

CENTRE FOR
SUSTAINABLE FOOD
SYSTEMS AT THE UBC FARM

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2029

COMPACT VERSION

RESEARCH PROJECT AT WORK
Effect of Artificial Light at Night on Biodiversity

This device is part of a project at the UBC Farm to study the effects of artificial light at night on insects and bats.
Please look, but don't touch or tamper with any of the equipment.

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ucrc.sustainability UBC STARS



Our Invitation

We are thrilled to share our new five-year strategic plan with you. This plan is the culmination of a year of consultation, workshops and feedback, resulting in strategies and actions that truly reflect a shared vision for the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at the UBC Farm.

Globally and locally, we find ourselves at a critical juncture, facing converging crises that demand urgent changes in our food system. In response, we are focusing our actions to help decolonize our food system and have positive impacts on local to global food security, biodiversity, and the climate crisis.

Embarking on the path of decolonization, we acknowledge that we are still very much at the beginning. We commit to implementing UBC's

Indigenous Strategic Plan and integrating Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity into every facet of our work, from research and teaching to community programs.

As you dive into our plan you will find five strategic areas which will focus and direct our work over the next five years: lead in agroecological research, learn through place-based education, mobilize for systems change, grow in social enterprise, and thrive with operational support.

An important part of our plan includes the building of a new farm centre at the UBC Farm. This building will allow us to expand what we offer to students, researchers, growers, and the campus community. It will have a transformative effect on our impact, and we invite you to connect with us to help support this key project.

This ambitious strategic plan cannot be achieved alone - working together we can achieve much more. We are actively building new partnerships and invite you to join us as we build a more sustainable food system.

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UBC Farm
Associate Professor
Chair of Agriculture and
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Faculty of Land and Food
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Clare Cullen
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CSFS & UBC Farm

About the CSFS

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems (CSFS) at UBC Farm serves as the academic home for the research, teaching, and cultivation activities at the UBC Farm, as well as sustainable food systems research and teaching that takes place across the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus, BC, Canada, and around the globe. CSFS supports collaborative research, teaching, and learning opportunities for UBC students, faculty, and staff as well as local and international academic and community partners. CSFS research associates work on the development of innovations in agroecosystem management for food security and ecosystem services, while honouring, respecting, and protecting diverse ecosystems and knowledge pathways within Indigenous and agrarian food systems.

About the UBC Farm

The UBC Farm is located on the Vancouver campus of UBC, on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the hənqəmihəm-speaking xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people, which was, until recently, a forest where the Musqueam harvested and hunted food, taught, and learned. The 24-hectare UBC Farm was started by UBC students in 2001 and since then this integrated organic farm and forest ecosystem has become a key part of UBC's agroecological research and education as well as an important Vancouver food hub.

In 2023, a new academic Centre was created at UBC: Indigenous Land-Based Education, Research and Wellness at xʷcičəsəm Garden. This Centre is the culmination of many years of commitment, hard work and vision by Dr. Eduardo Jovel, Indigenous faculty, staff and students as well as

allies, to develop a sacred, safe space on campus to support and advance Indigenous land-based cultural practices and pedagogies. We at the CSFS are honoured to be sharing land at the UBC Farm with this new Centre and look forward to supporting their work.

Challenges & Opportunities

Our food system is in a moment of critical opportunity given the current global challenges of food insecurity, climate breakdown, biodiversity loss and inequity, and the need for truth and reconciliation with Indigenous communities. We do not have all the answers about how to emerge from these complex challenges, but we feel clear about the importance of places like the UBC Farm and the networks of supporters and changemakers that constitute the CSFS.

The CSFS is uniquely positioned to bring together students, faculty, and staff from across a globally renowned university and connect them to networks of farmers, policymakers, and local and Indigenous communities to develop solutions grounded by our connection to the land at the UBC Farm.

We aim to have an impact in four key areas: **food security, climate, biodiversity, and decolonization**. We will achieve impact through five coordinated and synergistic strategies that will guide the ongoing programs within the CSFS and at the UBC Farm and clarify the need for additional programs.

We launched our strategic planning process in spring 2023. The process included nine workshops, an open online survey, and numerous one-on-one meetings engaging over 300 people.

This plan is a living document that will be updated and adapted as we progress.

