

Maple Ridge Agricultural Plan

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Prepared by Zbeetnoff Agro-Environmental Consulting
and
Quadra Planning Consultants
in collaboration with
The Maple Ridge Agricultural Advisory Committee



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A Long Term Vision for Agriculture in Maple Ridge

A key objective of the Agricultural Plan process was to develop a vision for agriculture in Maple Ridge. Based on consultations with area farmers and other stakeholders, a vision for the Year 2030 for Maple Ridge agriculture has been crafted to guide the planning process.

The Vision has four parts:

Sustainable agriculture is vibrant in Maple Ridge, making a vital contribution to the District's economy, health, environmental attributes, and quality of life.

Sustainable agriculture will possess three main characteristics that make the statement possible: farm profitability creating economic viability, environmental stewardship resulting in ecological soundness, and social justice - prosperity for all participants in the system.

Diverse agricultural activity occurs on farms of all sizes and uses many channels to distribute agricultural products and services to the consumer public.

This statement envisions all scales of farming activity in Maple Ridge producing a diversity of products and services using a range of business models from conventional full-time farming to part-time, smaller scale and community based farming. It also recognizes that it is not a choice of one type of farming over another. It is very possible that more than one business model will occur on a property.

Sustainable farming engages local residents, attracts new entrants, and takes profitable advantage of local marketing opportunities.

Sustainable farming will be characterized by the creation of a resilient food production system in the community, providing food security (see Glossary) and beneficial agricultural land (see Glossary) use in a variety of ways ranging from backyard gardening to community supported agriculture to commercial ventures. In particular, agriculture will attract and support new and young entrepreneurs.

The agricultural sector is fully supported by the community.

The key element of this statement is that the community will assist in protecting agriculture, providing key agricultural infrastructure and protecting the resource base to ensure that the conditions for working agriculture are maintained and enhanced. Most importantly, community demand for local agricultural products and services will be strong and a well-developed local storage, handling, distribution, processing, and marketing infrastructure is the cornerstone of the local food system.

1.0 Introduction

This Agricultural Plan was funded in part by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program¹. This funding assisted the District of Maple Ridge in commissioning Zbeetnoff Agro-Environmental Consulting and Quadra Planning Consultants to produce this Agricultural Plan. The purpose of the plan is to assist with the implementation of agricultural policies contained in the municipality's Official Community Plan (OCP).

The Terms of Reference for the work state the purpose of the Plan is to "...provide an overview of local agriculture, identify opportunities, and recommend strategies to support and encourage agriculture."

This Agricultural Plan was developed through a 3-step process. It provides recommendations and strategies for pursuing actions identified and further explored in workshops held with agricultural producers and other stakeholders in the winter of 2008-2009. These steps are listed below.

1. Situational Analysis: 2008 Update
2. Discussion of Issues, Preferred Options and Recommended Actions pertaining to the Maple Ridge Agricultural Planning Process: May 2009
3. Maple Ridge Agricultural Plan (Draft)

A Public Open House was held on July 27, 2009 at the Municipal Offices to review and receive comments on the Draft Agricultural Plan. Approximately 70 people attended the Open House and 22 written responses were received. The majority of those who responded, by about a 2 to 1 ratio, were in support of the Plan. The Agricultural Advisory Committee met and reviewed the responses and incorporated some changes into the Plan.

All members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee are recognized for their valuable contributions in the preparation of this Plan. They include:

- Candace Gordon, Community at Large, Chair
- Councillor Linda King, Council Liaison
- Councillor Cheryl Ashlie, Council Liaison
- Lorraine Bates, Agricultural Fair Board
- Christian Cowley, Community at Large, Vice Chair
- Margaret Daskis, Maple Ridge Representative to the Metro Vancouver (see Glossary) Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Heather Laity, Non-Food Producing Agricultural Sector
- Tony Pellet, Agricultural Land Commission
- Steve Pelton, Economic Advisory Committee
- Steve Wynnyk, Food Producing Agricultural Sector
- Chris Zabek, Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
- Matt Buchanan, Haney Farmers Market

¹ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is pleased to participate in the production of this publication. AAFC is committed to working with our industry partners and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC to increase public awareness of the importance of the agriculture and agri-food industry to Canada. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the District of Maple Ridge and not necessarily AAFC's.

- Paula Panek, Haney Farmers Market
- Kerry Davison, Non-Food Producing Agricultural Sector
- Kevin Davison, Maple Ridge Representative to the Metro Vancouver AAC
- Matthew Laity, Food Production Sector
- Jo Anne ten Brink, Community at Large
- Diana Hall, Staff Liaison, Planning Department, Maple Ridge

In addition, members of the community made themselves available for interviews that provided insight into agriculture challenges and opportunities in Maple Ridge. The Committee would also like to acknowledge the valuable assistance provided by Jane Pickering and Christine Carter of the Maple Ridge Planning Department.

2.0 Key Highlights of Maple Ridge Agriculture

2.1 Size of the Agricultural Land Base

- Total land area in the Agricultural Land Reserve is 3,848.9 ha (9,509 acres) or 15% of Maple Ridge's total area.

2.2 Use of the Agricultural Land Base

- In 2005, there were 213 farms in Maple Ridge
- The area of farms in Maple Ridge in 2005 was 1871 ha (4,752 acres)
- 73.3% of the farming area is in the Agricultural Land Reserve and 26.7% is outside the Agricultural Land Reserve
- By area, 34.5% of the Agricultural Land Reserve has farm class tax assessment status
- One quarter (25.8%) of the Agricultural Land Reserve is forested
- 28.9% of the Agricultural Land Reserve is used to produce hay/pasture, often with horses
- 33% of the Agricultural Land Reserve is used for rural residential purposes.

2.3 Agricultural Economic and Employment Contribution

- In 2008, Maple Ridge agriculture generated at least \$20 million in gross farm receipts, some \$14 million lower than 2005, due to the closure of a major greenhouse operation
- In 2008, Maple Ridge farmers paid for 9,400 weeks of agricultural labour.

2.4 Revenue Characteristics of Census Farmers

- The Maple Ridge agricultural sector is comprised primarily of operators with part-time levels of farm income
- In 2005, about 79% of farm operators grossed less than \$25,000 annually
- Agro-tourism is playing an increasingly important role.

2.5 Quality of the Resource Base

- Ninety percent of the Maple Ridge Agricultural Land Reserve lands are classed as prime farmland (improved land capability classes 1, 2, and 3)
- Maple Ridge has a higher proportion of soils that are more complex to manage, due primarily to very low permeability (impervious sub soils), restricted drainage (due to low permeability or location in un-dyked lowland areas), low moisture holding capacity where the surface soil is coarse textured (gravely/sandy), and topography
- Access to water is an issue where the access to groundwater for irrigation is unreliable
- Drainage and flood control are significant issues in the Northwest and Albion Flats areas of the agricultural lowland of Maple Ridge.

