

DISTRICT OF SUMMERLAND AGRICULTURAL PLAN

	Strategy	Economic Viability and Sustainability	Harmony between Rural and Urban Residents	Participative Planning for Sustainable Agriculture	Planning for Environmentally Sensitive Agriculture	Jurisdiction
6.0 Improving Viability	6.1 Management Syndicates	√	√		√	Others
7.0 Better Urban-Rural Relations	7.1 Environmental Farm Plans	√	√		√	Others
	7.2 Sterile Insect Release Program	√	√		√	Others

APPENDIX A – AGRICULTURE TODAY: RESOURCES, ECONOMICS AND POLICY

In preparing this report, an inventory was performed of the soils, water, and climactic data for the District. The history of agriculture was also briefly explored. Finally, the economic impacts of the industry on Summerland were assessed. The results confirmed that agriculture is an important component of the District of Summerland. It is the single largest land-based activity in the District. Some of the key information is summarized as follows.

A.1 HISTORY

1. Agriculture in Summerland in various forms has been practiced for thousands of years by natives. Records of farming by non-native in Summerland began in 1846. Agriculture has varied from root crops, cattle, dairy, poultry, pigs and other domestic animals, soft fruits and grapes. Agriculture is a market driven industry which is continually changing. Our community has modified food production to meet these changes

A.2 LAND USE

1. Approximately 35% of the District's total land area is reserved explicitly for agricultural use within the Agricultural Land Reserve.
2. The overwhelming majority (78%) of farming operations are between 0.8 ha and 4 ha (2 and 10 acres) in size, typically growing only one commodity. This contrasts with the Regional District of the Okanagan Similkameen where only 56% of farms are less than 4 ha (10 acres) in size.
3. Of the 3520 irrigated acres in the District, 1568 acres (44.5%) are devoted to tree fruit production, 116.3 (3.3%) to grape production, 78.6 acres (2.2%) to vegetable and other crop production, 32.2 acres (0.9%) to ornamentals, and 693.7 acres (19.7%) to pasture and other uses.
4. The production of apples (1132.7 acres, 32.2%) is the single biggest use of agricultural land in the District. Cherries are the second biggest tree fruit commodity by land area (204.6 acres, 5.7%).
5. Almost 40% of land parcels 2 to 10 acres in size, representing over 950 acres on the irrigation roll is rented or leased to a farm operation other than the property owner.
6. Lease tenures of significant duration need to be encouraged to provide incentives for farming leased land.

A.3 WATER

1. Agriculture is the largest user of water in the District.
2. Summerland's water system was developed primarily to provide sufficient volumes of water for agricultural needs.
3. The major issue is the high variability of crop water demand and water supply.
4. Improvements to Summerland's water system has been and continues to be a concern of farmers.
5. There is a potential for a shortfall in the water supply of almost 30% due to commitments under the Trout Creek Water Use Plan, potential climate change, watershed risk factors, and the fact that not all of the current Irrigation Roll commitment is being utilized.
6. There is no formal Drought Management Plan in the event of a serious and persistent drought.
7. Approximately 90% of Summerland's water is sourced from one watershed (Trout Creek). The remaining water is derived from the Aeneas Watershed. There is no formal source water protection plan in place for these watersheds
8. Climate change and beetle kill in the watersheds may have an impact on the volumes of water required by the agricultural industry at certain times of the year.
9. Water infrastructure planning and improvements must recognize various agricultural requirements. For example some soft fruits need a flow allocation of 6.0 imperial gallons per minute per acre (7.2 US gallons per minute per acre).

A.4 CLIMATE AND LAND CAPABILITY

1. Summerland has an excellent climate for growing agricultural crops, especially tree fruits. Its one deficiency is a moisture deficit during the growing season that makes a reliable water source an absolute necessity.
2. The dominant agricultural land capability in the District of Summerland is Class 3. With irrigation and good management, it is very capable of supporting a wide variety of tree fruits and other crops.



