



January 16, 2025

Honourable Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture and Food  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Popham:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Agriculture and Food at a critical time for our province. Serving as a member of the executive council is a privilege and responsibility which I am confident you will fulfill with integrity and a commitment to the people of our province.

British Columbians have trusted us with a mandate to deliver for them in ways that make a tangible difference in their daily lives. They expect us to listen and learn from people of different perspectives – and work together to make things better for everyone.

Specifically, we will tackle the challenges people worry about at the kitchen table:

- **Grow the economy by creating good jobs across British Columbia.** We will collaborate with businesses, workers, and communities to attract investments in both new and traditional sectors as well as emerging sectors of the economy. This approach will bring certainty for business, security for workers, and generate the wealth needed to support the essential services British Columbians rely on.
- **Reduce costs for families** including by helping people access homes they can afford through support for first-time homebuyers, increasing the supply of rental housing stock, and stronger measures to crack down on housing speculation.

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- **Strengthen health care** by expanding access to family doctors and recruiting and training more health professionals, ensuring that every British Columbian can access the care they need, no matter where they live. We will also increase access to addictions treatment and provide help for people whose struggles require intensive supports.
- **Make our neighbourhoods and communities safer** by working with law enforcement and social agencies to address street disorder, crack down on organized crime, and do all we can to ensure repeat offenders stay behind bars.

Our commitment to take action on climate change remains foundational and will be key to a healthy and prosperous BC for future generations.

Underlying all this work is our partnership with Indigenous peoples. Advancing reconciliation, implementing the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and working in partnership with First Nations rights-holders to advance shared interests is the responsibility of every Minister.

Over this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- In order to protect key services that British Columbians rely on, work with the Minister of Finance to review all existing Ministry of Agriculture and Food programs and initiatives to ensure programs remain relevant, are efficient, and make life better for BC families by supporting BC farmers and food producers. This is important in the context of current Provincial budget constraints, market conditions, tariff threats, and the economic realities of farmers.
- Help grow the profitability and success of our agricultural sector by ensuring close connection between agricultural stakeholders and government policy makers through a Premier's Task Force with connections to relevant ministries across government.
- Support work led by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation by working with farmers and food producers, and customers of British Columbia's agricultural products in:
  - advocating against proposed tariffs from the United States and ensuring continued expansion of our agricultural export programs for the mutual success of British Columbians and our trading partners;
  - expanding global markets for our products to diversify and reduce trade risk; and,
  - preparing contingency plans in the event that tariffs are imposed.
- Assume the role of government's liaison to the restaurant industry. In partnership with the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, be innovative in finding ways to connect farmers, restaurants, and the tourism sector to grow all three sectors.

- In partnership with the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, support work led by that Ministry to reform BC's liquor and cannabis rules in ways that support the restaurant and agricultural sector.
- Ensure a continuation of public support for the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), including protection of BC families from food price shocks, promotion of financial success for farmers, access to farming as a career for aspiring farmers, and expanded economic growth in the province.
- Ensure that ALR land use restrictions are consistent with the potential and available uses of the actual land in the reserve, and that provision is made to expand food processing in the province to grow our food processing sector.
- Expand affordability and food security in the province by working with farmers to find ways to control costs for them and for the BC families who rely on their products, and by advocating with the federal government for fair programs for British Columbia food producers.
- Strengthen our regional food systems by supporting farming, expanding local food processing, identifying supply chain disruption vulnerabilities, and by increasing economic opportunities through FeedBC and BuyBC.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture whose focus will be to:

- Work with you to ensure that farmers and food and beverage producers across the province are represented and heard through the policy development process.
- Work with farmers and food and beverage producers in the Okanagan valley who have been impacted by significant weather-related crop loss.
- Work with Indigenous communities to identify opportunities for expansion of food security initiatives as well as economic development opportunities for rural and remote Indigenous communities.
- Make particular efforts to reach out to young people interested in agriculture and farming to identify their concerns and interests and ensure they are represented at the table.

You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretary receives appropriate support to deliver on this work.

As you are aware, we have established an accord with the BC Green Caucus that supports our shared commitment to ensuring stable governance focused on delivering progress

and tangible outcomes for British Columbians. The commitments in that accord complement the direction in these mandate letters.

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 work we have ahead takes place in a profoundly challenging geopolitical environment. Close friends and neighbours to our south are contemplating imposing draconian tariffs on our products that would hurt both Americans and Canadians. Our allies internationally face governmental instability. Hate and racism are on the rise around the world. Artificial intelligence breakthroughs with unclear implications and astonishing potential are announced daily. Global inflation, snarled supply chains, and war are threatening global economic growth and prosperity as well as the transition to a low-carbon economy.

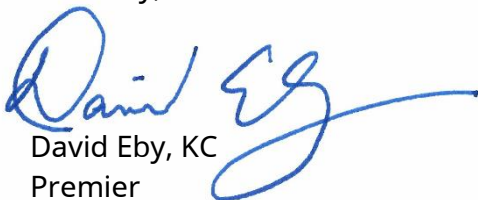
We have an obligation to protect and defend British Columbians, as well as seize opportunities, in these uncertain times.

The good news is that we have everything we need to succeed, and we will succeed. British Columbia's people – our workers, entrepreneurs, business leaders, artists, and innovators – are among the most talented in the world. We are home to world-class educational institutions and public services. Our natural beauty is unmatched, we have internationally envied resources, and we are one of the most diverse places on the planet. Your job is to help us leverage these advantages in perilous times.

Use this mandate letter to guide your work, and do not be afraid to challenge assumptions, or be innovative, bold and aggressive in achieving the goals set out for you and your Ministry by the people of this province.

Thank you for joining me in the work ahead.

Sincerely,



David Eby, KC  
Premier

cc: Harwinder Sandhu, MLA  
Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture