



ISLANDS 2050 - FACT SHEET

AGRICULTURAL LAND STEWARDSHIP

For communities in the Islands Trust Area, thriving local agriculture is a key component of rural island culture and supports local food security, economies, community health, and climate action.

Within the Islands Trust Area, some farmlands are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and some farms exist outside of the ALR. All farmlands are subject to local land use policies and regulations established by local trust committees and island municipalities. These regulations take into account the Agricultural Land Commission Act for lands within the ALR, and the Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act for all farmlands.

Thriving local agriculture on the islands is dependent on healthy soils, water, air, and biodiversity. Islands Trust has long advocated for agricultural policies and practices that sustain wildlife habitats, encourage sustainable farming, and are compatible with the smaller island scale of agriculture. In light of Trust Council's commitments to reconciliation, there is also a desire to ensure that agricultural practices do not adversely impact First Nations' food security, cultural heritage sites and harvesting areas.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION CALL TO ACTION #47:

'We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies' that continue to rely on such concepts.

Agriculture and the Draft New Policy Statement

Islands Trust is supportive of farming and agriculture within the Islands Trust Area. Proposed draft updates to the Policy Statement do not restrict current farming practices. Some previous language that described agriculture as a "traditional and valuable activity" has been removed to align with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. We know that the Trust Area was occupied and cultivated before colonial settlement. Language changes help us reflect this reality.

What do we mean by small-scale, sustainable, and regenerative?

Small-scale: a scale of agricultural activities that is compatible with the small size of islands in the Trust Area, minimizing adverse impacts to local ecosystems and Indigenous cultural heritage and harvesting areas

Sustainable: agricultural practices that are capable of being maintained indefinitely and of meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Regenerative: sustainable growing and harvesting practices that help to improve the overall health of natural systems, and avoids destroying or depleting them

There are no significant regulatory changes being proposed to the agricultural land stewardship section. The proposed draft updates include commitments of Trust Council and directive policies that indicate a preference for small-scale, sustainable, and regenerative agricultural practices. In other words - harvesting practices that protect the environment and safeguard Indigenous cultural heritage and harvesting areas.

There are also some proposed draft coordination policies in this section that advocate for this approach on lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve. Another draft coordination policy advocates for greater provincial supports to local farmers to adopt the highest standards of environmental protection, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions emanating from agriculture, and to adapt to climate variability.

These proposed draft updates to the Policy Statement do not attempt to regulate farming, diminish agricultural livelihoods, or threaten farm stalls in the Trust Area. The Policy Statement cannot supersede regulations set out by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Right to Farm Act, or the Agricultural Land Commission Act.



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[ISLANDS 2050 PROJECT INTRODUCTION VIDEO](#)

[GOVERNMENT OF BC AGRICULTURAL LAND AND ENVIRONMENT WEBPAGE](#)