2.6 Lot Use and Farm Size Distribution

- In 2005, over 93% of Maple Ridge farms were less than 28 ha (70 acres)
- Farm size in Maple Ridge averages 9.0 ha (23 acres)
- A significant proportion of Maple Ridge farms raise various types of domestic and specialty animals
- Tame/seeded and natural pasture together accounted for about 33% of the farm area in Maple Ridge
- Crops are grown on only 28.7% of the farming area.

2.7 Farm Investment

- The “average” Maple Ridge farm operator had a farm capital investment of about \$1,000,000.

3.0 Findings of Investigations

The information generated in the planning process has directed the content of the Agricultural Plan.

3.1 Key Findings of the Situational Analysis: 2008 Update

This Situational Analysis has revealed that the Maple Ridge agricultural sector wishes to see a concerted effort to protect, enhance, and promote agriculture in the District. There is an expectation that traditional farming models will not be as applicable in the future and that alternative models with new and multiple objectives should be pursued. There are individuals within the Maple Ridge agricultural sector who see a need for changes in how the agricultural sector currently interacts with the community and are embracing new emerging food system options.

Key observations emerged from sector consultations that will guide the agricultural planning process. Close proximity to a large urban population with increasing demand for local food and agricultural products is the biggest strength of Maple Ridge agriculture. As such, there is considerable opportunity to develop markets for a diverse range of high quality products that are fresher, safer, and healthier by virtue of being local.

There was overall optimism identified during the consultation process that food trends could be translated into profitable business opportunities regardless of the constraints posed by parcel size, fragmentation of the land base, or resource characteristics. These proponents include both established farmers and also relatively unseasoned operators with post-secondary educations, new ideas and substantial amounts of capital who are just starting out. However, these new entrepreneurs often lack basic agricultural knowledge and all farmers would have a greater prospect of success with targeted assistance in creating the infrastructure.

The agriculture sector faces significant threats from deteriorating agricultural infrastructure (such as gaps in the local marketing system and inadequate drainage and flood control), loss of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, and a declining knowledge base about agriculture. As such, there are gaps in providing the necessary conditions for working agriculture focusing on the local food economy.

3.2 Key Findings of “Discussion of Issues and Preferred Options and Recommended Actions Pertaining to the Maple Ridge Agricultural Planning Process – May 2009”

This consisted of the prioritization of the key issues likely to be addressed in the Agricultural Plan and development of a vision for Maple Ridge agriculture. Participants also identified preferred outcomes.

3.2.1 Key Issues

The key issues identified through the consultation process include the following:

- Loss of the agricultural land base
- Deterioration of the agricultural infrastructure
- Difficulty in gaining access to agricultural land

- Limits to the agricultural knowledge base of farmers
- Limits to the agricultural knowledge base of the consumer public
- Gaps in the local distribution and marketing system
- Gaps in the local food system infrastructure
- Limits to the diversity in agricultural land use
- Discord in the agriculture-residential interface
- Impact of agriculture on the environment
- Conflicts between agricultural land use and wildlife
- Inconsistent regulation of agricultural areas
- Land use bylaws may be too restrictive on agricultural land with respect to setbacks, lot coverage, or accessory buildings.

These issues are summarized in greater detail in Section 5.0.

3.3 Purpose of the Agricultural Plan

The Maple Ridge Agricultural Plan transforms the vision for agriculture and the issues into:

- A statement of goals of the Agricultural Plan to address the key issues
- Recommended actions to achieve the goals
- A timeframe for implementing actions and their relative priority
- Agent(s) with responsibility to implement the actions
- Recognition of the need for performance indicators to measure progress of the Agricultural Plan.

4.0 Planning Framework

The Agricultural Plan is guided by the policies and bylaws of Maple Ridge and the direction received during the stakeholder consultations in the community. The Official Community Plan designates land uses in the District including agricultural land.

4.1 Agricultural Principles and Policies of the Official Community Plan

The principles and policies for agriculture in Maple Ridge are articulated in the Official Community Plan.¹ Specifically, the Official Community Plan has adopted principles to protect and enhance agriculture in the community and devised broad policies to assist in meeting that goal.

- **Principle 1:** Protection of agricultural lands is considered a strong element of protecting environmental values.
- **Principle 2:** Agriculture is an important part of the community's character and economy. Citizens value methods to enhance and protect a diversity of agriculture in Maple Ridge.
- **Principle 3:** A comprehensive assessment of the Agricultural Land Reserve is important to ensure compatibility between municipal objectives and the objectives of the GVRD (see Glossary) (Metro Vancouver) and the Agricultural Land Commission.
- **Principle 24:** The community recognizes the environmental contribution made by lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Section 6.2 of the Official Community Plan² highlights an agricultural strategy that the District of Maple Ridge intends to pursue. The strategy is based on Maple Ridge pursuing:

- a) agricultural economic development, and
- b) sustainable agriculture through the following policies

- **Policy 6-5: Collaborate with other agencies**, such as the Agricultural Land Commission, BCMAL (British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands), and GVRD (Metro Vancouver), to promote and foster agriculture.
- **Policy 6-6: Develop an Agricultural Plan** that:
 - a) maintains an inventory of local agricultural products and agricultural land use,
 - b) develops and maintains a database of farm businesses and operations,
 - c) promotes leasing opportunities of agricultural land,
 - d) promotes agricultural heritage initiatives,
 - e) identifies appropriate land uses within the agricultural areas and at the urban-rural interface, promotes urban agriculture,
 - f) recognizes the positive role that agricultural lands have on the environment,
 - g) identifies mechanisms to assist farm operators and to protect agricultural lands (such as creation of trusts, endowments, life-leases,

¹http://www.mapleridge.org/assets/Default/Planning/OCP/pdfs/1.0_community_context.pdf

