

Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food

LOCAL MEAT PRODUCTION AND INSPECTION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

SEPTEMBER 2018

**THIRD SESSION
OF THE 41ST PARLIAMENT**



September 28, 2018

To the Honourable
Legislative Assembly of the
Province of British Columbia

I have the honour to present herewith the First Report of the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food for the Third Session of the 41st Parliament, entitled *Local Meat Production and Inspection in British Columbia*

The report was unanimously adopted by the Committee on September 7, 2018.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA
Chair

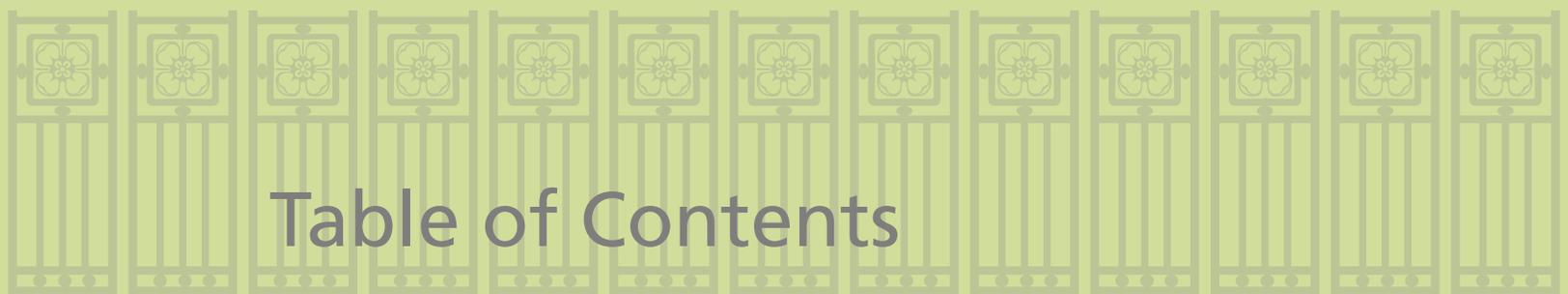
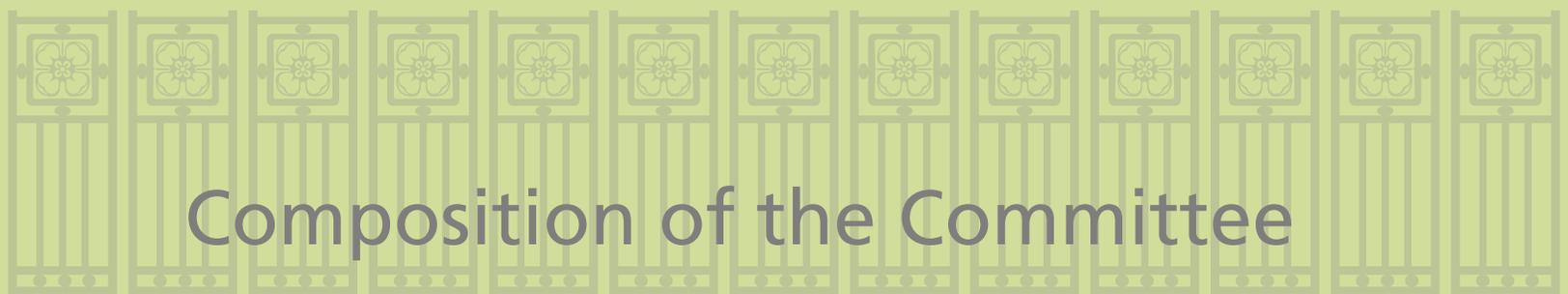


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Composition of the Committee

Members

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA | Chair | Courtenay-Comox |
| Jackie Tegart, MLA | Deputy Chair | Fraser-Nicola |
| Donna Barnett, MLA | | Cariboo-Chilcotin |
| Mike Morris, MLA | | Prince George-Mackenzie |
| Adam Olsen, MLA | | Saanich North and the Islands |
| Ian Paton, MLA | | Delta South |
| Doug Routley, MLA | | Nanaimo-North Cowichan |
| Nicholas Simons, MLA | | Powell River-Sunshine Coast |
| Rachna Singh, MLA | | Surrey-Green Timbers |

Committee Staff

Jennifer Arril, Committee Clerk

Lisa Hill, Committee Research Analyst

Nicki Simpson and Willi Fahning, Committee Researchers

Terms of Reference

On April 24, 2018, the Legislative Assembly agreed that, further to the motion establishing a Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food to examine matters concerning agriculture, fish and food in British Columbia, the Committee shall initially examine, inquire into and make recommendations concerning local meat production in British Columbia, based on the discussion paper released by the Minister of Agriculture on April 24, 2018. While the Committee's Terms of Reference was updated on May 31, 2018, the Committee undertook its initial inquiry based on the following referral:

The Committee shall seek to consider the views of farmers, producers, processors, consumers, restaurateurs and all other individuals and organizations interested in local, small-scale meat production.

In undertaking its inquiry, the Committee shall consider matters related to areas of provincial responsibility with respect to meat production regulations. The Committee shall have all the powers previously conferred upon the other Select Standing Committees and shall also be empowered:

- a. to appoint of their number one or more subcommittees and to refer to such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the Committee;
- b. to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned, during the recess after prorogation until the next following Session and during any sitting of the House;
- c. to conduct consultations by any means the Committee considers appropriate; and
- d. to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient;

and shall report as soon as possible to the House, but no later than October 1, 2018, or following any adjournment, or at the next following Session, as the case may be; to deposit the original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly.

Acknowledgement

Committee Members wish to acknowledge the significant contributions that farmers, meat producers and processors make to the B.C. economy and to providing healthy, safe, and delicious food for British Columbians. The Committee values their dedication, passion and commitment to their work, the long hours, and the community-driven values that were evident in the large and small-scale operations the Committee heard about during the consultation. The Committee also wishes to express their gratitude to those who made presentations or attended their public hearings, took the time to prepare a written submission, or complete the online survey. All of this input provided the Committee with useful information which aided in their deliberations and this final report.



1st row, from left to right: Adam Olsen, MLA; Nicholas Simons, MLA; Jackie Tegart, MLA (Deputy Chair); Rachna Singh, MLA; Donna Barnett, MLA; Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA (Chair)

2nd row, from left to right: Mike Morris, MLA; Ian Paton, MLA; Doug Routley, MLA

Executive Summary

On April 24, 2018, the Legislative Assembly instructed the newly-established Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food (the “Committee”) to examine, inquire into, and make recommendations on local meat production and inspection in British Columbia. The Committee was directed to base its inquiry on a discussion paper released by the Ministry of Agriculture which posed a number of questions to British Columbians seeking input on areas including: abattoir licensing and oversight; skilled labour and workforce; and industry growth and development.

The Committee held a public consultation from May 16, 2018 to June 15, 2018, which included holding five public hearings throughout the province, receiving written submissions, and collecting input through an online survey, based on questions set out in the discussion paper. The Committee heard from a range of individuals and various industry organizations from throughout the province, including farmers, producers, processors and others involved in meat production and processing. In addition, the Committee undertook a site visit to a meat production and processing facility on Vancouver Island, and received informational briefings from the Ministry of Agriculture, two regional Health Authorities, and the Program Director from Thompson Rivers University’s Applied Sustainable Ranching Program.

During its inquiry, it became apparent to the Committee that complex regulatory frameworks have developed in the meat production and processing industries as a result of a variety of factors specific to British Columbia including sparse populations spread over large distances, unique geography and varied weather patterns, and economic drivers such as the cost of acquiring agricultural land. It is the Committee’s intent that the recommendations made in this report result in positive change for those in the meat producing and processing industries, and the Committee would like to see regular reviews of the inspection system, in consultation with producers and processors, to ensure ongoing opportunities for assessment and improvement. The Committee hopes that, together, we can continue to work towards ensuring a strong and growing local meat industry in B.C. for many years to come.

Abattoir Licensing and Oversight

The Committee learned that oversight of the provincial meat production and processing industries is shared primarily between two distinct entities, based on the different classes of abattoir licences. Ministry of Agriculture inspection officers are responsible for monitoring slaughter at Class A and B licensed facilities; their main area of focus is the health and treatment of animals before, during and after the slaughter process. Environmental Health Officers (employed by the Regional Health Authorities), are responsible for ensuring requirements and standards are met at Class D and E licensed facilities; their focus is on the state of the facility, rather than the animals.

The Committee recommended that the Ministry of Agriculture look for opportunities to improve cross-ministry collaboration, coordination and communication to ensure consistency and simplify the process of licensing and oversight for those in the industry. Committee Members felt that as a way to support small-scale meat producers and processors, Class D and E licensed facilities should receive increased inspections, expanded to include slaughter. To achieve this, opportunities to expand the use of technologies, such as

virtual inspections, could be explored where available. The Committee also agreed that the restriction on Class D and E licensed facilities, which allows them to only sell meat within their given regional boundary could be reviewed, with consideration given to alternative boundaries that allow producers to potentially access markets closer to home.

Two important aspects related to licensing and oversight are food safety and the humane treatment of animals. Committee Members heard repeatedly that these are of the utmost importance to producers and processors. Committee Members agreed that appropriate legislation is in place to ensure food safety and protect animals, and felt that ongoing training and education opportunities would serve to support the good practices already being followed. In response to circumstances where an individual chooses not to comply with the licensing and oversight regulatory framework, the Committee would like sufficient resourcing provided to ensure compliance. The Committee also identified a gap in terms of inspection and enforcement related to livestock sales or auctions, and recommended that provincial inspectors be enabled to enter a public livestock sale yard to test animals on a regular basis.

Skilled Labour and Workforce

Committee Members heard that recruiting and retaining skilled workers in local meat production and processing can be quite difficult. This is compounded by the seasonal nature of the work. Building these professions into skilled trades with good-paying jobs and long-term career options would help attract new workers to the industry. The Committee would like to see additional education and training opportunities, including at the high school and post-secondary level, as well as options for seasoned professionals to upgrade their skills or develop new areas of expertise. This could include expanded apprenticeship, mentorship and co-op opportunities across the meat production and processing industries to help build local workforce capacity and transfer valuable knowledge to the next generation of British Columbians. The Committee recommends that information regarding safe slaughtering techniques, safety standards and best practices are made available in a variety of formats, to be supported with in-person training and slaughtering opportunities.

