



December 7, 2022

Honourable Pam Alexis  
Minister of Agriculture and Food  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Alexis:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as Minister of Agriculture and Food. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

Food security – where we get our food, and how much it costs – is front of mind for all British Columbians. Climate change, supply chain issues, and policy changes in places far from B.C. can impact our food supply and costs here at home.

As every British Columbian knows, we won't have a secure food supply and manage food costs for British Columbians if we don't look after our farmers and use our land base wisely. Our province's proud history of the Agricultural Land Reserve shows our commitment, through many changes of government, to protecting land for food for ourselves and future generations. Our provincial commitment to food and the people who produce it has never been more important.

Our farmers, ranchers and seafood producers are seeing rising costs for inputs like fertilizer, seeds, feed, and pieces of equipment. Shifts in weather are testing resilience, and major agricultural areas like the Fraser Valley Regional District have been hit hard by climate change disasters.

As Minister, your job will be to support farmers, ranchers, and seafood producers in the critical work they do for all of us, to ensure food security for British Columbians by establishing policies to use our agricultural land wisely, increase production, and add processing capacity. Your role also involves building on our strong export sector by promoting the clean, safe, high-quality food produced in B.C., creating jobs and growing our economy sustainably while supporting our communities and our neighbours.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Expanding the Grow BC, Feed BC, and Buy BC programs to encourage greater food security and local business growth, including opening nine new food hubs across B.C.
- Increasing Indigenous participation in the agriculture and food sector and strengthening Indigenous food systems, including launching the B.C. Indigenous Advisory Council on Agriculture and Food.
- Establishing a new Minister's Advisory Group on Regenerative Agriculture that will provide strategic advice to government on opportunities to promote innovation, technology adoption and regenerative practices.
- Supporting farmers, ranchers, and food processors to improve climate preparedness and resiliency to wildfires, flooding, and extreme heat through the launch of the new Extreme Weather Preparedness for Agriculture Program.
- And – in addition to these achievements – your ministry worked tirelessly to ensure our farmers and ranchers impacted by the devastating floods in late 2021 had the supports they needed to begin their recovery, and it continues to work together with food producers to build back better from the largest agricultural disaster in B.C.'s history.

As you continue to make progress on items in the previous mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Continue work on the recommendations of the Food Security Task Force and take steps to make B.C. a leader in agricultural innovation, resilience, and food security in the face of emerging challenges of supply chain disruption, global inflation, rising costs, and the impacts of climate change.
- Work with Indigenous Peoples on agricultural initiatives identified by them to support their interests in economic development, food security, and community building across the province.
- Work with the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, support the resilience of B.C.'s food system through an emergency preparedness strategy for food security.
- Grow our economy, reduce costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and increase food security for British Columbians by working with partners to increase food processing in B.C. while increasing innovation in food processing in the province, and supporting export opportunities.

- Work with industry to identify agricultural best practices that reduce carbon pollution and support their adoption across the sector so that agricultural innovation can continue to be a key part of our province's efforts to reduce carbon pollution.
- Ensure government has all of the information required about land use in the Agricultural Land Reserve to support partnerships with farmers, industry, and government in developing long-term planning and food security in the province.
- Continue to support the Grow BC, Feed BC, and Buy BC programs to encourage greater food security, regional business growth, and access to local food.
- Support the work of the Minister of Education and Child Care to integrate Feed BC into expanded school meal programs.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Eby", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Eby, KC  
Premier