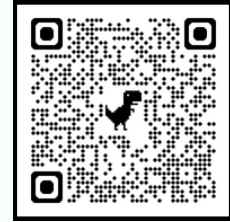


Agriculture in Action: Bridging Policy & Practice



View the
full report!

The Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project held agriculture tours in late 2024 and early 2025, bringing together over 90 farmers, elected officials, and government staff from across the Okanagan to explore shared challenges and solutions. The tours were funded by the Province of British Columbia through programs and initiatives delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC.

What We Heard

- **Farmers** face barriers with complex permitting, changing regulations, climate impacts, and public misconceptions about farming practices.
- **Local governments** balance competing priorities (housing, environmental protection, public safety) with limited resources and staff capacity.
- **Both sides** expressed a strong desire for better and more frequent communication, earlier engagement, and shared problem-solving.

Top Priorities

- ✓ Make processes clearer and more predictable for all.
- ✓ Strengthen communication between farmers and local governments.
- ✓ Expand public education to foster understanding and support for agriculture.

Moving Forward

By improving communication, aligning priorities, and strengthening public understanding, farmers and local governments can work together to support resilient agriculture and thriving communities.

Shared Opportunities For Action

1. Adopt Supportive and Streamlined Practices

- Simplify permitting processes and standardize policies across jurisdictions.
- Offer pre-application meetings to align project goals & realities.
- Consult farmers during infrastructure planning to avoid unintended impacts.
- Increase agricultural expertise within local governments.

2. Foster Ongoing Dialogue

- Create regular opportunities for discussions between farmers, staff, and elected officials (e.g., roundtables, "Farmer Fridays," coffee chats).
- Host semi-annual tailgate meetings that include farmers, industry groups, and government staff.

3. Grow Public Education and Awareness

- Hold annual tours for staff, boards, and councils.
- Invite agriculture industry representatives to present at council meetings.
- Launch public education campaigns highlighting the importance of agriculture to the community.
- Develop simple, accessible primers to inform staff and elected officials about the agricultural sector.

Learn more: www.crosscommodity.org