Industry Growth and Development

The Committee would like to see the meat production and processing industries thrive and grow for future generations. An important part of this is ensuring that productive agricultural land is affordable and remains available for livestock grazing, particularly in light of the devastation caused by wildfires and other natural disasters. The Committee recommends that a three to five-year averaging formula in relation to natural disaster compensation for those who derive less than 50 percent of their income from farming is developed in partnership with the federal government. Committee Members would like to see the existing Buy BC marketing campaign refreshed to highlight the benefits of purchasing local meat products in an effort to support local producers, processors, and retailers.

With sustainability in mind, Committee Members heard about the need to ensure that young people are made aware of, and encouraged to enter, the meat production and processing industries. Many community and industry organizations have been working for decades to promote the agriculture sector and the Committee recommends that the Ministry of Agriculture partner with these organizations in support of this important work. A comprehensive and accessible reference should also be made available to highlight existing educational and other programs for those interested in entering the industry.

Committee Members recognized that the issue of slaughter capacity is complex, and discussed the many options and possible solutions put forward by stakeholders, acknowledging that there is not likely to be a single solution. The Committee thought that looking at possible ways to extend the finishing season, and encouraging producers and processors to diversify their skills through the sale of value-added specialty products, could be beneficial. The Committee also recommended that current travel time restrictions be reduced from two hours to one hour between Class A/B licensed facilities and Class D/E licensed facilities to help alleviate local slaughter capacity challenges and increase local livestock production. Committee Members heard about the benefits and drawbacks related to mobile slaughter facilities, and thought that regulations related to these facilities should be reviewed with an eye to making mobile slaughter more affordable and accessible for small-scale producers.

Consultation Process

The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food is one of ten permanent all-party committees of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. The Committee was instructed to examine, inquire into and make recommendations concerning local meat production in B.C., based on a discussion paper released by the Minister of Agriculture and referred to the Committee on April 24, 2018. The Committee was also asked to consider matters related to areas of provincial responsibility with respect to meat production regulations.

In response, the Committee launched their public consultation on May 16, 2018, in conjunction with B.C. Beef Day. The consultation included holding five public hearings throughout the province, as well as receiving submissions through the Committee's consultation portal and input through an online survey, which was based on the questions set out in the discussion paper. The consultation closed on June 15, 2018.

The Committee developed a comprehensive consultation plan to engage with British Columbians on topics related to local meat production and inspection. A province-wide news release was distributed on May 16, 2018 to launch the consultation that included information on how interested individuals and organizations could take part in the process. Additionally, the Committee placed a number of print and online advertisements in major provincial and community newspapers to encourage public participation. Radio advertisements were also used to reach out to stakeholders in many rural communities. The Committee used the Legislative Assembly's social media platforms, including Twitter and Facebook, to promote awareness of the consultation, encourage participation, and provide timely updates regarding the public hearings and the Committee's activities.

Discussion Paper and Online Survey

A discussion paper released by the Minister of Agriculture on April 24, 2018 was referred to the Committee by the Legislative Assembly. The paper invited British Columbians to provide input and suggestions related to the following questions:

1. Are there options for changing regulations and policy that could increase:
 - a. Livestock production in B.C.?
 - b. Processing in B.C. of animals raised in B.C.?
 - c. Slaughter capacity, especially in rural and remote communities?
 - d. Access to B.C. meat for consumers, retailers, restaurants, and institutional buyers?
 - e. Access to specialized types of slaughter to meet cultural and market-based demands?
 - f. Standards for food safety and the humane treatment of animals?
2. How can access to training and development be improved in order to support the meat production sector's need for skilled workers?

3. Are the regulations with respect to provincial meat production, including those under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health and the regional health authorities, clear and effective?
4. How can the provincial inspection system more effectively align with the federal meat inspection system in order to strengthen B.C.'s meat production, including the licensing of slaughter facilities (The federal government is responsible for licensing slaughter facilities that sell products outside of B.C.)?

An online survey was developed based on the questions included in the discussion paper. Overall, the Committee received a total of 74 responses to the online survey. A listing of all of the online survey respondents is available in Appendix C.

Presentations and Written Submissions

The Committee heard 50 presentations from individuals and organizations who presented either in-person or via teleconference at the Committee's five public hearings, including meat producers and processors, among others. A complete list of presenters is available in Appendix A.

The Committee received a total of 36 written submissions prior to the close of the consultation on Friday, June 15. A wide variety of individuals and those who represented organizations provided input, including producers, processors, consumers and those interested in animal welfare. The list of individuals and organizations who provided written submissions is available in Appendix B.

Copies of presentations and written submissions are available on the Committee's website at <https://www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/aff>

Site Visit

As part of the consultation process, Committee Members visited a meat processing facility to learn more about the meat industry in B.C. from a practical perspective. On June 11, 2018, they toured Gunter Bros. Co. Ltd., a family-owned and operated Class A licensed facility near Courtenay on Vancouver Island. Established in the 1930's, the business has grown and expanded, and currently processes approximately 1,000 beef, 2,000 swine, and 800-900 lambs every year, in addition to bison and fallow deer. There is also a full-scale cut-and-wrap facility, and the ability to cure and smoke meats.

As part of the site visit, Committee Members toured the "kill floor" where livestock is slaughtered; industrial coolers where recently-slaughtered swine, bison and lamb were hanging; and the cut-and-wrap area where large sections of meat were being butchered into smaller cuts either for retail sales, or further processed into products such as sausages. The Committee then had a brief tour of the retail shop located at the front of the facility where customers are able to purchase



locally-made artisanal meat products, as well as a tour of the office which has been set up for the Ministry of Agriculture inspector who performs onsite inspections on the days livestock is slaughtered.

While at the facility, the Committee heard that the limited supply of skilled and properly-trained workers, including those who perform the slaughter, butchering and prepare custom cuts of meat, is one challenge that the company faces in continuing to grow their business. It was noted that seasonality greatly affects the facility's ability to run at full capacity, with so many producers wanting to have their livestock slaughtered and processed at the same time each fall. Committee Members were interested to learn about the humane slaughter training program, which had been provided by the BC Association of Abattoirs in Nanaimo a few years ago and how beneficial this was in providing new or updated skills for the company's workers. Recently, the company hosted a Meat Processing Certificate Training Program, which is part of a pre-apprenticeship program available through Thompson Rivers University.

The Committee wishes to express their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Gunter family and their employees who took the time to provide a tour of their facility and share useful information. This was very helpful in gaining a better understanding of the meat processing industry, and receiving insights which were useful for the Committee's deliberations.

Meetings Schedule

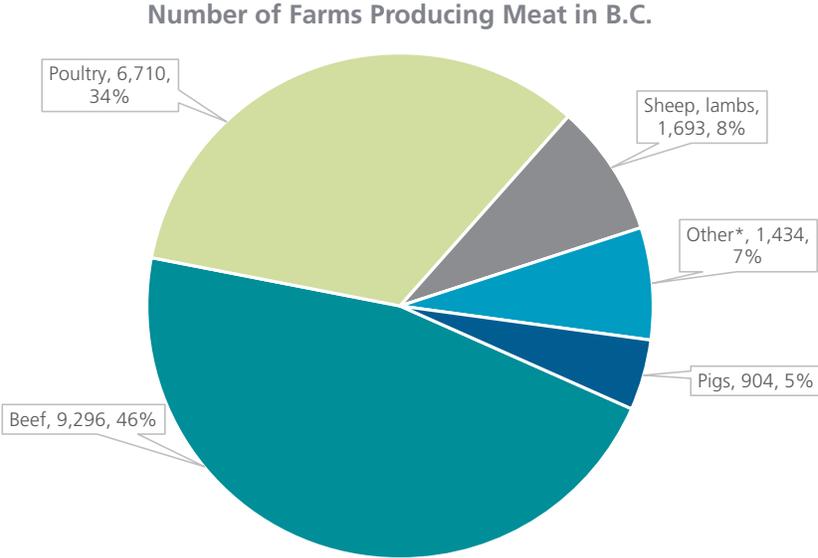
| Date | Type | Location(s) |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| April 26, 2018 | Organizational Meeting | Victoria |
| May 30, 2018 | Ministry Briefing; Planning | Victoria |
| June 11, 2018 | Public Hearing, Site Visit | Courtenay |
| June 12, 2018 | Public Hearings | Williams Lake, Castlegar |
| June 13, 2018 | Public Hearings | Cranbrook, Kamloops |
| July 6, 2018 | Informational Briefing; Deliberations | Victoria |
| July 17, 2018 | Informational Briefing; Deliberations | Victoria |
| July 19, 2018 | Deliberations | Victoria |
| September 5, 2018 | Deliberations | Victoria |
| September 7, 2018 | Deliberations; Adoption of Report | Victoria |

Overview

The world-renowned beauty of British Columbia’s natural landscape, temperate climate, and rich soil means that the quality and bounty of agricultural products are second to none. Whether it be pork and beef products from the Interior, lamb from the Gulf Islands, or poultry from the Fraser Valley, British Columbians count on local producers and processors to deliver fresh, healthy and safe meat products to their tables.

Current Statistics

British Columbia’s agricultural industry includes many diverse products. Census data from 2016 outlines a snapshot of meat production in the province, according to the chart below.



*Other includes: goats, bison, deer and rabbits

According to data provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, British Columbian consumer demand for some meat products is greater than what is produced locally, meaning that British Columbians also consume beef, pork and lamb products imported from other jurisdictions. For example, in 2013, British Columbians consumed 4.5 times more beef, 3.8 times more pork, and twice as much lamb than the amount produced in BC. Where the consumption of poultry is concerned, consumer statistics tell a different story in that British Columbians only consumed 57% of the chicken produced by local farmers, and consumed 70% of the turkey by B.C. producers.