A.5 SUMMERLAND'S AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

1. The agricultural sector in Summerland supports over 300 farm families and provides approximately 400 full time equivalent jobs to residents of the District with a payroll of \$25 million.
2. With annual revenues of approximately \$10.8 million, tree fruits represent the biggest single source of income in the District.
3. Currently cherries generate the highest returns of all the tree fruit crops on a per acre basis. They generate 32% of the tree fruit revenue for the District on 5.7% of the irrigated land base. In contrast, apples generate 54% of the tree fruit revenue on 32.2% of the irrigated land base. Historically this percentage has varied widely. At one time cattle dominated our community's agriculture, as did the poultry industry.
4. Currently the market for produce from the District is predominantly as fresh fruit with limited distribution options.
5. The presence of PARC has allowed farmers in the District to be very progressive in adopting new varieties and technology, allowing them to take advantage of niche markets.
6. Farm expenses for inputs and labour can be expected to exceed \$5.2 million per year.
7. Infrastructure investment by the tree fruit industry, vegetable, grape, and ornamental growers in Summerland is conservatively estimated to be \$27.2 million.
8. Agri-tourism has been one of Summerland's fastest growing industries. The wine industry clearly hosts the largest number of tourists annually. For example, Sumac Ridge Winery attracts almost four times as many tourists as does the Kettle Valley Steam Railway. Agricultural and wine tourism within the District creates 80 jobs alone with \$4.7 million in wages and benefits.

APPENDIX B – AGRICULTURE TODAY: COMMUNITY INTERESTS

B.1 PUBLIC PROCESS

Several focus group sessions and an open house were held to determine the concerns of the citizens of Summerland with respect to local agriculture and where there might be opportunities to strengthen the industry. Their concerns can be summarized as follows.

1. Land for agricultural use, including:

- Competition for other uses such as removal from the ALR, speculation and recreation
- Encroachment
- Degradation
- Viability of small parcels

2. Water for agricultural use, including:

- Availability
- Competition for other uses
- Affordability
- Quality

3. Economic viability, including:

- A shortage of seasonal labour availability.
- A concern for farm labour safety and liability.
- Issues with respect to temporary farm worker housing and accommodation.
- A lack of options with respect to marketing and distribution infrastructure.
- Challenging returns and financial viability.
- Potential municipal restrictions and regulations.

4. Community awareness, understanding, and support, including:

- A general perception that urban residents and visitors are generally unaware of Summerland's agricultural sector, and economic prominence.
- A perceived lack of understanding by urban residents and visitors as to how agriculture works.
- A feeling of alienation and lack of support in the municipal planning processes within the District of Summerland.



5. Farmland and Urban/Rural conflict issues, including:

- Insufficient buffers between agriculture and other land uses.
- The effects of non-agricultural neighbours' activities on farm land and agriculture.
- Agricultural noise and odours.

6. Environmental and wildlife issues, including:

- Deer fencing.
- Potential impacts of climate change on local agriculture.

7. Opportunities to improve and strengthen agriculture:

- Improved farmers' market to boost local awareness and understanding.
- Niche market development and branding.
- A Centre of Excellence for sustainable agriculture and agri-food.
- Increased visual presence supporting agriculture within the District.

B.2 FIELD TOUR

A field tour was also conducted with the Agricultural Advisory Committee to view issues and concerns. Issues witnessed during the field tour include:

- A lack of buffers between incompatible land uses.
- Poorly located infrastructure adversely affecting farm security.
- Fumes from industrial operations affecting agriculture operations.
- Examples of small land parcels (< 2 acres) being developed inappropriately to surrounding uses.
- Examples of hobby farming and agricultural land being used for residential purposes.
- Examples of farm labour housing becoming rental accommodation.
- Degradation of farmland.

The tour also provided an opportunity to witness examples of opportunities that local farmers had developed, including:

- International niche marketing for an agricultural commodity (late cherries).
- Small scale niche food processing.
- Agri-tourism and wine tourism.

B.3 INTERVIEWS

Interviews with a number of individuals confirmed many of the issues brought forth in the field tour and during the public process. One group not heard from in other processes, however, were small-scale food processors. They expressed several concerns, including:

- The regulatory environment under which they operate.
- Concerns over small-scale food processors without proper facilities, operating licences, training, or certification.
- A lack of good marketing opportunities for small-scale processors.



GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AAC	Agricultural Advisory Committee
AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
APF	Agricultural Policy Framework
BCFGA	BC Fruit Growers Association
BC MAL	BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
EFP	Environmental Farm Plan
FPPA	Farm Practices Protection Act
OCP	Official Community Plan
PARC	Pacific Agri-Food Research Station
RDOS	Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen