

The BC Greens believe that by working towards food sovereignty, we can improve food security while creating a vibrant, sustainable food system that values farmers and strengthens community resilience.

As the climate crisis worsens and trade disputes continue, the ability of British Columbia to maintain our own food supply will become one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century. The BC Greens believe that food sovereignty is about more than economic resilience - it's about healthy and culturally appropriate food, about farming within ecological limits, about looking after the people and systems who produce food and put it on our tables.

In the words of the Nyéléni Declaration:

Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and the right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of the food system rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation.

We urgently need to invest in food security, steward our farmland, and support our farmers. For too long, provincial agriculture policies have benefited large corporations and prioritized exports at the expense of local food systems and the economic well-being of family farms. The BC NDP have had years to address this issue, with the BC Greens introducing legislation to ban foreign ownership of farmland since 2017; something that the NDP have consistently ignored.

The BC Greens will prioritize building a food system that puts local and regional economies first rather than the current system that seems to prioritize absentee investors and agribusiness conglomerates. We will ensure BC-grown food ends up on BC tables, not just on container ships.

The Agricultural Land Reserve protects the five percent of British Columbia with the greatest agricultural capacity. It doesn't however place limits on the ownership of that land - making British Columbia an outlier, risking the health of our agricultural system, and limiting opportunities for new and younger farmers. By protecting agricultural land in our communities, expanding local food production, and investing in local food systems and processing infrastructure, we will strengthen our regional food networks and reduce dependence on distant sources. This will create a more resilient and self-sufficient food system for all British Columbians. It also reduces the financialisation of farmland - something that contributed to the average value of cultivated farmland rising 11.3% in 2024¹, increasing pressure on new farmers

¹ https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2025/fac-fcc/CC212-4-2024-eng.pdf

and making farming less affordable. This is playing out in communities across British Columbia, with the town of Dunster, in the Robson Valley being a prime example. US-based billionaires have bought up 3,500 acres in the small community - pushing up prices, and leaving homes and properties vacant, hollowing out a tight-knit farming community². The Dunster Farmland Coalition have been a driving force in pushing the Government to act on this issue, including working on bringing the extent of the issue to light, given the lack of transparency on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

The BC Greens will:

- Protect BC's farms and food security by restricting non-resident and investment firm ownership of farmland. Specifically, the BC Greens will limit ownership of Agricultural Land Reserve Land parcels greater than 4 hectares only to citizens and permanent residents of British Columbia, unless they demonstrate intent to become residents and establish themselves within four years.
- Make food sovereignty part of the Agricultural Land Commission's mandate, to protect and prioritize agricultural use, and provide additional funding and staffing to fulfill that mandate.
- Improve public data on who owns BC's farmland, how ownership is changing and how agricultural land is being used, so governments, researchers and the public can better understand emerging trends and develop effective policy.
- Empower municipalities to be able to tax productive farmland that is being left idle.
- Develop a public interest test for significant farmland purchases to ensure that they support the long-term interests of BC's agricultural land base, food production, and farming communities.
- Incentivise regenerative farming practices that build healthier soils, improve water management, reduce energy use and sequester carbon.
- Streamline the approvals process for water storage dugouts on farms to improve drought resilience and water availability.
- Commit the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship to work with farmers to ensure the protection of food crops during drought periods.
- Facilitate public institutional procurement of local food, ensuring schools, hospitals and other institutions prioritise locally produced food.
- Support the development of systems to address food insecurity in First Nations communities that honour First Nations knowledge, values, harvesting areas and practices.
- Create a school food program that provides opportunities for schools, community organisations and farmers to promote sustainable practices and educate children on healthy eating habits.
- Protect and expand BC's reserve of farmland by establishing a publicly owned agricultural land bank for lease by new farmers.

² <https://therockymountangoat.com/2026/07/dunster-farmland-coalition-gains-momentum/>