Ministry of Agriculture data further indicates that the number of small (less than \$10,000 in annual sales) livestock farms (as a percentage of all livestock farms) declined by six percent from 2006 to 2016, with small beef farms showing the most significant decline. The number of small poultry and lamb farms has remained relatively consistent, and small hog farms has shown an increase during this time period. In terms of agricultural land, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, approximately five percent of B.C.’s total land base

is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), which is a provincial zone within which agriculture is recognized as the priority activity. The ALR includes public (Crown) and privately-held land in all regions of the province.

Regulations and Licensing

Between the 1960's and the early 2000's, provincial meat inspection in B.C. was decentralized. Implementation of inspection programs for local meat products was managed by municipalities, and on-farm slaughter of animals for commercial purposes was legal and largely unsupervised. The outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or "mad cow disease") in 2003 resulted in a major regulatory shift. In 2004, the Meat Inspection Regulation was introduced and had a significant impact on industry producers and processors.

The implementation of the Regulation meant that all meat destined for sale within the province was required to pass through a licensed and inspected slaughter facility. The regulation focused on three priorities to ensure that: animals are humanely handled and slaughtered; animal carcasses are processed in a clean environment; and meat is packaged and stored in ways that reduce contamination risks. At the time, government introduced the \$5 million Meat Transition Assistance Program (MTAP) to help existing unlicensed processing facilities to become licensed, and to provide transitional licensing and capital cost incentives for new facilities to be built under the new regime. As a result of the funding support provided under MTAP, the number of Class A and B licensed facilities grew during this time.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, overall B.C. livestock numbers declined between 2004 and 2010. This may have been caused by a number of factors, including the above-mentioned BSE outbreak that prevented the export of B.C. beef into U.S. markets; the fluctuating value of the Canadian dollar, in part due to the 2008 financial crisis; the increased cost of feed; and impacts from federal and provincial regulatory changes. From 2010 to the present, beef production has remained relatively stable in B.C., while the production of sheep and lambs, as well as pigs, has decreased somewhat. Poultry production has shown a steady increase, which is consistent with Canada-wide meat production trends. In response to feedback received from livestock producers who struggled with lack of access to licensed slaughter facilities, in 2010, the B.C. government reintroduced provisions for on-farm slaughter in two regions of the province under the current licensing system. This change was focused on geographical areas where licensed slaughter facilities did not exist, including sparsely-populated areas of the northern coast and interior region. Provisions for on-farm slaughter were gradually expanded over time to other regions of the province.

Another recent development was the federal government's decision to withdraw the provision of Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) staff from provincial inspection duties at the end of 2013, with the province taking on full responsibility for this service. Inspections related to meat production and inspection are carried out by Environmental Health Officers (Regional Health Authorities) for Class D and E licensed facilities, and meat inspectors (Ministry of Agriculture) inspect Class A and B licensed facilities. Ministry of Agriculture inspectors work cooperatively with producers and processors to ensure compliance with regulations through education, warnings, tickets and fines. Additionally, the Animal Health Act was updated in 2015 to allow better management of and response to animal diseases, including strengthening of detection and management of diseases that can spread between animals and humans, with a focus on preventing, detecting and eradicating animal diseases.

Classes of Abattoir Licensing

Slaughter facilities in B.C. are either registered with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, or are licensed by the province. Provincially-licensed slaughter facilities are only permitted to sell their products within B.C. whereas slaughter facilities registered with CFIA are permitted to export their products outside the province. This Committee report is strictly focused on the provincial licensing program. There are currently four classes of provincial slaughter licences available under the Graduated Licensing System as outlined in the chart below.

| Licence Type | Activities Permitted | Sales Permitted | Geographic Scope | # of Animal Units* | Oversight |
|--------------|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Class A | Slaughter, cut-and-wrap | Retail and direct to consumer | B.C. | Unlimited | Pre and post-slaughter inspection of each animal |
| Class B | Slaughter only | Retail and direct to consumer | B.C. | Unlimited | Pre and post-slaughter inspection of each animal |
| Class D | Slaughter only (own animals and other peoples' animals) | Retail and direct to consumer | Sales restricted within the regional district where meat is produced | 1 – 25 | Periodic site/facility assessments and audit of operational slaughter records (in inspection of animals) |
| Class E | Slaughter only (own animals only) | Direct to consumer only | Sales restricted within the regional district where meat is produced | 1 – 10 | Periodic site/facility assessments and audit of operational slaughter records (in inspection of animals) |
| Personal Use | Slaughter only | None | For producer only | Unlimited | None |

*One animal unit means: combined weight, when measured alive, of 1000 lbs (454 kg) of meat (e.g., beef, poultry, bison, etc.)

Informational Briefings

In order to gather information to aid in their deliberations and further broaden their knowledge of local meat production and inspection, the Committee heard from representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, representatives from two regional health authorities (Interior Health Authority and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority), the Provincial Enforcement Officer, as well as the Program Director from Thompson Rivers University's Applied Sustainable Ranching Program.

Ministry of Agriculture

On May 30, 2018, the Committee met with senior subject-matter experts from the Ministry of Agriculture who provided a briefing on B.C.'s meat inspection regime. Ministry representatives presented a thorough introduction for Members, including information on the history of meat inspection regulations in British Columbia, and details on the current program, as well as an explanation of the distinctions between different types of slaughter licences. The Committee also heard about the specific requirements for each type of licence and the relationships different licences have with each other, the health authorities, and the market.

The Committee was interested in gaining a better understanding of the rules and regulations related to Class D and E licences for facilities. Committee Members asked questions pertaining to the criteria for Class E licences, and expressed an interest in learning more about the considerations related to feasibility studies which are conducted prior to issuing a Class D or E licence. In addition to the various classes of licences, producers are allowed to slaughter their own animals for personal use or consumption.

Committee Members were also interested in learning more about the availability of inspectors, as well as the cost/benefit analysis of establishing a Class E facility and the potential contribution to a specific local population. Committee Members heard about issues raised by small-scale producers regarding Class A and B facilities, including how some are geographically too far away, how Class A and B facilities sometimes do not have the time to slaughter their animals, how some facilities do not want to deal with small-scale producers, and how the slaughter is not done as specified or desired by the small-scale producer. Conversely, Committee Members learned about the concerns that some Class A and B facilities have in working with small-scale producers, such as scheduling conflicts, inconsistent communication, orders taking up storage space and not being picked up when scheduled, and livestock not being delivered on time.

Regional Health Authorities

On July 6, 2018, the Committee met with representatives from the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and the Interior Health Authority. The representatives who attended the meeting described the role of the regional health authorities, provided an overview of licensing and inspection for Class D and E licensed facilities in B.C., and presented comments from health authority staff with respect to the questions set out in the discussion paper.

The Committee learned that the typical caseload for Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in Interior Health is 250 - 300 facilities, including Class D and E facilities, which means that resources are currently stretched to

capacity. As part of their mandate, EHOs perform evaluations to issue licences and inspect all types of facilities in addition to slaughter facilities, including restaurants, pools, and tattoo parlors.

EHOs inspect Class D and E licensed facilities once every one to five years, depending on the level of risk, and focus on facilities, not the animals or slaughter. All facilities are assessed as either low, moderate, or high risk during licensing. For on-farm slaughter facilities, those deemed high-risk are inspected once a year, moderate-risk facilities are inspected once every three years, and low risk facilities are inspected once every five years. No slaughter facilities in B.C. are currently classified as high risk, and only 20 percent are assessed at moderate risk. If EHOs discover that a facility is not in compliance, the EHOs will work with the facility to provide information and education to gain compliance. Enforcement measures, including penalties, are considered a last resort that is only used when voluntary measures fail.

The Committee was interested to hear how inspection services provided by EHOs could be expanded to include the inspection of animals before, during and after slaughter performed at D and E licensed facilities. The Committee heard that inspection could be expanded; however, this would require additional training for EHOs, as their current job descriptions do not include matters related to ensuring animal health and welfare before and during the slaughter process. The representatives identified online training and animal health, as well as slaughter technique training as the main gaps to be filled for regional health authorities. It was also noted that no additional funding was provided to health authorities when they took on inspection of Class D and E facilities. As an alternative solution, the Committee heard that inspections could be carried out by local veterinarians.

The Committee asked what actions could address the lack of slaughter capacity, increase inspections, while continuing to ensure food safety and animal welfare. The representative from Interior Health proposed more Class B facilities spread throughout the province, while the representative from Vancouver Coastal Health believed many remote communities could not support a Class B operation. Both agreed that funding is required in order to increase food production and support smaller operators.

The Regional Health Authority representatives informed the Committee that they were not aware of any disease outbreaks related to public health that had been traced back to a Class D or E licensed facility. It was noted that such an outbreak would be small, could go unreported, and may not be traceable. Other questions covered risk assessments, EHO travel, traceability, complaint-driven audits, and the impact of regulations on operators. Finally, the Committee inquired about the licensing process, asking how many inquiries with respect to Class D and E licences actually result in a licence applications or licences granted. The representatives indicated that while these statistics are not collected, not all inquiries result in licences.

Ministry of Agriculture (additional briefing)

On July 17, 2018, the Committee heard from the Ministry of Agriculture for a second time to follow up on items that were raised during the consultation. The provincial Enforcement Officer spoke about his role and noted that he backstops inspectors for Class A and B facilities, investigates complaints associated with all licensed facilities, and works to combat unlawful slaughter, and the associated unlawful sale of uninspected meat. The authority for the Enforcement Officer is derived from the Food Safety Act.

The Committee had several questions about workload, in light of the fact that there is only one Enforcement Officer for the province, and the number of files dealt with is increasing each year as the ministry becomes better at discovering issues. Representatives from the ministry reported that this year is on track to have over

40 files, 50-60 percent of which are in the lower mainland. The Committee heard that Investigations take varying amounts of time to complete, and there are capacity issues at certain times of the year. With the Food and Agricultural Products Classification Act to be enforced starting in September, which potentially could result in new responsibilities and a steady increase in files, ministry representatives felt that they are approaching capacity. The office does not contract out investigations, but collaborates with other agencies in a multi-jurisdictional approach, including local governments, bylaw enforcement officers, the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA), RCMP, and health authorities. When asked, the Enforcement Officer noted there is good collaboration and exchange of information between the Ministry of Agriculture and the regional health authorities.