² http://www.mapleridge.org/assets/Default/Planning/OCP/pdfs/6.0_employment.pdf

- h) includes an assessment of the agricultural land base, and
 - i) develops Development Permit area guidelines to direct non-agricultural development at the urban-rural interface.
- **Policy 6-7: Promote sustainable agriculture and consider the inclusion of agriculture in the District’s Economic Development Strategy** by:
 - a) increasing public awareness of farming values and practices,
 - b) emphasizing the local and regional importance of agriculture,
 - c) emphasizing the importance of preserving and supporting access to locally grown food,
 - d) encouraging farmers to implement Environmental Farm Plans, and
 - e) emphasizing the importance of agricultural land in the District’s social, economic, and environmental values.
 - **Policy 6-8: Work cooperatively with senior levels of government and other agencies to promote agricultural business opportunities** by:
 - a) aligning land use bylaws to permit supportive non-farm uses such as agro-tourism, bed and breakfast, and on-farm sale,
 - b) assisting agricultural landowners to identify and develop agricultural opportunities, such as value-added, agro-tourism, bed and breakfast, recreational,
 - c) identifying and encouraging access by agricultural landowners to agricultural programs,
 - d) promoting the demand for, and sale of, local agricultural products within the community, such as farmers’ markets, on-farm marketing, District food and plant material procurement policies, and
 - e) Developing a small lot agriculture initiative tailored to Maple Ridge conditions.
 - **Policy 6-9: Support the policies and regulations of the ALC and the Farm Practices Review Act** in its land uses and review its bylaws affecting farmland and farm operations for consistency with provincial acts, regulations and guidelines.
 - **Policy 6-10: Strive to maintain its agricultural land base in Maple Ridge** through ...
 - a) establishing a distinct separation between rural and urban designated areas,
 - b) designating all lands outside of the Urban Area Boundary that are within the Agricultural Land Reserve as Agriculture,
 - c) establishment of an Agricultural Advisory Committee, and
 - d) striving for a balance between farming activity and conservation lands.
 - **Policy 6-11: Review policies and regulations** to support and encourage small lot agriculture.
 - **Policy 6-12: Protect the productivity of its agricultural land** by
 - a) adopting a “positive benefit to agriculture” guiding principle in making land use decisions affecting agriculture,
 - b) requiring agricultural impact assessments and groundwater impact assessment of non-farm development and infrastructure projects and identifying measures to off-set impacts to agricultural capability,
 - c) preserving larger farm units by using buffers (see Glossary, topographic features, watercourses, ditching, fencing, or reduced residential densities on properties adjacent to agricultural land,

- d) discouraging subdivision of agricultural land into smaller parcels except where positive benefits to agriculture can be demonstrated,
 - e) reinforcing the concept that the Agricultural Land Reserve is intended for agriculture by increasing the minimum lot size for Agricultural Land Reserve properties that are zoned rural residential, and
 - f) encouraging the amalgamation of smaller parcels of farmland into larger parcels.
- **Policy 6-13: Develop Development Permit Area Guidelines for the protection of farming to:**
 - a) reduce impacts on farmland and maintain compatibility between farm and non-farm uses,
 - b) guide the form and character of future adjacent non-farm development, and
 - c) place conditions on title to inform non-farming rural residents of normal incidents encountered when living in an active agricultural area.
 - **Policy 6-14: Work with the Agricultural Land Commission** to advance community services related to proposed parks in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

4.2 The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)

The agricultural planning process has been guided by the Agricultural Advisory Committee. This Committee is appointed by Council for the purpose of advising Council on agricultural matters and undertaking and providing support for such activities as benefit and provide for the advancement of agricultural activities in the District. The duties of the AAC include:

- a) Develop and implement educational and public awareness programs related to agriculture in the District;
- b) Support projects that promote agriculture; and
- c) Make recommendations on agricultural policies and advise Council on policy issues relating to agricultural land and appropriate land uses in agricultural areas.

4.3 Guiding Principles Emerging from Agricultural Planning Process

In light of the issues that emerged from the workshops and consultations, several guiding principles have been articulated to direct the agricultural plan and to assist with implementing the Long Term Vision for Agriculture as identified through the agricultural planning process. They are also consistent with the District's OCP and principles and policies identified above. These guiding principles are:

- Protection of the agricultural land base
- Support for regional drainage and flood control infrastructure to ensure that agricultural capability is realized
- District commitment to regulatory reform to promote working agriculture
- Community support for agriculture.
-

These principles convey a need for active community participation in protecting and enhancing agriculture in Maple Ridge. The principles also identify a requirement for direct involvement of the District to ensure that the ability to perform agriculture is re-established and sustained. Finally, there is a challenge to farmers to demonstrate through their efforts and actions that support for agriculture is worthwhile.

5.0 Agricultural Plan Recommendations – Action Framework

The sustainability and future viability of agriculture in the District of Maple Ridge is a shared responsibility. The District, through its Official Community Plan and various bylaws plays a strong role in some key areas related to the goals of the Agricultural Plan. In particular, through its OCP, the District can help protect the resource base upon which agriculture depends. It can also assist with facilitating a “sustainable agriculture” culture that benefits the entire community by protecting the resource base, furthering economic viability, creating employment, and enhancing the rural character and environmental attributes of the municipality. While the District can play an integral part in the sustainability of agriculture, the community also faces external factors which it does not have control over. These include regional growth pressures from the adjacent urban community, agricultural commodity markets, and senior level government policies. Some issues that affect agriculture are a result of historical settlement patterns and land use, such as small lots, Agricultural Land Reserve boundaries, water drainage, and flood control boundaries.

Despite these challenges, agriculture continues to be an economic driver in the District. It is evident through its policies and bylaws that the District values agriculture and the role it plays in the community. Given its size and resources available to it, the District has a limited ability to initiate new programs or projects. However, the District can act as a catalyst to initiate discussions, explore opportunities, and work with other partners and interests in implementing the Agricultural Plan.

The following recommendations are meant to provide direction to the District of Maple Ridge in implementing the Agricultural Plan. In some instances, the District will play a leading role, in others a supporting role. More detail is provided in Appendix Table 1.

5.1 Issue 1: Difficulty in Gaining Access to Underutilized Agricultural Land

- Absentee landlords
- Agricultural land held in idle state
- Landless operators unable to find land to farm
- High land cost restricts access.

Goal 1: Increase Access to Underutilized Agricultural Land

There is interest in initiatives to encourage non-farming land owners to make idle land available to farmers or to start farming it themselves. Of prime interest is the potential to re-emphasize the role of agriculture in the Agricultural Land Reserve and to remove some of the perception that the Agricultural Land Reserve is a land reserve for development in the District.

Recommendations

- a) Develop a strategy to increase landowner awareness of farmland leasing options, taxation benefits, and community demand for local production
- b) Create a database of farmland available for leasing, including a database maintenance strategy
- c) Develop access to materials on lease/rental terms and sample agreements, possibly website delivered
- d) Create educational materials for agricultural property owners regarding stewardship of agricultural land

- e) Through various workshops and electronic media, initiate discussion on the role of small lot property owners in enhancing local agriculture in the District (gaining access to land, pooling of small lots, rent calculator, lessee responsibilities)
- f) Identify and promote opportunities for development of urban agriculture.

5.2 Issue 2: Gaps in the Knowledge Base of Farmers

- Farm operators are aging rapidly
- Most established farmers not taking advantage of new trends
- Aspiring and new farmers lack farming knowledge
- The challenges of agricultural sustainability not understood by farmers
- Appropriate local extension services (See Glossary) not available.

Goal 2: Improve the Agricultural Knowledge Base of Farmers

There is a core of entrepreneurs attracted to the concept and economic potential of a local food system providing safe food in a sustainable manner. These people crave agricultural knowledge. The potential payback of agricultural extension services geared toward this market is tremendous.

Recommendations

- a) Partner with farmers to create apprenticeship opportunities and mentorships, and to attract workers to agriculture in the area
- b) Pursue options and opportunities to provide a hands-on training ground for aspiring farmers
- c) Engage high schools and post-secondary institutions in local farmer training initiatives
- d) Investigate innovative ways aspiring new farmers without land may be encouraged to access agricultural land currently not in production
- e) Through various workshops and electronic media, initiate information exchange on small lot agriculture (production techniques, organic, equipment, pest management)
- f) Develop information sharing and exchange networks and coalitions with like-minded groups in other areas
- g) Create a cross-commodity Farmers Institute (see Glossary) to coordinate and implement the knowledge base initiatives identified in this Agricultural Plan
- h) Develop awareness of educational initiatives in the local community.

5.3 Issue 3: Gaps in the Knowledge Base of the Consumer Public

- Consumer public unaware of where much of its food comes from or how it is produced
- The challenges of agricultural sustainability not understood by the general public
- Consumer public not fully aware of the quality of locally grown products
- Consumer purchasing decisions are not being connected to climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, food security
- Benefit of supporting local farmers not appreciated
- There are limited channels to engage the local consumer.

Goal 3: Improve the Agricultural Knowledge Base of the Consumer Public

Education of the consumer at all levels and through all channels is critical to successfully developing the market for a local food system. People in the local food business are the most attuned to food trends and should be partnered with to meet common food security goals. Direct sales and farmers' market producers already recognize that the market appeal of local products will be found in the marketing of the taste, smell, colour, shape, and story of growing local products, attuned to local preferences. Agricultural businesses and agro-tourism should be highlighted through the District's website and publications and agriculture should be celebrated in the community.

Recommendations

- a) Develop an inventory of local agricultural land use and agricultural products produced
- b) Create newspaper slot highlighting farming, seasonal recipes, farmer direct markets
- c) Encourage retailers to advertise and identify locally produced and seasonal products
- d) Partner with schools and the School District to communicate information about farming
- e) Create more hands-on displays at District Fair
- f) Host a "Taste of Maple Ridge" event annually
- g) Engage local chefs to partner in local food promotion
- h) Partner with schools to develop agricultural curriculum, including coordinating with the Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation and the School Gardens project
- i) Report on Agricultural Plan completion in the media
- j) Report regularly in the media on progress and issues relating to implementing the Agricultural Plan
- k) Provide continued support for the Haney Farmers Market.

5.4 Issue 4: Gaps in the Local Distribution and Marketing System

- Limited number of local channels of food distribution and marketing
- Infrastructure to preserve food quality in the local system is missing
- Sectors of the agricultural community have not developed linkages to support one another
- Farmers are not organized to coordinate actions
- District has not yet included agriculture in its economic development strategy

Goal 4: Develop the Local Distribution and Marketing System

The preferred option is that the components of food distribution and marketing be fast tracked to protect the integrity of local products. A local food system has need of the same types of distribution and marketing functions as large food systems, albeit at a significantly smaller scale. Maintaining the quality of the food product through proper handling, storage, and transportation is critical and may be more challenging among small producers because of potential gaps in supply and fluctuations in quality.

Recommendations

- a) Work with producers to: investigate the potential for marketing cooperatives; brokerages; machinery cooperatives; investigate community storage and handling options; learn about marketing models; branding

- b) Hold workshops on local marketing and distribution systems
- c) Enlist the participation of local expertise up-to-date on food marketing issues
- d) Develop a strategy to assist the development of distribution and marketing options in the District
- e) Pursue the development of key components of a local distribution system, including cooling, handling, and staging area for fresh produce (e.g., food terminal)
- f) Investigate marketing needs of local farming community

5.5 Issue 5: Loss of the Agricultural Land Base

- Many small parcels
- High level of rural residential incursion into Agricultural Land Reserve
- Non-farmed areas of the Agricultural Land Reserve tend to be smaller parcels
- Limited availability of irrigation water
- Continued conversion pressure from the District of Maple Ridge's urban growth
- Financial pressure on farming

Goal 5: Protect the Agricultural Land Base

In light of uncertainty attributable to food safety (see Glossary) and food security concerns and climate change, most agree that developing a local food system must be a high priority goal of the District's Agricultural Plan. To this end, it is considered time to provide certainty that the agricultural land base will not be undermined by short term decisions that result in agricultural land being forever lost to development in Maple Ridge. In addition, there may be opportunities for land inclusions into the Agricultural Land Reserve and owners of agricultural land should be made aware of this opportunity.

Attempting to plan for the continuation of agriculture outside of the Agricultural Land Reserve is difficult since keeping the land in agriculture is solely the property owner's decision. Nevertheless, the significance to District agriculture of activity outside the Agricultural Land Reserve is considerable and there is interest in pursuing strategies that would keep this land in agricultural production. Alternatively, the District should take stock of its agricultural situation and provide mechanisms to ensure that the land base does not suffer further capability loss.

Recommendations

- a) Continue to implement the OCP policies to protect the agricultural land base by creating Development Permit Area guidelines to minimize non-agricultural encroachment on agriculturally designated lands and farming activities
- b) Continue to implement the OCP policies to protect the agricultural land base by creating guidelines for reviewing applications for non-farm use, exclusions, fill applications, transportation and utility applications, subdivisions, and government applications
- c) Investigate federal, provincial, and Metro Vancouver support for agriculture irrigation water supply expansion
- d) Explore opportunities to protect agricultural land from development through a variety of means such as donations of land, covenants, easements, agricultural use of municipal land, consolidation of land, and other mechanisms that support agriculture
- e) Support opportunities to provide land for community based agriculture

- f) Explore establishing an agricultural levy on agricultural land conversion developments to ensure that capital is available to finance the agricultural strategy in this plan
- g) Explore retention of lots 2 ha (5 acres) and larger in the Agricultural Land Reserve
- h) Support and encourage applications to include lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve

5.6 Issue 6: Deterioration of the Agricultural Infrastructure

- Increased surface flows and degraded drainage systems in several agricultural areas
- Deteriorated flood control in the floodplains
- High water table and absence of freeboard in the floodplain
- Insufficient access to water for irrigation

Goal 6: Rehabilitate and Improve the Agricultural Infrastructure

It is difficult for the community to realize the potential of agricultural lands that are compromised due to deteriorating infrastructure, and are less productive as a result. This situation may contribute to pressures to convert this land to non-farm uses. In view of the fact that a lower standard of infrastructure improvements is required to meet agricultural drainage and flood control needs in the flood plain, it would appear to make sense to use this relationship to the benefit of agriculture and the community as a whole. Other factors of production, such as access to irrigation, are also essential to viable agricultural operations in Maple Ridge and water should be managed with agriculture's requirements in mind.

The primary goal with respect to larger established farming operations in Maple Ridge is to plan for their retention as farms, rather than watch them languish and deteriorate, so that the community can optimize the rewards and advantages of having agriculture in its midst.

Limited to highly specific situations, the secondary goal (if the primary goal is not feasible) is to explore establishing a policy of compensation from development that enables funds to be generated and expended so that the net agricultural capability of the District is enhanced by investment elsewhere.

Recommendations

- a) Investigate a watershed-based surface and groundwater irrigation strategy
- b) Where a need is identified, undertake a water supply inventory for lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve
- c) Explore establishing a drainage and flood control levy
- d) Require upland land owners and applicants to control storm water flows into the flood plain
- e) Undertake a feasibility study of drainage and flood control to rehabilitate affected areas
- f) Continue to build relationship with the neighbouring municipality
- g) Require compensation from unavoidable agricultural land conversion developments to be used to increase net agricultural capability in the District
- h) Encourage the Agricultural Land Commission to enforce agreements entered into with proponents that allow applications to proceed on Agricultural Land Reserve land.

5.7 Issue 7: Gaps in the Local Food System Infrastructure

- Food processing components of the food system are missing locally
- Small scale processing options are expensive to establish
- Regulations have created barriers to adopting small scale processing options
- Lack of regional coordination in mobilizing resources to address the gap
- Processing knowledge is inadequate.

Goal 7: Develop Local Food System Infrastructure Capacity

There is interest in developing locally the potential to process local food products. There is a need for training of would-be processors, providing seasonal access to community or demonstration facilities, and providing opportunities for consumers to learn processing techniques. It is recognized that the capacities of the facilities could be small scale and linked into the health and food choice goals of a more accessible local food system and the economic development planning of the District.

Recommendations

- a) Work with producers and local entrepreneurs to explore the feasibility of an agro-industrial infrastructure strategy that could include: shared industrial spaces; branding; small scale processing facilities; community kitchens; mobile slaughter facilities.

5.8 Issue 8: Limited Diversity in Agricultural Activity

- Services tend to be oriented towards “conventional” agriculture
- Inconsistent approvals for all types of land uses permitted by the Agricultural Land Commission, such as bed and breakfast operations
- Some “conventional” sectors are in financial stress
- Some “new trend” operations are thriving
- New agricultural management and production models are being demanded
- New community objectives for local agricultural activity are emerging
- Interdependence and service support among different land uses not appreciated
- Resilience as a desired characteristic of the local agricultural sector not understood.

Goal 8: Increase the Diversity of Agricultural Activity

Pursuing diversity in local agriculture is a way of ensuring that agricultural land use is capable of adaptive response to, and recovery from, challenges to food security, and other amenities valued by society. More diversity creates more ability for successful response and promotes resiliency in agricultural land use. Diversified agricultural activity (equestrian, agro-tourism) will protect the land base through active use, create demand for services and workers, and support the infrastructure also required for food production.

Recommendations

- a) Work with the AAC to promote and gauge the feasibility of alternative models of community supported agriculture
- b) Continue to acknowledge and incorporate agriculture into District economic development strategies and plans
- c) Explore the agro-tourism policies of the Agricultural Land Commission for their potential to provide new and expanded opportunities for farmers and possible inclusion into District bylaws.
- d) Promote local agri-businesses and activities on District website and publications
- e) Encourage linkages in the agricultural sector in Maple Ridge to identify cross-demand for products and services
- f) Identify a community work force for agriculture
- g) Identify community demand and develop linkages for participatory food production
- h) Provide opportunities for community gardening, allotments, and urban demonstration plots.

5.9 Issue 9: Stress in the Agriculture-Residential Interface

- Agricultural Land Reserve land owners not supportive of agricultural activity adjacent to their properties
- Agricultural Land Reserve rural residents not aware of agricultural status of their land
- Agricultural Land Reserve rural residents not tolerant of agricultural sights, sounds, smells, and intensified activity
- No requirement to maintain land in Agricultural Land Reserve
- Noxious weeds allowed to grow on properties
- Vandalism, theft, trespass, and harassment
- Speculative pressures created by adjacent development.

Goal 9: Reduce Potential for Stress in the Agricultural-Residential Interface

In order for working agriculture to flourish, it must be provided with space, respect, and understanding that farming operations employing good management practices are accepted in the community. This goal is concerned with providing the information, edge planning, and enforcement necessary to sustain economically viable agriculture in Maple Ridge.

Recommendations

- a) Implement Development Permit Area guidelines to minimize non-agricultural encroachment on agriculturally designated lands and farming activities, including specific provisions for buffer zones, appropriate landscaping, subdivision design, and building location
- b) Create a cross-commodity Farmers Institute to implement agricultural initiatives identified in this Plan
- c) Require notices on title on properties adjacent to agricultural lands (disclosure statements) to avoid neighbourhood conflicts

- d) Enforce noxious weed bylaw on idle land in the Agricultural Land Reserve, municipal rights-of-way, and utility rights of way
- e) Create respect for property rights of farmers respecting trespass, vandalism, and harassment
- f) Develop a neighbourhood community watch for stray dogs, animals, and trespass
- g) Develop ongoing communication channels with non-farming landowners to promote “good neighbour” relations
- h) Educate landowners adjacent to agricultural land of potential for farming activities on neighbouring properties.

5.10 Issue 10: Impacts of Agriculture on the Environment

- Concern over the environmental sustainability of farming practices
- Concern over agricultural waste management practices
- Lack of recognition of the environmental benefits provided by agriculture.

Goal 10: Minimize the Impact of Agriculture on the Environment

Sustainable agriculture, by definition, is based on the principle of ecological soundness to ensure that farming does not cause negative impacts on the environment. The goal will be to adopt agricultural practices that meet the competing needs for agricultural production and protection of the environment.

Recommendations

- a) Educate farmers about the benefits of completing and implementing Environmental Farm Plans
- b) Lobby to have the Environmental Farm Plan (see Glossary) program broadened to include the equine sector, hobby farmers, and new farmers
- c) Identify options for farmers to manage farm manures in a sustainable manner
- d) Investigate and adopt new technologies to deal with farm wastes, alternative energy sources, and generation of greenhouse gases
- e) Develop interface, linkage, and communications with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment to create workable solutions to agriculture-environment issues in the District
- f) Educate and inform the community about the ecological goods and services agriculture provides in Maple Ridge
- g) Promote the use of natural methods of controlling pests.

5.11 Issue 11: Agriculture Land Use - Wildlife Conflicts

- Roaming wildlife are causing damage to agricultural crops and property
- In some cases, farmers unable to control problem wildlife
- Farm losses not recoverable.

Goal 11: Reduce Agriculture – Wildlife Conflicts

This goal will be reflected in the pursuit of an improved ability to provide habitat for wildlife on agricultural land without creating unsustainable economic impacts on farm operators.

Recommendations

- a) Keep channels of communication open to advise on issues before they become problems
- b) Develop strategy to control populations of released domestic rabbits
- c) Work with farmers experiencing depredation from bears and deer to channel movement away from farms
- d) Support research to develop repellents and barriers for problem wildlife
- e) Identify opportunities and create incentives for land owners to participate in land management systems that enhance wildlife habitat and support agriculture.

5.12 Issue 12: Inconsistent Regulation of Agricultural Areas

- Lack of consistency in regulation of agriculture in land use designations where agriculture is permitted
- Discrepancy in regulatory requirements for agriculture between adjacent municipalities.

Goal 12: Create a Regulatory Environment Friendly to Agriculture

Regulation in lands designated for agriculture should be sensitive to the conditions necessary for working agriculture in order to promote it. The goal of regulatory review should be to create science-based regulations that protect the rights of all residents while promoting the agricultural interests of the local community.

Recommendations

- a) Continue to retain the AAC to advise Council on issues affecting agriculture
- b) Develop results-based approach to new regulation, so that targets and effects are assessed before regulatory policy is implemented.
- c) Monitor proposed regulations to ensure they are not unnecessarily onerous on producers and agro-development
- d) Advocate for region-wide policies for agricultural areas.

5.13 Issue 13: Incompatible Land Use Zoning Context for the Agricultural Land Reserve

- Zoning bylaw for land in the Agricultural Land Reserve not geared toward conserving agricultural land or ensuring appropriate farm use.
- Zoning bylaw for land in the Agricultural Land Reserve not geared toward promoting agricultural activity (e.g., prohibitive setback requirements)
- Rural Residential zoning within the Agricultural Land Reserve conveys a message that agricultural is not the primary use.

Goal 13: Protect and Enhance the Agricultural Context of the Agricultural Land Reserve

The goal is to ensure that land use designations in the Agricultural Land Reserve reflect the primacy of agriculture as the highest and preferred land use.

Recommendations

- a) Continue to implement OCP by concentrating growth to within the urban area boundary
- b) Create a code of good land stewardship in the Agricultural Land Reserve (abandoned cars, trailers, machinery, trash, obsolete signage, dumped soil) to prevent contamination and visual pollution (batteries, crankcase oil, unproductive fill)
- c) Encourage property owners to build in a fashion to conserve the land base and minimize potential for conflict with agricultural activity
- d) Explore changes in the RS-3 (One Family Rural Residential) zone as it applies to land in the Agricultural Land Reserve with respect to restrictions such as setbacks, lot coverage, and accessory buildings.

6.0 Agricultural Plan Performance

Indicators are proposed as a means to measure the progress of the implementation of the Plan over the next five years. These indicators will be project specific and established as appropriate through the business planning process.

7.0 Acronyms Used in this Plan

AAC – Agricultural Advisory Committee
ALC – Agricultural Land Commission
ALR – Agricultural Land Reserve
BCAC – BC Agriculture Council
EFP – Environmental Farm Plans
MAL – Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
MOE – Ministry of the Environment
OCP – Official Community Plan

8.0 Glossary

Agri- tourism

As defined in the Maple Ridge Official Community Plan, agri-tourism is a form of tourism that attracts visitors who are interested in experiencing forms of agriculture and agriculturally related aspects of an area. The Agricultural Land Commission has developed supportive policies to encourage agri-tourism as a means to improve farm incomes, that may be accessed at the following link:

http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/legislation/policies/Pol4-03_agri-tourism.htm

Sometimes referred to as “agro-tourism”.

Agricultural Land

Land is considered agricultural if: the site is zoned to permit agriculture uses; the site is designated agricultural, or the site is within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Buffer

The Agricultural Land Commission has developed landscape buffer specifications in recognition of increasingly complex land use patterns and the relationship between agricultural and non-farm uses. Landscape buffers are intended to avoid the conflicts that many agricultural producers are concerned with. Trespass and vandalism to farm crops and equipment, complaints about early morning farm vehicle noise, the drifting of dust and sprays from field operations and smells from the application of manures and composts, are some of the more commonly expressed concerns. It is important to note that these buffer areas are intended to be established on the non-farm property rather than coming off of the farm properties. Buffers are often made a requirement by the Commission when considering the approval of applications under the Agricultural Land Commission Act. In addition, the Commission’s specifications provide a practical guide for councils, regional boards and other agencies where the opportunity exists to create or improve the buffer between agriculture and non-agricultural lands. The

Maple Ridge Official Community Plan requires that landscape buffers be provided on properties adjacent to agricultural land.

Climate Change

The Maple Ridge Official Community Plan notes that global climate change, likely caused by human activity, can have an adverse effect on agricultural production. As most Canadians rely increasingly on international sources for their food supply, local food security may be affected by a diminished global supply.

Environmental Farm Plan

As defined in the Maple Ridge Official Community Plan, an Environmental Farm Plan is a management tool that producers can use to increase their awareness of environmental issues, to examine their current production practices, to identify potential risks, and to develop a practical plan to manage those risks on their farm operation.

Farmers Institute

As per the Farmers and Women's Institutes Act, a Farmers Institute is incorporated under the Act for one or more of the following purposes: (a) to improve conditions of rural life so that settlement may be permanent and prosperous; (b) to promote the theory and practice of agriculture; (c) to arrange on behalf of its members for the purchase, distribution or sale of commodities, supplies or products; (d) to act generally on behalf of its members in all matters incidental to agricultural pursuits and rural development. Membership is voluntary.

The goal of Farmers Institutes is therefore to advance general agricultural interests rather than specific types of operations. Within the context of Maple Ridge, which is characterized by diverse agricultural operations, this cross - commodity organization can be especially beneficial for providing a key link between the diverse producers across the sector.

Food Safety

The World Health Organization defines food safety as the assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or eaten according to its intended use.

Food Security

The World Food Summit (Rome, 1996) states: Food security exists when all people, at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

GVRD

Greater Vancouver Regional District. For most of regional planning purposes, this organisation has been renamed Metro Vancouver, which is the federation of 22 member municipalities in the western portion of the Lower Mainland. However, the GVRD is still a recognized entity for certain regional functions, such as parks planning.

Land Trusts

a private, non-profit organization that, as all or part of its mission, actively works to conserve land by undertaking or assisting in land or conservation easement acquisition, or by providing stewardship of such land or easements. Local examples include The Land Conservancy, or the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust.

Local extension services

Refers to technical expertise that traditionally had been available to farmers through agencies such as universities or the Ministry of Agriculture.

Metro Vancouver

See GVRD, above.

Right of Way

A strip of land protected by law in perpetuity for transportation or infrastructure purposes.

Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable agriculture is agriculture which supports a triple bottom line approach by providing social, economic, and environmental benefits.

APPENDICES

Appendix Table 1: Agricultural Plan – Recommended Action Plan

Appendix Table 1: Agricultural Plan – Recommended Action Plan

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
<p>Goal 1: Increase Access to Underutilized Agricultural Land</p>	<p>a) Develop a strategy to increase landowner awareness of farmland leasing options, taxation benefits, and community demand for local production</p>	<p>AAC District Farmers Institute</p>	<p>Minimal Hire a co-op student to assist or consultant to develop strategy</p>
	<p>b) Create a database of farmland available for leasing, including a database maintenance strategy</p>	<p>AAC District, Farmers Institute, Ministry of Agriculture And Lands</p>	<p>Minimal Hire a co-op student to assist</p>
	<p>c) Develop access to materials on lease/rental terms and sample agreements, possibly website delivered</p>	<p>AAC District, Farmers Institute, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands</p>	<p>Minimal Hire a co-op student to assist</p>
	<p>d) Create educational materials for agricultural property owners regarding stewardship of agricultural land</p>	<p>Farmers Institute, AAC Support from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver</p>	<p>Minimal Utilize existing materials and modify, production and distribution costs</p>
	<p>e) Through various workshops and electronic media, initiate discussion on the role of small lot property owners in enhancing local agriculture in the District (gaining access to land, pooling of small lots, rent calculator, lessee responsibilities).</p>	<p>Farmers Institute AAC Support from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver</p>	<p>Minimal Invite Ministry of Agriculture and Lands staff to assist</p>
	<p>f) Identify and promote opportunities for development of urban agriculture</p>	<p>Farmers Institute, AAC, Community Kitchens, District</p>	<p>Minimal</p>

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
<p>Goal 2: Improve the Knowledge Base of Farmers</p>	a) Partner with farmers to create apprenticeship opportunities and mentorships, and to attract workers to agriculture in the area	Farmers Institute Commodity Associations, District, Educational institutions	Moderate
	b) Pursue options and opportunities to provide a hands-on training ground for aspiring farmers	Farmers Institute with support from Agricultural Land Commission, District	Moderate
	c) Engage high schools and post-secondary institutions in local farmer training initiatives	Farmers Institute Support from Agricultural Land Commission, District, School District	Minimal Invite presenters within the industry
	d) Investigate innovative ways aspiring new farmers without land may be encouraged to access agricultural land currently not in production	Farmers Institute Support from Agricultural Land Commission, District	Minimal
	e) Through various workshops and electronic media, initiate information exchange on small lot agriculture (production techniques, organic, equipment, pest management)	Farmers Institute Support from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver	Minimal Invite presenters from within the agricultural industry. Add to Lower Mainland Horticultural curriculum
	f) Develop information sharing and exchange networks and coalitions with like-minded groups in other areas	Farmers Institute	Minimal
	g) Create a cross-commodity Farmers Institute to coordinate and implement the knowledge base initiatives identified in this Agricultural Plan	AAC could take lead with assistance from other organizations	Moderate
	h) Develop awareness of educational initiatives in the local community	Farmers Institute	Minimal

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 3: Improve the Knowledge Base of the Consumer Public	a) Develop an inventory of local agricultural land use and agricultural products produced	Farmers Institute	Moderate
	b) Create newspaper slot highlighting farming, seasonal recipes, farmer direct markets	Farmers Institute; community kitchen Community newspaper Farmers Market	Minimal
	c) Encourage retailers to advertize and identify locally produced seasonal products.	Farmers Institute AAC	Minimal
	d) Partner with schools and the School District to communicate information about farming	AAC District	Minimal
	e) Create more hands-on displays at District Fair	Farmers Institute Ministry of Agriculture and Lands	Minimal Partner with commodity associations
	f) Host a "Taste of Maple Ridge" event annually	Farmers Institute AAC	Minimal User pay and donations
	g) Engage local chefs to partner in local food promotion	Farmers Institute	Minimal User pay and donated
	h) Partner with schools to develop agricultural curriculum, including coordinating with the Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation and the School Gardens project	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands Ag in the Classroom BC Agriculture Council	Minimal Already existing
	i) Report on Agricultural Plan completion in the media	District	Minimal
	j) Report regularly in the media on progress and issues relating to implementing the Agricultural Plan	District	Minimal
	k) Provide continued support for the Haney Farmers Market	District Farmers Institute	Minimal Location, advertising, promotion

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 4: Develop the Local Distribution and Marketing System	a) Work with producers to: investigate the potential for marketing cooperatives, brokerages; machinery cooperatives; investigate community storage and handling options; learn about marketing models; branding	Farmers Institute Support from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands Commodity groups	Moderate Seek IAF funding to explore options
	b) Hold workshops on local marketing and distribution systems	Farmers Institute Support from Metro Vancouver	Minimal Invite existing local marketers
	c) Enlist the participation of local expertise up-to-date on food marketing issues	Farmers Institute Support from AAC, Metro Vancouver, District	Minimal Invite presenters from Fraser Health Authority, Food security groups, Organic associations, Direct marketing associations
	d) Develop a strategy to assist the development of distribution and marketing options in the District	Farmers Institute Assistance from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver	Moderate Seek IAF funding to explore options
	e) Pursue the development of key components of a local distribution system, including cooling, handling and staging area for fresh produce (e.g., food terminal)	Farmers Institute	Moderate Seek IAF funding to explore options
	f) Investigate marketing needs of local farming community.	Farmers Institute Assistance from District, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver	Moderate

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
<p>Goal 5: Protect the Agricultural Land Base</p>	<p>a) Continue to implement the OCP policies to protect the agricultural land base by creating Development Permit Area guidelines to minimize non-agricultural encroachment on agriculturally designated lands and farming activities</p>	<p>District</p>	<p>Minimal</p>
	<p>b) Continue to implement the OCP policies to protect the agricultural land base by creating guidelines for reviewing applications for non-farm use, exclusions, fill applications, transportation and utility applications, subdivisions, and government applications</p>	<p>District</p>	<p>Minimal</p>
	<p>c) Investigate federal, provincial and Metro Vancouver support for agriculture irrigation water supply expansion</p>	<p>District</p>	<p>Minimal to moderate</p>
	<p>d) Explore opportunities to protect agricultural land from development through a variety of means such as donations of land, covenants, easements, agricultural use of municipal land, consolidation of land, and other mechanisms that support agriculture.</p>	<p>AAC District</p>	<p>Minimal to moderate</p>
	<p>e) Support opportunities to provide land for community based agriculture.</p>	<p>AAC District Land Trusts</p>	<p>Minimal to moderate</p>
	<p>f) Explore establishing an agricultural levy on agricultural land conversion developments to ensure that capital is available to finance the agricultural strategy in this Plan</p>	<p>District</p>	<p>Minimal</p>
	<p>g) Explore retention of lots 2 ha (5 acres) and larger in the Agricultural Land Reserve.</p>	<p>District</p>	<p>Minimal</p>
	<p>h) Support and encourage applications to include lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve</p>	<p>AAC District Farmers Institute</p>	<p>Minimal</p>

