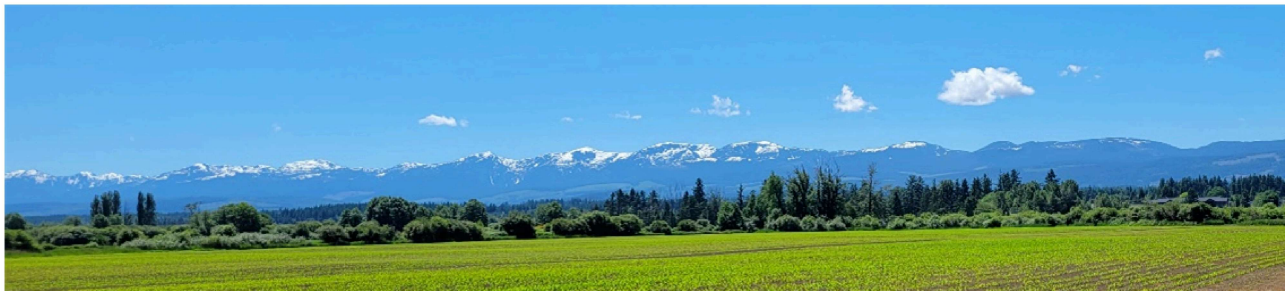




AgriServiceBC

## AgriServiceBC: Islands Edition



### Islands Region - Resources

Looking for Islands-specific agriculture information? Check out the [Vancouver Island](#) webpage for Industry contacts, local planning information, soil and nutrient management resources.

### Islands Contacts

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## Decoding Drought event held in Courtenay- and two more coming to the region!

On March 5th, 60 producers attended a [Decoding Drought Management Engagement Session](#) in Courtenay. These drought engagement events have been delivered around BC, particularly in areas impacted by drought and water curtailments under the Water Sustainability Act, as happened this summer in the Tsolum watershed.

Similar upcoming events include a [virtual session on April 4th](#) for the West Coast region, and a

follow-up session for the [Cowichan area April 18th](#), to build on the previous engagement with producers in the Koksilah watershed. Workshops are co-delivered by staff from the ministries of Agriculture and Food, and Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS). Recordings of the presentations are [now available here](#). Learn more about the upcoming events below!



Ministry of  
Water, Land and  
Resource Stewardship



Ministry of  
Agriculture  
and Food

# Decoding Drought Management Engagement Session

## West Coast Region (All)

**Thursday, April 4, 2024, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm**

Register by using the link, QR code, email or telephone listed below. Link to join virtually will be provided on registration.

## Topics

**AGRICULTURAL DROUGHT SUPPORTS | 2024 CONDITIONS  
DISCUSSION | SCIENCE | DROUGHT RESPONSE ACTIONS**

For information, contact:

[events02@vgnresources.ca](mailto:events02@vgnresources.ca) or call [1-877-906-1131](tel:1-877-906-1131)

Booking support provided by VGN Resources Group. Logistical support provided by VGN Resources Group and other project partners

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/decoding-drought-management-engagement-session-west-coastvirtual-tickets-859607297567?aff=oddtcreator>



## Upcoming Events

**April** - BMP Agricultural Water Infrastructure funding application window opens - visit [Water Infrastructure BMP](#) on the Investment Agriculture Foundation site for details. Applications are already open for designs and plans through the [Beneficial Management Plan](#) Program, and for cost shared replanting through the [Perennial Crop Renewal Program](#).

**April 3** - [South Vancouver Island Farmers Institute](#) is presenting a Sustainer Series meeting on April 3rd, held at the Saanich Fairgrounds, 7pm. This event series showcases the history, successes and challenges of sustaining farms and farmers in the South Vancouver Island region and addresses topics of regional concern. Entry is by donation, a May event is also being planned- [register on Eventbrite](#).

**April 3-24** - How to Start Farming - Young Agrarians is presenting this introductory course online- with presenters from across BC including the Islands. Visit [How to Start Farming](#) for registration and details.

**April 3** - Do More Ag hosts [Grief Connection: Recognizing Grief - What Does It Look Like?](#) A free virtual session on Wednesday April 3rd, 5-6pm. The Do More Agriculture Foundation is continuing online workshops on various mental health topics throughout the year. Find more on their [Events page](#) or [Do More Agriculture Events | Eventbrite](#).

**April 4** - Decoding Drought Management Engagement - VIRTUAL. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship are pleased to invite the agricultural community of the West Coast region to an engagement and learning opportunity at a Decoding Drought management Engagement Session to be offered virtually for the region, from 6:30pm-8:30pm. Session offered online via Zoom. [Register at Eventbrite](#).

**April 7** - Basic Maintenance and Operation of Farm Equipment presented by VIU at Providence Farm, 1-4pm. Would you like to increase productivity, decrease machine down time, and limit costly repairs? This course will review practices used in the maintenance, preventative maintenance, and operation of farm equipment. John Spencer will discuss the engine cooling system, engine lubrication system, engine fuel system, engine air system, electrical system, transmission and hydraulic systems, tires and ballasting, proper attachment of towed implements, implement drive lines (PTO), fuels, oils and lubricants, blade sharpening and more. Fee is \$60 +GST, Learn more and [Register at VIU](#).

**Apr 8, May 13, Jun 10 (2nd Mondays):** Vancouver Island Fibreshed monthly meetings online at 7pm. Contact [info@vancouverislandfibreshed.ca](mailto:info@vancouverislandfibreshed.ca) for the Zoom link. Join us to discuss upcoming projects. Do you have local fibre to buy or sell? Visit the [VIF Producer Directory](#) or connect on [Facebook](#).

**April 11** - Agroecology: Scaling up Sustainable Farming in a Planet in Polycrisis. Join [National Farmers Union](#) for this free webinar as they delve into how to think of agroecology on a larger scale with Miguel A. Altieri. [Learn more and register here](#).

**April 11** - BC Poultry Health Network's monthly Ask a Poultry Vet virtual session, 6:30pm. These sessions offer an informal opportunity to join your poultry-keeping peers to have your poultry health, biosecurity and disease related questions answered by one of BC's very few licensed poultry veterinarians, Dr. Victoria Bowes. Visit [BC Poultry Health Network](#) for details and to

register.

**April 13** - [Comox Valley Farmers' Institute](#) Farm & Acreage Equipment Live Auction will be held at Beaver Meadows Farm, 1821 Anderton Road, Comox. Opens for viewing at 10am, auction starts at 12pm- see details at [cvfarmersinstitute.com/events](https://cvfarmersinstitute.com/events), view items at [theauctioneer.ca](https://theauctioneer.ca). Comox Valley 4H Calf Club is hosting the concession- please bring cash!

**April 16** - Introduction to Backyard Beekeeping with Gordon MacKay and VIU. Are you interested in becoming a beekeeper, or are you new to raising bees? In this course, you will learn about tools and equipment, pests and diseases of the honeybee, and other essentials for the first years of beekeeping. In addition, this workshop will explore the top pollinator plants that you could establish to provide forage for honeybees and other native pollinators. Tuesday, April 16, 6:30 to 8:30 pm at Providence Farm, Fee: \$30 + GST [Learn more and register at VIU](#).

**April 18** - Decoding Drought Management Engagement - In-Person - COWICHAN. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and The Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship are pleased to invite you to join us for a community learning opportunity in Cowichan. The purpose of the Session being held is to improve awareness of the supports available to area producers to prepare for and reduce the impacts of drought. The engagement sessions will help build understanding within the agriculture sector about B.C.'s legislative framework for water management, including regulatory tools, and decision-making under the Water Sustainability Act (WSA). [Register at Eventbrite](#).

**April 18, 25, May 2, 9** - [Reconciliation Training for BC Farmers](#)- Are you a farmer located in B.C. wondering how to honour the Indigenous lands you steward? [kinSHIFT](#) hosts beautiful online trainings about cultivating stronger relationships with Indigenous peoples and places. Young Agrarians received funds to subsidize the cost for BC farmers - [visit the YA blog to learn more and register](#).

**April 21** - Coombs Farmers' Institute 44th Annual Equipment Auction. Viewing starts at 10am, Auctioning at 11am, at the Coombs Fairgrounds, 1014 Ford Rd. Visit [Coombs Farmers' Institute](#) for details.

**April 25** - BC Poultry Health Network is holding a virtual Information Webinar at 6:30pm. These webinars occur monthly and explore a timely or relevant topic to keeping a healthy flock. To find out more or register visit [BC Poultry Health Network](#).

**April 26** - The 2024 WIGA Viticulture and Oenology Conference and Island Wines Showcase will be held at the [Cobble Hill Hall](#), 3550 Watson Ave., 8am-5pm for the Conference, Island Wines Showcase is 5:30-8pm. Early Bird Tickets are on sale now. Visit the [Wine Islands Growers Association 2024 conference page](#) for details.

**April 29** - Innovative Cover Cropping Video Series Screening with [BC Climate Agri-Solutions Fund](#) via IAF. Join us for an evening of cover cropping with Organic BC's Innovative Cover Cropping video series. During this online screening, watch our recently completed video series, showcasing new and diverse cover cropping practices across three regions in the province, spanning five different sectors. 6-7:30pm, [Register on Eventbrite](#).

**April 30** - Deadline for new participants/renewal in AgriStability 2024 - [AgriStability](#) is a low-cost, whole-farm Business Risk Management program that offers personalized coverage based on individual farm taxes and production information. AgriStability helps agricultural producers

manage large declines in their net farming income due to market conditions, production loss or increased cost of production.

**Early May** - May 5-11th 2024 is [emergency preparedness week!](#) Does your farm have an emergency plan? Resources for emergency preparedness for agriculture are available on the [ministry website](#). Also, look for the program guides and opening of the funding windows for the [Extreme Weather Preparedness for Agriculture Program](#) and the [Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program](#).

**May 11 & 12** - Save the date - Cowichan Agricultural Society, Island Natural Growers and Small Scale Meat Producers Association are planning hog management and rotational grazing events in Cowichan and Salt Spring- stay tuned for details!

**June 15th** - Fowl Creatures 4-H Poultry Club is hosting a free in-person Small Flock Poultry Health Workshop at Saanich Fairgrounds, 9am-4pm. Learn about health and management of broilers, layers, turkeys, exhibition breeds, wildfowl and waterfowl! Visit [BC Poultry Health Network](#) for details and to register.

**June 30 DEADLINE** - Enrolling in Late Participation for AgriStability 2023 is easy! AgriStability is a low-cost, whole-farm [Business Risk Management program](#) that offers personalized coverage based on individual farm taxes and production information. AgriStability helps agricultural producers manage large declines in their net farming income due to market conditions, production loss or increased cost of production. **Producers now have until June 30, 2024 to enroll.** Payments to Late Participants will be reduced by 20%. Find out more here: [Late Participation for AgriStability 2023](#) or **call 1-877-343-2767.**

Do you have an agriculture event taking place on Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands or Powell River that you would like highlighted in this newsletter? Send your request to [Megan.Halstead@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Megan.Halstead@gov.bc.ca)

## More Info

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## Islands Agriculture Show

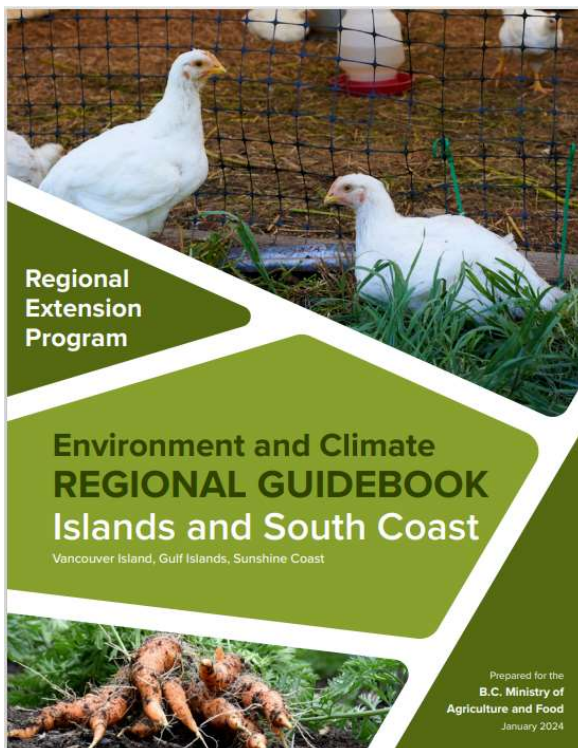
The 2024 Islands Agriculture Show conference took place February 2 and 3, 2024, at the Cowichan Exhibition Park in Duncan. This two-day conference was geared towards horticultural and livestock producers of all sizes on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Held in conjunction with an agricultural trade show and delivered in partnership with the [Islands Agriculture Show Society \(IASS\)](#), the conference featured 14 sessions on topics including crop production, livestock production, business planning, water management, and climate adaptation. This year, over 200 people attended the conference sessions and there were 1600 visits to the event!



[Session highlights](#) included Building Healthy Soils, Planting Hedgerows for Pollinators and Pest Management, Climate Adapted Farming and On-Farm Meat Processing. The keynote address by Jared (Qwustenuxun) Williams was standing room only- the talk was titled Indigenous Agriculture: Creating Food Systems that are Indistinguishable from Nature.

Please provide your feedback on the IAS in general and any of the sessions through the [online survey](#) - this feedback is so helpful for us to plan session topics and the event for next year!

Funding for the conference sessions was provided in part by the government of Canada and British Columbia through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.



## Regional Extension Update

There is an updated Islands and South Coast Regional Guidebook now [available here](#). The regional guidebooks are a resource for producers, on-the-ground researchers, and consultants to reflect on the climate issues challenging environmental sustainability and local farm businesses and food production.

The Regional Extension Program is producer driven. Input from producers through the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Regional Extension Committees and regional producer engagement sessions will inform the long-term delivery of extension activities. To learn more, visit the [program webpage](#).

Ministry staff are still hard at work planning how to action recommendations from the recent producer engagements. Please stay tuned to this newsletter for updates as events and resources are launched in the Islands and South Coast Region. Please also keep your suggestions coming, the [survey is still open!](#)

## Subscribe to Islands Edition!

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is caused by an abnormal protein called a **prion**.

Prions **accumulate in the brain** of infected animals, impairing brain function.



Let's keep CWD out of B.C.

Learn more at: [www.gov.bc.ca/chronicwastingdisease](http://www.gov.bc.ca/chronicwastingdisease)



Want to see webinars that could support your business? Visit our [AgriService B.C. Past Webinars library](#) to view recorded webinars.



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Email: [AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca)

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