The Committee was also curious about non-compliance. The Enforcement Officer noted that five files have posed health risks, all of which were illegal, unlicensed operations. When non-compliance occurs, the initial approach is to provide education to help bring the operation into compliance. It was noted that several formerly-illegal operations have undergone the licensing process, and are now legitimate meat processors. If providing education does not suffice to ensure compliance, then a warning is issued, and if compliance is still not met, then a ticket will be issued, which has an accompanying fine. Another area that the Committee focused on was coordination between agencies to fill gaps and ensure safety. Livestock auctions were identified as a gap, as there is no inspection of animals at the time of sale. Several agencies are involved in oversight of animals for meat production. The BC SPCA covers animal welfare at auction yards and on farms, but does not address animal health. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) covers transport of animals, and until 2014, CFIA provided inspection to provinces for a fee. In 2015, B.C. took over inspection of provincial facilities. The Ministry of Agriculture inspects animal health at Class A and B licensed facilities, and the Ministry of Health oversees Class D and E facilities, but does not inspect animals.

The Committee learned from Ministry of Agriculture representatives that it could be challenging to concentrate all of these responsibilities under one agency; however, there may be opportunities to ensure that gaps are filled. To expand inspection, one option would be for the Ministry of Agriculture meat inspectors to do facility inspections in slower months. Training to be a meat inspector within the Ministry of Agriculture is a three-and-a-half-week full-time program at an animal health lab, and the Ministry would share these resources to train inspectors if needed.

Thompson Rivers University (Applied Sustainable Ranching Program)

On July 17, 2018, the Committee heard from Gillian Watt, the Program Director of the Applied Sustainable Ranching Program* at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) campus in Williams Lake. Ms. Watt described the program's curriculum as unique in North America. The two-year diploma offers the opportunity to transfer credits to related degree-program options at Olds College or TRU. The program offers a blended approach of online and on-campus learning, including hands-on work and classroom assignments. Students spend two years living and working on a ranch while they perform hands-on work, as well study and learn about topics such as low-input regenerative agriculture, maintaining a work-life balance, and traditional use of the land. There is a focus on building a business plan, including opportunities for students to calculate borrower-risk rating and do business case analysis with the goal of students building their own enterprise. The courses are all taught by experts in the field, and the program culminates with students creating a comprehensive three-year business and operations plan.

The Committee had several questions focused on participation in the program, and learned that the program is about to begin its third cohort this fall. Fourteen students enrolled in the first cohort and eighteen are enrolled in the third. Most students are from B.C.; however, some come from other provinces and there are several international students. The program has also had four First Nations students participate in the program, and the university is focused on increasing First Nations enrolment. The ages of students have ranged from seventeen to forty-eight, and the third cohort will include two high-school students participating in the program for dual credit.

Members were also curious about the education students receive on abattoir-related work. The Committee heard that the class on abattoirs involved a panel of representatives from every part of the food production chain, with the class being a popular one because of the need for licensed abattoirs in the area. In response to Members' questions regarding the current offerings for slaughter facilities, Ms. Watt noted that she recommends her students use Class A and B licensed abattoirs as those facilities are inspected. Students also learn about spreading out their finishing times for livestock as part of good practice. Other questions focused on marketing for the program, graduate outcomes, the cost to students, and whether opportunities might exist to expand the high-school program.

*Note: program name will change to the "Sustainable Agriculture and Enterprise Management Program" in Sept. 2018.

Abattoir Licensing and Oversight

British Columbian farmers, producers and processors are proud of the products produced in our province, and they want consumers to feel good about the products they bring home to their families. Throughout the consultation, the Committee heard about the need to ensure that our food system continues to be safe so that British Columbians can remain confident about the meat products they purchase and consume. Licensing and oversight regarding meat production and inspection is currently overseen by two bodies. Inspectors at the Ministry of Agriculture are responsible for the oversight of slaughter at Class A and B licensed facilities, so their area of focus is the animals before, during and after slaughter. The Environmental Health Officers with the Regional Health Authorities, under the Ministry of Health, are responsible for ensuring requirements and standards are met at Class D and E licensed facilities with respect to processing (not slaughter).

Inspection and Enforcement

The Committee heard from a number of presenters who suggested that inspection regulations and standards currently in place for Class A and B licensed facilities could be expanded or modified to apply to Class D and E licensed facilities, thereby bringing provincial meat inspection within a single centralized system. A number of other stakeholders suggested that a single agency could help ensure improved food safety, animal welfare, quality of meat products, and effective traceability programs – all to increase the public trust in provincial food systems and meat products. Survey respondents, in particular, indicated that they felt that regulations are unclear, and suggested that these might be standardized between various agencies or ministries.

The Small Scale Meat Producers Association, for example, recommended bringing all licence classes under the purview of a single authority, preferably the Ministry of Agriculture. This could increase efficiency, reduce capacity for error, and provide clearer direction and better understanding of regulations and the codes of practice for producers and processors. Input from survey respondents indicated that current regulations are too restrictive or onerous for small producers, and can increase costs where profit margins are already minimal. A number of stakeholders suggested that the government should look at best practices in other jurisdictions where similar regulations or licensing systems are in place.

Regularity, Scope and Coordination of Inspections

Committee Members heard repeatedly from presenters and those that made written submissions that inspections of Class D and E licensed facilities should include inspection of slaughter, and that the frequency of inspections should be increased. A number of presenters, including Fraser Valley Specialty Poultry, spoke positively about creating an enhanced inspection system, noting that this would help bring credibility to the sector and allow it to continue to grow.

The Committee heard that scheduled inspections in regard to slaughter were beneficial for Class A and B producers, in terms of time management and promoting efficiency in their work. Some stakeholders recommended that random, spot-check inspections where inspectors would arrive unannounced could be beneficial for inspection of Class D and E licensed facilities.

A number of presenters and those that made written submissions expressed concerns regarding the perceived lack of oversight of Class D and E facilities, which do not have to adhere to the same standards that apply to Class A and B facilities. Many proponents called for the standardization and coordination of all inspections under a single agency to assist with harmonization of regulations and lessen the frequency of misinterpretation of expected standards. While a number of presenters and submitters called for provincial and federal regulations to be harmonized, others suggested that the two systems should remain separate.

Food Safety

The Committee heard repeatedly from multiple stakeholders that farmers, producers and those involved in production and the sale of B.C. meat want to ensure the highest levels of food safety for consumers.

Representatives from a number of organizations and individuals noted that traceability regarding the origin of the meat products can help ensure food safety standards are in place, as well as allow inspectors and others involved in food safety oversight to isolate issues quickly before they become a public health risk. A number of presenters and those that made written submissions noted that the ongoing use of radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags and barcodes to identify animals for slaughter needs to be continued and increased.

Some stakeholders suggested that third-party inspections could be increased as a way to ensure adherence to regulations, and to provide onsite information and education to producers and processors. The owners of Gunter Bros. Meat Co. Ltd. suggested that all provincially-licensed slaughter plants in B.C. should be required by regulation to provide annual proof of commercial insurance for slaughtering meat and that the minimum required liability insurance should be \$2M.

“We want to work together with scientists, regulatory bodies and the industries we support, like feed companies, abattoirs and butcher shops, to ensure that meat produced by small-scale producers in British Columbia is safe, delicious, and abundant.” - Small Scale Meat Producers Association

Consumers and Uninspected Meat

A number of stakeholders noted that consumers may not be aware they could be purchasing uninspected meat and that there is not enough public awareness regarding the differences in buying meat products from licensed or unlicensed facilities, or through farmer’s markets. The Windermere District Farmers Institute noted that consumer confidence exists when controls are in place including adherence to regulations, regular inspections of farms and facilities, traceability, as well as proper labelling and packaging.

Several producers noted the different regulations pertaining to different types of facilities and the associated enforcement of these regulations being uneven. Other producers highlighted the unfair competition created by the sale of uninspected meat at a lower cost as a concern. In light of this, a number of presenters suggested that clearer labelling for uninspected meat should be in place so that consumers can be made fully aware of the risks associated with the product they may want to purchase. Sometimes uninspected meat is labelled as coming from a regulated or licensed facility, which may be true, but that does not mean the meat has gone through an inspection process. To avoid confusion related to consumer perception, a number of presenters suggested that a public education campaign could help consumers make well-informed purchasing decisions.

Should a health issue arise from the consumption of meat from any class of facility (inspected or not), producers felt that this would create a negative effect on the whole meat production industry, and raise doubts among consumers about food safety. A number of stakeholders suggested that incentive transitional funding could be provided to help uninspected facilities or abattoirs meet the standards and associated costs to become fully inspected facilities. Additionally, more information and education could be beneficial to help reinforce provincial standards among producers and processors.

Humane Treatment of Animals

A theme heard throughout the consultation was that producers and processors want to ensure that animals raised for food are treated humanely. Stakeholders felt that, in general, this is currently done well; however, some individuals and organizations expressed concerns related to the humane treatment of animals in farming or meat production, as well as issues related to the transport, handling, holding and slaughter of animals.

Regulations, Oversight and Enforcement

Committee Members heard from a number of large and small-scale producers and industry professionals who suggested that policies and regulations regarding the humane treatment of animals should be continuously reviewed and updated to ensure recommended practices remain up to date. A number of presenters and those that made written submissions called for government to enact stiffer penalties and higher fines against producers or processors who treat animals and livestock inhumanely, or who do not adhere to regulations regarding the upkeep and state of their facilities. The Committee received numerous requests that updated training curriculum and materials related to the humane treatment of animals be provided to all producers and processors, including online options.

Some individuals who made written submissions suggested that the use of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) be mandated within all provincial slaughter facilities to monitor workers and ensure that humane practices are being adhered to in abattoirs. Others suggested that if current regulations are expanded to Class D and E facilities, the number of provincial inspectors will need to be increased to address the frequency and coverage of scheduled and random inspections at those facilities.

Transportation and Holding of Animals

A number of stakeholders, including a B-class licence holder, and other individuals through written submissions, expressed concerns regarding the transportation of animals. To reach slaughter facilities, animals may be transported in cramped conditions in all kinds of weather, which can mean travel over long distances in severe temperatures.

Extensive travel places stress on the animals, which can lead to bruising, injury or death. Several presenters noted that stress produces a hormone in animals being transported which leads to a noticeable difference in the quality of the product ultimately sold to customers. One presenter noted that animals need to be secured at slaughter facilities based on time constraints and can be left in restrictive holding pens in unfamiliar surroundings at the slaughterhouse facility, sometimes overnight. This can cause stress in the animals which leads to decreased muscle tone and can lower the quality of meat.

Committee Deliberations

The Committee heard a variety of opinions, and sometimes conflicting information, regarding inspection and enforcement. Some proponents recommended the expansion of current Ministry of Agriculture inspection standards and regulations, as well as safety standards, to cover Class D and E facilities. A number of presenters advocated for the amalgamation of the services provided by the regional health authorities (inspection of Class D and E facilities, and cut-and-wrap service facilities) and the Ministry of Agriculture (inspection of slaughter at Class A and B facilities) under a single operating body in the interest of better alignment to help alleviate confusion among producers and processors. Committee Members noted that many stakeholders appreciated the value of oversight for the meat production and processing industries, and how increased oversight could serve to make the industries stronger in the future.

Committee Members understood that many Class A and B facilities had already undergone significant updates through owner investments to meet current regulations and standards, and that these facility owners are concerned about fairness and consistency in relation to Class D and E facilities. To ensure producers and processors continue to have ongoing opportunities for constructive dialogue in relation to inspections and enforcement, the Committee would like to see regular reviews of the inspection system conducted in the future, to include consultation with relevant stakeholders. Committee Members also discussed the current model of relying on regional district boundaries in relation to producer markets and speculated if there could be some flexibility in this distinction that could help producers reach markets closer to home.

The Committee recognized the importance of food safety and traceability to ensure that British Columbians can feel confident about the local meat products they purchase and consume. Committee Members acknowledged that the systems in place to ensure food safety and product quality appear to be working well and they are proud of the work currently being done. Committee Members discussed the viewpoints presented to them regarding the potential value of adding more meat inspectors or independent third-party validators to proactively enhance the current system, thereby ensuring continued high levels of food safety. Some Members expressed concerns about the current model where a single enforcement officer ensures compliance for the whole province and wondered if a regional approach to compliance enforcement might provide better coverage province-wide. Members also wondered if veterinarians, existing EHOs, Ministry of Agriculture meat inspectors, or other appropriate third-party professionals, could receive (re)training and/or have their numbers increased without a great deal of additional cost.

Committee Members acknowledged the input they heard from stakeholders who suggested that tighter regulations and increased inspections could drive up costs for producers and processors. This in turn could drive some consumers to the black market to purchase uninspected meat, while other consumers would be willing to pay higher costs for meat products with the assurance that their purchase had been properly inspected according to established standards. In terms of the feedback they heard from Class D and E facility operators who said they would welcome more regular inspections, the Committee would like to see the Ministry of Agriculture ensure that Class D and E licensed facilities undergo regular inspections, including slaughter, to be supported by appropriate levels of staffing, and the possible use of virtual technologies. This would provide an opportunity to support small-scale producers and processors and grow a more robust industry overall.

Committee Members heard feedback from stakeholders who indicated that there may be a gap in inspection and enforcement related to livestock sales or auctions where the Animal Health Act enables provincial inspectors to enter a public livestock sale yard to test animals, but no regulation is currently implemented to

ensure this happens on a regular basis. The Committee would like to see the appropriate regulation-making authorities under the Animal Health Act undertake a review of this issue to find a resolution. The Committee also heard that British Columbians need to feel confident that the meat products they purchase have been produced to a rigorous standard to ensure public health. The Committee discussed the opportunity to increase consumer awareness and ensure better identification of inspected and uninspected meat products as potential approaches to provide better public education and increase consumer confidence.

Committee Members further discussed the importance of the humane treatment of animals and want to ensure that current policies, regulations, and best practices are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure the best possible treatment of animals raised for public consumption. Enforcement of regulations, regular inspections, ongoing training, and stiff penalties or fines for those who contravene regulations were all brought forward by the Committee as ways to ensure the humane treatment of farm animals. Transportation of animals over long distances and cramped holding pens at abattoirs were other issues the Committee wishes to address with their recommendations, while recognizing that animals in transport are not under provincial authority. As an alternative to long-haul transport of animals, the Committee Members discussed the benefits of mobile abattoirs which allow the animals to be slaughtered in familiar surroundings, thus promoting better animal welfare. However, current regulations with respect to mobile slaughter facilities would need to be reviewed for ways to increase accessibility of these facilities for small producers by addressing the cost-prohibitive docking station requirements.

Recommendations:

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Inspection and Enforcement

1. Encourage the Ministry of Agriculture to look for ways to improve cross-ministry coordination, collaboration and communication to expand current meat inspection and enforcement services to realize efficiencies, minimize risks, ensure consistency, simplify practices for producers and processors, as well as share best practices and enhance skills.
2. As a way of supporting small-scale meat producers and processors, require the Ministry of Agriculture (or their designate) to increase resources to enable engagement with Class D and E licensed facilities to ensure increased inspections at those facilities, including slaughter.
3. Help Class D and E licensed producers reach markets closer to home by investigating alternative boundary restrictions for sales, other than regional districts.
4. Work with relevant authorities to address the gap that currently exists in inspection and enforcement related to livestock sales or auctions to enable provincial inspectors to enter a public livestock sale yard to test animals on a regular basis.
5. Investigate options to expand use of current technologies to extend or implement virtual inspections in communities, where available.

6. Confirm that regular reviews of the inspection system occur, in consultation with producers and processors, to ensure ongoing opportunities for assessment and improvement of the current system.

Food Safety

7. Provide ongoing training and education opportunities, including during inspections, to producers and processors with respect to food quality and safety, as well as the humane treatment of animals, to share knowledge and awareness of current best practices.

Humane Treatment of Animals

8. Ensure there are sufficient resources available for enforcement to ensure compliance in relation to regulations regarding the humane treatment of animals by those engaged in all aspects of meat production and inspection.

Skilled Labour and Workforce

Stakeholders identified difficulties in finding staff due to a lack of trained workers in local meat production, particularly in processing. Given the seasonal nature and high costs involved in the industry, as well as limited access to training, it is difficult for producers and processors to maintain a skilled workforce. Encouraging young people to enter the industry is challenging, particularly when training is sparse and facilities need to balance hiring experienced workers with those who are newer to the industry. The Committee heard that those entering the industry need access to hands-on training to gain the experience required by employers and that employers need consistent, well-paid work to attract skilled workers and to ensure consistency and longevity for their workforce.

Education and Training

Operators of Class A and B licensed facilities, along with producers, indicated that difficulties in attracting and retaining skilled labour are causing processors to operate below capacity, thereby creating challenges for everyone in the industry. Submissions from operators of Class A and B facilities identified staffing issues as a key reason that plants are operating below capacity, and the BC Association of Abattoirs identified particular labour shortages in the cut-and-wrap stage of processing. Numerous stakeholders informed the Committee of the importance of building a skilled workforce to encourage new farmers to enter the industry, make meat production a viable career path, and build slaughter capacity in the province.

Stakeholders offered suggestions to address the lack of trained workers such as: improving the availability of training, encouraging more people to undergo training, providing financial support as needed, and improving the training currently offered by provincial institutions and organizations. Many producers and processors shared the view that access to training is inadequate, particularly for the cut-and-wrap stage of processing where capacity is most underserved. For example, a rancher and a Class A facility operator both recommended making training available in a greater variety of locations throughout the province to improve access in small communities. In addition, several producers suggested offering training online, with the requirement that an in-person demonstration slaughter of an animal is carried out before issuing a licence.

“If meat inspection and slaughter can be made into an honourable and a knowledge-based, training-based, certification-based, employment stream, then more people can be recruited to help support the existing operators who have trouble finding qualified staff.”
- Cariboo Cattlemen’s Association

The Cariboo Cattlemen’s Association, among others, identified specialized training to build the profession into something viewed as a skilled trade would both attract more workers and improve the available training. In addition, survey respondents and stakeholders recommended outreach at the secondary education level to demonstrate to young people that working in local meat production is a viable long-term career option and recognized as a skilled trade. Finally, financial aid in the form of scholarships or funding for apprenticeships were identified by stakeholders as incentives which could encourage more people to undergo training. Some survey responses suggested that increasing opportunities for appropriately-trained foreign workers to enter the production industry could help alleviate labour shortages during busy times of the year.

Many stakeholders indicated different ways that existing training could be improved. The Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance suggested providing greater access to skills upgrading and development. Several small processors and a number of survey respondents indicated a preference for training that involves first-hand experience, such as an apprenticeship or co-op position, along with ongoing mentorship opportunities. A number of stakeholders noted that training needs to be offered in remote areas of the province, as well as in larger centres. Finally, to ensure current standards of food safety and the humane treatment of animals are maintained, stakeholders, including the BC SPCA, expressed support for government-licensed, third-party verified training to be presented in a variety of accessible formats.

Wages and Benefits

Building a stable, long-term workforce requires offering competitive and attractive benefits and wages in relation to comparable industries. Presenters recommended assisting small businesses to do this through funding and support to allow year-round employment opportunities. The District A Farmers' Institute explained that people are reluctant to pay for training that leads to a minimum wage position, so to increase the numbers of skilled and trained workers in local meat production, wages must be increased in the industry. The Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance agreed and recommended funding co-op style training programs with subsidized wages. On the other hand, the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District and a Class A licence holder argued that paying a living wage would increase the price of meat and the cost of transporting animals to above what can be sustained by businesses.

The BC Association of Abattoirs indicated that providing year-round work or support would also serve to increase wages and would help to retain workers. A number of stakeholders urged the Committee to support producers in moving to a year-round schedule to make work in the industry more stable. In addition, a Class A licence holder suggested a tax or fee to create a fund that processors could access in slow months, similar to a wage subsidy, to aid in the provision of year-round financial support. Conversely, a number of producers expressed the view that a year-round finishing schedule is not feasible, as animals are born in the spring and gain weight eating summer grass. Extending the season would require housing animals through the winter and purchasing grain for feed, which would drastically increase costs.

Recruitment and Retention of Skilled Labour

Stakeholders urged the Committee to build the workforce by growing the local meat industry and developing apprenticeship-style training programs. A number of presenters suggested taking steps to expand local meat production across the province. Growth would make the entire industry more lucrative, bring in more money to attract skilled workers, and create more consistent work to retain them.

The Committee heard from a Class D licence holder and producer who suggested that subsidized wages during training or implementing wage matching programs could help to attract more skilled labour and assist small producers in offering competitive wages to invest in the workforce. Variations of mentorship-based learning were widely supported across presentations and submissions. For example, one processor proposed holding a practical portion of training at existing facilities and a Class A licence holder urged the Committee to adopt the European model of apprenticeship for butchers.

Committee Deliberations

Committee Members recognize that attracting and retaining staff would help build slaughter capacity for the whole province, thus benefiting the industry overall. Work in local meat production must become stable and offer opportunities for year-round employment before young people will choose it as a career path. Members discussed different ways to support a skilled workforce and examined existing opportunities for education including post-secondary courses, SlaughterSAFE, and training provided by facilities and organizations. Through the consultation, it became clear to the Committee that the need for more local training and year-round work were key issues to be addressed.

Committee Members would like to see continued action to build robust educational programs that include value-added skills like sausage-making to help producers diversify their product offerings, as well as the exploration of vertical integration models to extend the busy season. Secondary and post-secondary institutions already offer courses that can prepare young people to enter meat production and processing industries in B.C., such as the Sustainable Ranching Program at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) in Williams Lake, which is a hands-on program that prepares students to be producers.

The Committee also inquired about training for processors. There is currently only one meat cutting program in B.C. The Retail Meat Processing Certificate is a nine-month, primarily hands-on program that is offered at TRU in Kamloops which includes value added processing in its curriculum. Members raised the question of whether there is demand to expand this type of training to the Fraser Valley, or to institutions in other regions of the province. This would be beneficial in utilizing local expertise, creating opportunities for local recruitment, and allowing those interested in entering the industry to train closer to home. The Committee suggested that funding be maintained or increased for agricultural education at post-secondary institutions and the high school level, and that government could look into enhancing these programs to encourage young people to take on meat production and processing or butchering as viable career options.

The Committee also considered the proposal to move the SlaughterSAFE course online or to a correspondence course model to provide greater access in remote communities, as well as have the course run more frequently and serve as an opportunity to refresh existing skills. Currently, the SlaughterSAFE course is only run once there are several applicants in a region, which the Committee heard can result in delays related to licensing approval for all classes of facilities. Moving the course online using existing best practices for distance education would increase access and build the skill and capacity of local meat processing in the province. With the understanding that the current SlaughterSAFE program does not include training on actual slaughter techniques, the Committee wishes to ensure that opportunities for proper training in safety and humane practices around slaughter are provided. Thus, the need to include a hands-on slaughter training component in addition to the demonstration slaughter was noted by Committee Members.

Committee Members also acknowledged the learning that takes place in abattoirs, and recognized the role that inspectors can play in this. The Committee learned that inspectors are present for each slaughter, and can offer suggestions to bring processors up to date on evolving best practices, and that inspectors are a source of information on food safety and the humane treatment of animals. The Committee heard from many processors that inspectors are a welcome source of information and expertise. Committee Members discussed ways to support licensed abattoirs that are interested in offering training, either in the form of short courses in the off-season, or by providing mentorship opportunities. This would enable valuable first-hand experience to be shared, and provide opportunities to upgrade or learn specific skills for those taking courses. Additionally, the Committee noted that this could provide a source of revenue for processors

outside of slaughter season, and create the potential to find new workers through teaching and mentoring opportunities.

Committee Members emphasized that training must be made available in a manner conducive to people who work on farms, and may not reflect a typical class schedule. Members also discussed other ideas, including the provision of training for producers to extend the finishing season, as well as an increased focus on specialty products and value-added skills to allow processors to diversify. Members also discussed promoting the industry through district agriculturalists and agricultural fairs. The Committee noted that a variety of industry organizations engage and educate young people about agriculture and local meat. Members proposed acting in cooperation with existing organizations that conduct outreach or provide scholarships. The creation of a list of industry-specific educational opportunities in the province could also help guide young people who are interested in a career in agriculture or local meat production or processing.

Recommendations:

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Education and Training

9. Offer additional opportunities for professional or post-secondary training programs to encourage new entries into the meat production and processing industries, and to provide upgrading or new skill development for those already working in these industries to promote career longevity.
10. Ensure that information regarding safe slaughtering techniques, safety standards and best practices is made available in a variety of formats (including online or through a correspondence course model), is kept up to date, and is supported with in-person training and slaughter opportunities.

Recruitment and Retention of Skilled Labour

11. Look at options to develop or enhance existing apprenticeship, mentorship and co-op training programs, including opportunities at the high school level, to help build workforce capacity and transfer valuable institutional knowledge. [See recommendation #16 under Slaughter Capacity]

Industry Growth and Development

The importance of providing policies, programs and initiatives that work in collaboration with farmers, producers and those in the processing and retail sectors of meat production to ensure continued industry growth and development was of great importance to the majority of stakeholders the Committee heard from. Those already in the meat production industry want to see the industry thrive for future generations, for the benefit of all British Columbians by providing food that comes from local, sustainable and safe sources.

Access to Farmland

Thoughtful land stewardship was on the minds of many presenters and the need for more farmland for meat production, including forage land for grazing herds, was highlighted by a number of stakeholders. For example, the BC Cattlemen's Association pointed out that livestock production could be increased through careful land stewardship, forage production, and utilizing forage effectively to assist in the increase of herd sizes.

A number of presenters spoke about the difficulties that new and existing farmers and producers face in accessing viable and affordable land suitable for agricultural use and livestock production. The Committee heard that stakeholders want available farmland, including the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), protected and used to its full capacity, thus ensuring its use for future generations of B.C. farmers and enabling better food security for all British Columbians. Some presenters stated that viable farmland within the ALR should not be encumbered by covenants which restrict the land's agricultural use. A number of stakeholders suggested that Crown-owned land should be brought into the ALR to increase the availability of viable farmland, or see if there are tracts of workable farmland currently sitting fallow which could be brought into production.

Marketing and Promotion

The Committee heard repeatedly that B.C. producers, processors and retailers are proud of the local products produced in all regions of the province, claiming that B.C.-raised and produced meat products compare to the best the world has to offer. A number of organizations highlighted the success of the Buy BC program; however, they suggested that more can be done to promote the purchasing of local products to consumers, retailers, restaurants and institutional buyers. The Central Kootenay Food Policy Council suggested that access to B.C.-raised and slaughtered meats could be increased by having the government strongly promote and endorse BC inspected meat through programs like Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC. The Council further noted buying products from independent grocers, local meat shops and other venues that are sourcing from B.C.-inspected abattoirs would help to support the industry. Other stakeholders indicated that the increased promotion of the benefits of buying local B.C. products is beneficial for a number of reasons, including improving animal health and welfare, benefitting the environment with less transportation of animals, benefitting family farms and local economies, and increasing food safety.

Allowing more farm-gate sales (currently Class D and E) could be beneficial in permitting producers the opportunity to diversify their products, realize additional income in slower seasons, and build relationships with local customers, either through sales at local farmer's markets or through direct consumer transactions on their farms. Presenters noted that any farm-gate sales would need to adhere to current slaughter and food safety and sales regulations, as well as recognized best practices. In addition to this, a number of survey respondents suggested that government should have procurement policies dedicated to acquiring local B.C. meat products as a way to increase sales for local producers and processors.

Financial Considerations

A number of stakeholders highlighted a number of issues related to the various costs associated with farming and the production and processing of meat products. They suggested that subsidies, operating grants, low-interest loans, or other forms of financial aid could be provided. The high cost of transporting livestock to a licensed facility for processing was noted by a number of producers, including the Island Pastures Beef Producers Association, especially for those in remote or geographically-challenging areas, including those that rely on ferry service. Processors noted the high costs to transition to a Class A or B licensed facility, or to start up a new processing facility in an underserved community. The Committee heard concerns about fairness from a Class A facility operator who explained that the owners of Class A and B licensed facilities had already invested significant costs to set up their facilities or upgrade existing plants to meet regulations when the current province-wide inspection system was introduced in 2004.

Hydro, equipment and liability insurance were other types of costs that can weigh heavily on the budgets of producers and processors. A small-scale producer noted that the disposal of offal or Specified Risk Material (SRM) in a community without a large land base and without affordable access to large-scale composting or rendering facilities is a challenge. A written submission encouraged the Committee to look into the possibility of amending the compensation and disaster financial assistance regulation that restricts emergency support to those who derive more than 50 percent of their income from farming to ensure that farmers and producers are adequately compensated in cases where a natural disaster or emergency affects their ability to produce their product.

Slaughter Capacity

During the consultation, lack of slaughter capacity was strongly identified as a problem by producers and processors alike and it became apparent that this is a complex issue with no simple solution. The Committee learned that the vast majority of cattle are finished at the same time of year to make the best use of available pasture for livestock grazing and the milder temperatures in the spring, summer and fall months, creating a processing bottleneck that lasts from August to November. Producers have trouble accessing slaughter in the fall when their animals are ready, and must book months in advance, sometimes before they know how many animals they will have for slaughter. They face undesirable options to process animals at greater cost while they are too small, or continue to feed animals long after they are ready to be processed at an additional cost.

Additionally, processors have trouble attracting skilled labour because of the seasonal nature of the work, as well as low wages, and so are unable to build up staffing capacity. One industry association suggested that outreach, education and support for producers to switch to a year-round finishing schedule where animals are slaughtered at several times throughout the year could help to create year-round work and build slaughter capacity. Producers also indicated that finishing animals when it is too cold for them to survive and

there is no grass to eat is not economically viable in all regions of the province. Some producers suggested engaging with other industries to learn how they deal with seasonal demand to look for solutions or best practices. The Central Kootenay Food Policy Council proposed providing funding and training to help abattoirs process a wider range of species to spread demand for slaughter over a longer period of time and increase access for different types of producers.

Several submissions, including survey responses, focused on increasing the number of existing slaughter facilities in the province. A number of producers and processors agreed that most capacity issues arise from cut-and-wrap and other additional processing, not slaughter itself, and suggested providing additional training to help alleviate the bottlenecks that occur at certain times of the year. A producer from the Gulf Islands explained that most abattoirs in B.C. can only process 20 -30 animals at a time, which creates difficulties for producers with larger herds. Building the capacity of existing abattoirs by moving from a Class E or D licence to a Class A or B licence could also increase capacity.

Some stakeholders expressed support for increasing the number of Class D and E licensed facilities to increase overall slaughter capacity, thus resulting in a greater number of smaller plants across the province. Alternatively, other stakeholders believe that allowing more Class D and E licences could make existing Class A and B licensed facilities economically unviable, which could potentially cause larger facilities to close, thus decreasing overall capacity. In addition to this, many producers expressed concerns regarding the cost of upgrading from a Class D or E facility to a Class A or B licensed facility.

Local and Mobile Slaughter Facilities

A number of stakeholders, including the operator of a Class D or E facility, as well as a number of written submissions and survey responses, indicated that increasing the number of smaller, local slaughter facilities could help improve the treatment of animals produced for consumption, including allowing more on-farm slaughter and creating more opportunities for mobile abattoirs. These types of transportable facilities can temporarily set up at a producer's location to perform slaughter services, thus alleviating the stressors of travel altogether, although these facilities require docking stations which can be cost prohibitive for some producers to construct onsite. Mobile slaughter facilities would also benefit smaller producers who cannot afford to purchase the necessary transportation vehicles required to bring their animals to larger centralized locations, or cover the costs of building a docking station. It was noted that these facilities must be implemented within provincial regulations and with adequate oversight to ensure that they are operating within established guidelines for humane slaughter practices, food safety requirements and regulations regarding the disposal of animal waste products.

Specialized Slaughter

Specialized slaughter includes slaughter of less common species such as buffalo, quail or emu; or slaughter carried out in line with cultural traditions or requirements; organic food, game meat, and other customized slaughter requirements. In alignment with what the Committee heard about challenges with slaughter capacity more generally, presenters and survey respondents reported that access to specialized slaughter is limited. A number of stakeholders noted that local slaughter facilities could be more flexible to accommodate specialized slaughter to meet local demand. Building local slaughter capacity through licensed facilities to increase access to specialized slaughter was suggested as the best approach. Other presenters noted that local facilities often do not offer specialized slaughter services and suggested that on-farm specialized

slaughter be allowed so that producers could reliably carry out slaughter to their own specifications. In both cases, stakeholders recommended expanding training for different types of specialized slaughter to ensure safety standards are met, and that animals are treated humanely during the slaughter process. The Committee heard from a number of stakeholders who expressed concerns about slaughter without prior stunning, which they explained causes unnecessary suffering and pain. They argued that stunning before slaughter is necessary for the humane treatment of animals.

Other issues related to specialized slaughter were presented to the Committee, including access to traditional food. The Committee heard from the Tsilhqot'in National Government about the need for specialized slaughter of wild game meat to offer for sale in local communities. Currently, a provincially-licensed Class A facility is required to sell game meat to restaurants or public facilities. In communities without a Class A facility, this creates a barrier to accessing wild game meats.

New Farmers

Several presenters advocated on behalf of new farmers or producers, and urged the Committee to support young people who may be interested in getting into farming. The Committee heard their concerns about farms closing down, and how young people were leaving family farms and the industry. The focus of their recommendations was on supporting small producers, and helping new farmers run their own operations in their own communities. A new farmer from near Prince George highlighted the importance of support for small local farms, and the Committee heard from a number of small-scale farmers who face difficulties in meeting regulations while remaining profitable. Some stakeholders recommended supporting small producers by making licensing and adherence to regulations less onerous and costly.

Because of the high initial costs of setting up a small farm, a number of smaller producers suggested providing funding to help cover start-up costs, or working to make farmland more affordable through initiatives like the GrowBC program. A new livestock producer from the North Okanagan noted that there is no clear path for a small producer to become a large producer, should that be an attractive option for a small producer. Small farms must make expensive upgrades all at once and often cannot afford to do so. The Committee heard that creating a dedicated path to help small farms make the jump from a Class D or E licence to a Class A or B licence could be beneficial in allowing small producers to grow slowly, through more gradual investments.

“I am a British Columbian. I am a farmer. I love to raise food that makes people happy and I love doing it in a way that is humane, serene and beautiful. And I believe that this is a noble calling, one full of long hours and tremendous knowledge, patience, concern for quality and empathy.” - Joseph Courchesne, Freedom Farm

Committee Deliberations

Committee Members discussed the challenges that exist regarding the acquisition of land for the purposes of farming and food production, including forage land specifically set aside to allow herds to graze. The Committee noted that protection of farmland, including areas within the ALR, is of vital importance. Committee Members understood that new areas of grazing land are required in an urgent manner due to the decimation of viable grazing land by wildfires in recent years. Committee Members expressed a desire to ensure that future generations of farmers and producers have the land they require to maintain or increase production, and to continue to provide the high-quality food products that British Columbians currently enjoy.

The Committee discussed the need to ensure that farmland is made available to new farmers and producers who may not have the financial ability to purchase available properties or tracts of land.

The Committee stressed the importance of ensuring that British Columbians can access local products, which in turn provides the support needed for producers and others in the meat production industry to maintain their facilities and farms as viable businesses. Committee Members were pleased to learn that an expanded “Buy BC” promotional program had been relaunched and thought that this program could highlight the benefits of buying local meat products for consumers, along with the “Grow BC” and “Feed BC” companion programs. The Committee noted however, that capacity issues need to be resolved before any further promotional campaigns are initiated.

Regarding financial considerations, Committee Members acknowledged the significant impact that natural disasters, including wildfires and floods, can have on producers and want to ensure that natural disaster compensation and support is provided – particularly in light of the severity of wildfires in recent years. The Committee heard about challenges some producers had faced to receive adequate compensation and would like to see a three to five-year averaging formula put in place to fairly compensate those who derive less than 50 percent of their income from farming. The Committee also heard about the work being done by government staff in providing advice and support to processors who are considering upgrading their Class D or E facilities and that there should be a continued commitment to provide this much-appreciated and useful service.

The Committee discussed the various issues they heard regarding seasonal variability and slaughter capacity, as Committee Members recognized that these two aspects of meat production are inextricably linked. Issues arise when producers are unable to access slaughter and meat processing facilities due to demand and volume increasing at certain times of the year, most predictably in the fall. The Committee discussed various options to address these concerns, including reviewing existing mobile slaughter regulations in B.C. and other neighbouring jurisdictions with an eye towards identifying opportunities to approach mobile slaughter differently, to make this service more affordable and accessible to small producers. This could potentially relieve variable pressures on the system, without compromising food safety and the humane treatment of animals. Other options included the idea to train more specialists, including meat cutters and butchers, to work at cut-and-wrap facilities, as well as looking into ways to extend the slaughter season or investigate options to enable year-round slaughter and finishing. The Committee further discussed options to help alleviate issues that producers face in getting their livestock slaughtered and wondered if shortening the current two-hour restriction to one hour might be helpful in addressing the unique circumstances in some regions that the Committee heard about, as well as allow more small-scale D and E class slaughter facilities to emerge, thus increasing overall livestock production.

The Committee expressed a particular interest in looking at opportunities to engage with young people who may have an interest in farming, or meat production and processing, and finding ways to ensure that local meat production is seen as a viable career choice. Committee Members were pleased to learn about industry organizations who are working with educational institutions to promote agricultural careers through training and mentorship programs, such as the BC Cattlemen’s Association, the Young Farmers Association, Young Agrarians, and the 4-H organization. The Committee was also pleased to hear that a number of Class A and B licensed facilities offer hands-on training opportunities. Committee Members felt that further opportunities could be introduced at the high-school level, and promoted beyond that into community colleges and post-secondary institutions. The Committee thought that the opportunity might exist for district agriculturalists

to engage directly with young people at information sessions to generate interest in the industry. The Committee also highlighted the value that local agricultural fairs have in promoting interest in young people entering the industry and want to see continued support for these types of events.

Recommendations:

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Access to Farmland

12. Ensure that sufficient productive agricultural land is and remains available for livestock grazing in order to encourage increased livestock and local food production capacities.
13. Strongly promote the availability of productive Crown land within the Agricultural Land Reserve for livestock grazing purposes in an urgent manner, particularly in light of the devastation caused by wildfires and other natural disasters.

Marketing and Promotion

14. Make sure that the “Buy BC” promotional marketing campaign highlights the benefits of purchasing local meat products to encourage British Columbians to support local producers and retailers.

Financial Considerations

15. In partnership with the federal government, investigate options to develop a three- to five-year averaging formula in relation to natural disaster compensation for those who derive less than 50 percent of their income from farming.

Slaughter Capacity

16. Provide additional training for finishing of meat products to producers to help alleviate capacity issues by extending the slaughter season. [See recommendation #11 under Recruitment and Retention of Skilled Labour]
17. Reduce current travel time restrictions to one hour between Class A/B licensed facilities and Class D/E licensed facilities to help alleviate local slaughter capacity challenges and increase local livestock production.
18. Review mobile slaughter regulations to look for opportunities to make mobile slaughter more accessible to small producers in B.C. without compromising food safety or the humane treatment of animals.
19. Cooperate with producers and processors to address seasonal capacity issues by expanding business opportunities to maintain a viable living, including increasing the production of value-added specialty products and services.

New Farmers

20. Through the Ministry of Agriculture, work with community and industry organizations, such as 4-H, Young Agrarians and Farmers Institutes, to continue to promote interest and engagement in the industry through local agricultural fairs.
21. Create a comprehensive and accessible reference, to be made available through the Ministry of Agriculture in a variety of formats, to highlight existing educational and other programs to ensure that those interested in entering the industry can find the information they need.

Summary of Recommendations

All the presentations and written submissions, as well as the survey results, were taken into account by Committee Members as they undertook their deliberations. The recommendations within this report are not presented in order of importance.

The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fish and Food recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Abattoir Licensing and Oversight

Inspection and Enforcement

1. Encourage the Ministry of Agriculture to look for ways to improve cross-ministry coordination, collaboration and communication to expand current meat inspection and enforcement services to realize efficiencies, minimize risks, ensure consistency, simplify practices for producers and processors, as well as share best practices and enhance skills.
2. As a way of supporting small-scale meat producers and processors, require the Ministry of Agriculture (or their designate) to increase resources to enable engagement with Class D and E licensed facilities to ensure increased inspections at those facilities, including slaughter.
3. Help Class D and E licensed producers reach markets closer to home by investigating alternative boundary restrictions for sales, other than regional districts.
4. Work with relevant authorities to address the gap that currently exists in inspection and enforcement related to livestock sales or auctions to enable provincial inspectors to enter a public livestock sale yard to test animals on a regular basis.
5. Investigate options to expand use of current technologies to extend or implement virtual inspections in communities, where available.
6. Confirm that regular reviews of the inspection system occur, in consultation with producers and processors, to ensure ongoing opportunities for assessment and improvement of the current system.

Food Safety

7. Provide ongoing training and education opportunities, including during inspections, to producers and processors with respect to food quality and safety, as well as the humane treatment of animals, to share knowledge and awareness of current best practices.

Humane Treatment of Animals

8. Ensure there are sufficient resources available for enforcement to ensure compliance in relation to regulations regarding the humane treatment of animals by those engaged in all aspects of meat production and inspection.

Skilled Labour and Workforce

Education and Training

9. Offer additional opportunities for professional or post-secondary training programs to encourage new entries into the meat production and processing industries, and to provide upgrading or new skill development for those already working in these industries to promote career longevity.
10. Ensure that information regarding safe slaughtering techniques, safety standards and best practices is made available in a variety of formats (including online or through a correspondence course model), is kept up to date, and is supported with in-person training and slaughter opportunities.

Recruitment and Retention of Skilled Labour

11. Look at options to develop or enhance existing apprenticeship, mentorship and co-op training programs, including opportunities at the high school level, to help build workforce capacity and transfer valuable institutional knowledge. [Also see recommendation #16 under Slaughter Capacity]

Industry Growth and Development

Access to Farmland

12. Ensure that sufficient productive agricultural land is and remains available for livestock grazing in order to encourage increased livestock and local food production capacities.
13. Strongly promote the availability of productive Crown land within the Agricultural Land Reserve for livestock grazing purposes in an urgent manner, particularly in light of the devastation caused by wildfires and other natural disasters.

Marketing and Promotion

14. Make sure that the “Buy BC” promotional marketing campaign highlights the benefits of purchasing local meat products to encourage British Columbians to support local producers and retailers.

Financial Considerations

15. In partnership with the federal government, investigate options to develop a three- to five-year averaging formula in relation to natural disaster compensation for those who derive less than 50 percent of their income from farming.

Slaughter Capacity

16. Provide additional training for finishing of meat products to producers to help alleviate capacity issues by extending the slaughter season. [Also see recommendation #11 under Recruitment and Retention of Skilled Labour]
17. Reduce current travel time restrictions to one hour between Class A/B licensed facilities and Class D/E licensed facilities to help alleviate local slaughter capacity challenges and increase local livestock production.
18. Review mobile slaughter regulations to look for opportunities to make mobile slaughter more accessible to small producers in B.C. without compromising food safety or the humane treatment of animals.
19. Cooperate with producers and processors to address seasonal capacity issues by expanding business opportunities to maintain a viable living, including increasing the production of value-added specialty products and services.

New Farmers

20. Through the Ministry of Agriculture, work with community and industry organizations, such as 4-H, Young Agrarians and Farmers Institutes, to continue to promote interest and engagement in the industry through local agricultural fairs.
21. Create a comprehensive and accessible reference, to be made available through the Ministry of Agriculture in a variety of formats, to highlight existing educational and other programs to ensure that those interested in entering the industry can find the information they need.

Appendix A: Public Hearing Witnesses

- Agricultural and Farmers Institute, Alan Rebane (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Heather Shobe (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- BC Association of Abattoirs, Nova Woodbury (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- BC Bison Association, Conrad Schiebel (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- BC Cattlemen's Association, Kevin Boon (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- BC Cattlemen's Association, Nick Bapty (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- BC Chicken Marketing Board, Robin Smith; Alistair Johnston (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- BC Meatworks Inc., Kyle Wiebe (12-Jun-18, Castlegar)
- Blue Sky Ranch, Julia Smith (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Bruce Bradley (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Gerald Brinders (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Chris Brown (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Abra Brynne (12-Jun-18, Castlegar)
- Cabot Homestead Natural Meats & Pioneer Market and Meats, Helen Cabot (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Campbell Farm, Jacques Campbell (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Cariboo Cattlemen's Association, Cordy Cox, David Zirnhelt (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Columbia Valley Meat and Sausage, Grant Kelly (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Ed Conroy (12-Jun-18, Castlegar)
- Paul Devick (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- District A Farmers Institute & Coombs Farmers Institute, Janet Thony (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Glenbirnam Farm, Roma Tingle (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Blake Goddard (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Gunter Bros Meat Co., Sheldon Gunter (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Cameron Harris (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Island Pastures Beef Producers, Ben Vanderhorst (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Joni Janzen (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Kam Lake View Meats Ltd., Ron Keely (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Kawano Farms, Mike Noullett (12-Jun-18, Castlegar)
- Marie Kohlman (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Kootenay Livestock Association, Faye Street (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Kootenay Natural Meats, Dale McNamar (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Magnum Meats, Chad Maarhuis; Erika Maarhuis (12-Jun-18, Castlegar)
- Mike Malmberg (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Nechako Valley Cattlemen Association, Larry Garrett (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Pasture to Plate Inc., Felix Schellenberg (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Jim Peter (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Randy Reay (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Robson Valley Custom Meats, Matt Rempel (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Rodear Cattle Co. Ltd., David Fernie (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Frank Rohls (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Jim Ross (12-Jun-18, Castlegar)
- Curtis Smith (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Spray Creek Ranch, Tristan Banwell (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- StoneCroft Farm, Glen Beaton (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Tannadice Farms Ltd., Allen McWilliam (11-Jun-18, Courtenay)
- Doug Temple (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)
- Uncle Mark's Custom Meat Cutting, Mark Roth (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Valley Wide Meats, Richard Yntema (13-Jun-18, Kamloops)
- Walk'In Acres, Wilma Watkin (12-Jun-18, Williams Lake)
- Windermere District Farmers Institute, Hedi Trescher (13-Jun-18, Cranbrook)

Appendix B: Written Submissions

Gillian Anderson
Candice Appleby
Arenbrook Acres, Meghan Jacques
Baru Farm, Ruth Wheadon
BC Sheep Federation, Valerie Gerber
BC SPCA, Amy Morris
Gordon Brown
C4 Ranching, Daniel Weaver
Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Paul Glover
David Charchuk
Monika Eriksen
Falcon Farm, Fraser Baldwin
Micah Field
Fraser Valley Specialty Poultry, Ken Falk
Freedom Farm, Joseph Courchesne
Gwinner Country Butcher, Uwe Gwinner
Natalie Hitchmough
Barbara Johnstone Grimmer
Brian Kingman
E.B. Klassen
Kootenay Livestock Association, Morgan Dilts
Gilles Leduc
Moon Gravity Farm, Andrew Bennett
Martin Nicoll
Karen Persson
Regional District of Central Kootenay, Aimee Watson
Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance, Elizabeth White
Hugh Scolah
Sue Skidmore
Small Scale Meat Producers Association, Julia Smith
Stene Ranch, Justin Stene
Stony Mountain Farm, Tracy Robertson
Peggy Thompson
Tsilhqot'in National Government, Megan Dark
Windermere District Farmers Institute and Livestock Association, Peter Trescher
Sunya Wright

Appendix C: Online Survey Respondents

667803 BC Ltd, Russ Purvis
ACRD Agricultural Development Committee, Janis Nairne
Alberni Farmers Institute, Jamie Aylard
Douglas Allen
Arenbrook Growers Cooperative, Margaret Thompson
Lisa Aylard
Bini Ball
John Barten
BC SPCA, Amy Morris
Cindy Bolen
Gordon Brown
John Buchanan
Cabot Homestead Natural Meat / Pioneer Market, Helen Cabot
Candice Appleby, Candice Appleby
Donovan Cavers
Chillo Creek Ranch, Tim Saunders
Kathleen Collin
Copper Mountain Farms, Marie- Josee Lang
Margaret Demianiuk
Hans Dueck
Alex Dyer
Eleanor Evans
Falcon Farm, Fraser Baldwin
Micah Field
Artemis Fire
Sean Flynn
Freedom Farm, Joseph Courchesne
Fresh Valley Farms, Steve Meggait
Steffan Gabriele
Patrick Gale
Greater Terrace Food Association, Paul Sametz
Gunter Bros Meat Co Ltd, Sheldon Gunter
Halstead Farm, Megan Halstead
Oliv Howe
Frank Jankunis
Sandra Jasinowski
Linda Johnson
Johnston's, Bonnie Windsor
Kensington Prairie Farm Ltd., Catherine Simpson
Brian Kingman
KnowWhere Farms, Kyler Miller
Evelyn Koedooder-Brouwer
Lorne Landry
Eva-Lena Lang
Kerry Lee
Bridgette Lens
Darby Marcellus
June Mcfadden
Moon Gravity Farm, Andrew Bennett
Muddy Feet Farm, Julia Rylands
Karen Persson
Olga Radzikh
Rainer Custom Cutting, Ben Rainer
Jennifer Reeves
Robson Valley Custom Meats, Matt Rempel
Rodear Cattle co LTD, David Fernie
Dana Rothkop
SALI (Semiahmoo Animal League Inc), Keryn Denroche
Salt Spring Abattoir Society, Serena Hayes
Hugh Scorah
Charlotte Senay
Danny Soles
Fred Stafford
Stene Ranch, Justin Stene
Margot Swinburnson
Richard Taki
Vancouver Humane Society, Emily Pickett
Kris Welk
Windermere District Farmers Institute and Livestock Association, Peter Trescher
Windy Creek Farm, Shawn McGrath