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 6: Rehabilitate and Improve the Agricultural Infrastructure	a) Investigate a watershed-based surface and groundwater irrigation strategy	District Metro Vancouver Min. of Ag and Lands	Moderate
	b) Where a need is identified, undertake a water supply inventory for lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve	District Min. of Ag and Lands Metro Vancouver	Moderate
	c) Explore establishing a drainage and flood control levy	District	Minimal
	d) Require upland landowners and applicants to control storm water flows into the flood plain	District	Minimal
	e) Undertake a feasibility study of drainage and flood control to rehabilitate affected areas.	District Support from Ministry of Agriculture and Lands	Moderate
	f) Continue to build relationship with neighbouring municipality	District	Minimal
	g) Require compensation from unavoidable agricultural land conversion developments to be used to increase net agricultural capability in the District	District	Minimal
	h) Encourage the Agricultural Land Commission to enforce agreements entered into with proponents that allow applications to proceed on Agricultural Land Reserve land.	District	Minimal
	a) Work with producers & local entrepreneurs to explore the feasibility of an agro-industrial infrastructure strategy that could include: shared industrial space; branding; small scale processing facilities; community kitchen; mobile slaughter facilities	Farmers Institute Support from District, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver	Moderate Seek IAF funding to explore options
	Goal 7: Develop Local Food System Infrastructure Capacity		

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 8: Increase the Diversity of Agricultural Activity	a) Work with the AAC to promote and gauge the feasibility of alternative models of community supported agriculture	AAC Support from Farmers Institute and other community organizations	Moderate
	b) Continue to acknowledge and incorporate agriculture into District economic development strategies and plans.	District	Minimal
	c) Explore the agro-tourism policies of the Agricultural Land Commission for their potential to provide new and expanded opportunities for farmers and their possible inclusion into District by/laws.	District	Minimal
	d) Promote local agri-businesses and activities on District website and publications	District	Minimal
	e) Encourage linkages among the agricultural sector in Maple Ridge agriculture to identify cross-demand for products and services	Farmers Institute	Minimal
	f) Identify a community work force for agriculture	AAC District Coordinate with Farmers Institute, Social Services, community organizations	Minimal
	g) Identify community demand and develop linkages for participatory food production	Farmers Institute Support from District, community organizations	Moderate
	h) Provide opportunities for community gardening, allotments; and urban demonstration plots	District Support from Farmers Institute, realtors,	Minimal to moderate

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 9: Reduce Potential for Stress in the Agricultural-Residential Interface	a) Implement Development Permit Area guidelines to minimize non-agricultural encroachment on agriculturally designated lands and farming activities, including specific provisions for buffer zones, appropriate landscaping, subdivision design, and building location	District AAC	Minimal
	b) Create a cross commodity Farmers Institute to implement agricultural initiatives identified in this Plan	AAC, Metro, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands	Minimal
	c) Require notices on title on properties adjacent to agricultural lands (disclosure statements) to avoid neighbourhood conflicts	District Realtors	Minimal
	d) Enforce noxious weed bylaw on idle land in the ALR, municipal rights-of-way and utility rights-of-way.	District	Minimal to moderate
	e) Create respect for property rights of farmers respecting trespass, vandalism, and harassment	Farmers Institute AAC, District, Metro Vancouver	Minimal
	f) Develop a neighbourhood community watch for stray dogs, animals, and trespass	ACC, Farmers Institute District	Minimal
	g) Develop ongoing communication channels with non-farming landowners to promote “good neighbour” relations	Farmers Institute	Minimal
	h) Educate landowners adjacent to agricultural land of potential for farming activities on neighbouring properties	District, AAC Farmers Institute	Minimal

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 10: Minimize Impact of Agriculture on the Environment	a) Educate farmers about the benefits of completing and implementing Environmental Farm Plans	Farmers Institute AAC	Minimal
	b) Lobby to have the Environmental Farm Plan program broadened to include the equine sector, hobby farmers, and new farmers	Farmers Institute AAC	Minimal
	c) Identify options for farmers to manage manures in a sustainable manner	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands Farmers Institute	Minimal
	d) Investigate and adopt new technologies to deal with farm wastes, alternative energy sources, and generation of greenhouse gases	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands Ministry of the Environment Metro Vancouver Farmers	Moderate to major Seek Investment Agriculture Foundation funding to explore options
	e) Develop interface, linkage, and communications with Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment to create workable solutions to agriculture-environment issues in the District	District AAC Farmers Institute	Minimal
	f) Educate and inform the community about the ecological goods and services agriculture provides in Maple Ridge	District AAC Farmers Institute	Moderate
	g) Promote the use of natural methods of controlling pests	Farmers Institute District, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver	Moderate
	a) Keep channels of communication open to advise on issues before they become problems	AAC	Minimal
	b) Develop strategy to control populations of released domestic rabbits	District	Moderate
c) Work with farmers experiencing depredation from bears and deer to channel movement away from farms	Ministry of the Environment District	Moderate	
d) Support research to develop repellents and barriers for problem wildlife	Farmers Institute	Minimal Seek Investment Agriculture Foundation funding to explore options	
e) Identify opportunities and create incentives for land owners to participate in land management systems that enhance wildlife habitat and support agriculture	Farmer's Institute AAC, District , Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver	Moderate	
Goal 11: Reduce Agriculture–Wildlife Conflicts			

Goal	Recommended Actions	Who?	Resources Required
Goal 12: Create a Regulatory Environment Friendly to Agriculture	a) Continue to retain the AAC to advise Council on issues affecting agriculture	District	Minimal
	b) Develop results-based approach to new regulation, so that targets and effects are assessed before regulatory policy is implemented.	District, AAC, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Agricultural Land Commission	Minimal
	c) Monitor proposed regulations to ensure they are not unnecessarily onerous on producers and agro-development	District, AAC	Minimal
	d) Advocate for Region-wide policies for agricultural areas	AAC District, Farmers Institute	Minimal
Goal 13: Protect and Enhance the Agricultural Context of the Agricultural Land Reserve.	a) Continue to implement OCP by concentrating growth to within the urban area boundary	District	Minimal
	b) Create a Code of good land stewardship in the Agricultural Land Reserve (abandoned cars, trailers, machinery, trash, obsolete signage, dumped soil) to prevent contamination and visual pollution (batteries, crankcase oil, unproductive fill)	District AAC Agricultural Land Commission	Minimal
	c) Encourage property owners to build in a fashion to conserve the land base and minimize potential for conflict with agricultural activity	District Agricultural Land Commission	Minimal
	d) Explore changes to the RS-3 (One Family Rural Residential Zone) as it applies to the Agricultural Land Reserve with respect to restrictions such as setbacks, lot coverage, and accessory buildings.	District	Minimal

Appendix Figure 1
RS-3 Properties in the ALR