OUR IMPACT

Improve Regional Food Security

Adapt to & Mitigate Climate Change

Outcome: Ag
and Practi
Relatio
Networ



M

SYST
POLICY

Outcome: Educational Programs
Positively Impacting Learners
and Flourishing



LEARN

PLACE-BASED EDUCATION

5 STRATEGIC THEMES

Outcome: A model Organic Farm
and Agroecological Research



LEAD

TRANSFORMATIONAL
AGROECOLOGICAL
RESEARCH

MISSION To design, facilitate
innovation, research, place-based
community building and s

VIS

Resilient, th
socially just food

VALUES Long-Term Thinking • Land St



ACT GOALS

Enhance Biodiversity

Decolonize Our Approach

Agricultural Policy
Resources Improved,
Relationships and
Communities Thriving

MOBILIZE

SYSTEMS &
CHANGE

Outcome: Strong Campus and
Neighborhood Community
Connected to UBC Farm



GROW

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING
THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

and model food system change through
learning, knowledge mobilization,
stewardship of the UBC Farm.

ION

Thriving, and
systems for all

Outcome: Fully supported Programs,
Thriving and Diverse Team and
Ecologically Friendly and Resilient
Food and Seed Production



THRIVE

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE
ORGANIZATION &
AGROECOLOGICAL SITE

Stewardship • Collaborative Leadership



LEAD

Transformational Agroecological Research

The Challenge

We need to increase the resilience of agriculture to the impacts of a shifting and increasingly volatile and unpredictable climate.

The Strategy for Impact

We are developing, demonstrating and promoting new agroecological approaches, management practices and technologies that are climate-friendly and resilient, support biodiversity and the provisioning of ecosystem services as well as being economically viable.

The Goal

To provide a model of organic production and scientific guidance to help support the transition to an effectively sustainable agricultural system.

Our Objectives

1. Develop a baseline and set of short to long-term experiments that will provide clear guidance for improving agroecological sustainability.
2. Establish a framework that provides a welcoming and safe space for researchers interested in Indigenous ways of cultivating, harvesting, and preserving food and medicines.
3. Improve opportunities for our research associates and partners to develop research projects improving agronomic, social, and environmental outcomes in the context of an operational farm.
4. Support the establishment of a network of on-farm trials to help develop, contextualize, and promote agroecological research.
5. Enhance research infrastructure and instrumentation and develop data collection, analysis, and synthesis approaches to become an internationally recognized agroecological research station.

OUTCOME

We are a model organic farm and agroecological research station



LEARN

Place-Based Education

The Challenge

Complex and interconnected challenges facing our food system require moving beyond the capacity of our current siloed classroom-based educational programs.

The Strategy for Impact

We are helping to cultivate a new generation of solution-makers who apply systems approaches based on agroecological principles to address the overlapping challenges facing our food system.

The Goal

To develop the next generation of food system leaders and be an inclusive space for sustainable food systems teaching and learning, for UBC students and beyond.

Our Objectives

1. Create new and stronger connections to courses at UBC, from Land and Food Systems as well as other Faculties.
2. Apply a decolonized and equity lens to all CSFS teaching. Grow, support, and enhance Indigenous initiatives and partnerships, and Indigenous Garden collaboration.
3. Enhance our programs in sustainable agriculture for UBC students, community members, and emergent farmers. Develop new course offerings, certificates, workshops, and online programs.
4. Develop children and youth programming that inspires and engages learners and their teachers through science, land stewardship, sustainability and wonder and improve the development of place-based pedagogies.
5. Enhance and develop unique learning spaces and laboratory facilities at the UBC Farm to better support and inspire place-based learning.

OUTCOME

Our educational programs are flourishing and positively impacting learners



MOBILIZE

Systems & Policy Change

The Challenge

Decision makers and land stewards need guidance and well-organized pressure to address the current challenges facing future generations and ecosystems.

The Strategy for Impact

We are instigating systems change through knowledge translation and mobilization, and through the development of transformative networks.

The Goal

To help facilitate the immediate and widespread adoption of agroecological, climate-smart farming practices and instigate changes in policy that will support this work.

Our Objectives

1. Establish and adopt a decolonial and equity-based framework for engaging in knowledge mobilization and policy development.
2. Engage in agricultural knowledge translation and mobilization through connections to extension specialists and networks, workshops, seminars, and the development of communications materials.
3. Facilitate and support the development and/or strengthening of networks that connect farmers, researchers, policymakers, industry, and the community.
4. Engage in policy development and decision-making through participation in campus, regional, national, and international organizations to analyze key issues and develop recommendations, policy briefs, and reports.

OUTCOME

Facilitate policy changes and the immediate and widespread adoption of agroecological, climate-smart farming



GROW

Community Well-Being through Social Enterprise

The Challenge

Efforts to address the complex challenges of our food system are under-resourced, isolated, and unsustainable. Those of us working to address these challenges face mental and financial stress and burnout. Within our immediate community, there are those who are food insecure despite the resources that surround us.

The Strategy for Impact

We build, support, and sustain our community through social enterprise (i.e. markets, food sales, and events) that provide fair wages to our staff and students, opportunities to build community, and information about and access to healthy food. Our work benefits researchers, staff, students, learners, and the public.

The Goal

To support the community by connecting researchers, learners, and the public to an operational campus farm, while also generating revenue and support that aligns with our values as an agroecological site.

Our Objectives

1. Provide access to high-quality organic food and seeds to model a resilient local food system and contribute to campus and regional food security.
2. Work with Musqueam and other Indigenous communities to create a shared vision of how the CSFS can support their initiatives.
3. Improve site-based programs, activities and events to strengthen our campus and neighbourhood community while increasing revenue for the CSFS.
4. Improve eating, cooking, gathering, and workshop spaces to enhance the delivery of community programs and events.

OUTCOME

Strong campus and neighbourhood community connection to the UBC Farm



THRIVE

Sustainable Organization & Shared Agroecological Site

The Challenge

We need to develop a shared vision of the long-term future for the UBC Farm.

The Strategy for Impact

We will develop a governance and funding model that acknowledges the long-term future of the UBC Farm as a significant part of the campus infrastructure, a significant habitat for birds, insects, and wildlife, an important carbon sink, a place of food growing, biodiversity monitoring, agricultural research, community building around food, and a sacred space.

The Goal

Our goal is to provide the elements required to achieve the goals in each of our strategic areas by building an organization that is sustained by a thriving team and an agroecological site with effective infrastructure and adequate funding.

Our Objectives

1. Work with partners to co-develop and implement a land stewardship plan and decision-making process for the UBC Farm.
2. Be a model organic farm and agroecological site that provides realistic research and learning opportunities while financially supporting programming.
3. Develop and implement a plan to improve Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigeneity.
4. Improve internal operational systems, ensure staffing and financial sustainability and strengthen governance.
5. Enhance site infrastructure and complete the construction of a new farm centre that will extend the capacity to deliver programs and support activities year-round.

OUTCOME

Our programs are fully supported, we have a thriving and diverse team and we exemplify ecological, climate-friendly and resilient food and seed production



Our Programs & Initiatives

MOBILIZE



- Extension Program
- Policy Program
- Support for BC EcoSeed Co-op & Farmer Networks
- Support for BC Food Web
- Support for BC ACARN
- Communications & Outreach
- CSFS Speakers Series

GROW



- Food Distribution via Sales & Donations
- Public Market for Other Farms & Food Businesses
- Events
- Venue Rentals for Events
- Community Tours
- Community Workshops
- Volunteer Program

LEAD



- On-site Research Program
- Off-site Research Networks
- Data Management & Sharing
- CSFS Associate Membership

LEARN



- Academic Courses, Labs & Site Visits
- Practicum Program
- Short Courses
- Continuing Education
- Children & Youth Programs
- Academic Tours

THRIVE



- Farm Operations & Food Cultivation
- Site Operations including Care & Maintenance
- Farm Work Learn Program
- New Farm Centre Development
- Workplace Equity Diversity, Inclusion, & Indigeneity Program
- Workplace Well-Being Improvement

Evaluation & Accountability

To ensure accountability for our strategic plan, we have developed an action plan for meeting our ambitious objectives. This action plan details our activities for the next five years along with metrics to evaluate their success. Regular communication

with interested parties will provide insights to refine strategies and align them with the UBC Farm community's interests. To enhance transparency, and indicate our progress, we will report on key metrics from each strategy through our website.

Join the CSFS Team of Teams

We are actively seeking partners and collaborators who align with our core values. We recognize that learning from a diverse range of partners is essential in the development of equitable and inclusive programs. While the CSFS is housed in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems, the Centre is designed to bring together people from across campus and the UBC Farm. We invite you to join one of the teams working on each of our five strategic areas.

Thank you Staff, Associates and Supporters

The CSFS at the UBC Farm would not be able to exist without the hard work and dedication of our staff team, CSFS Associates and generous supporters that are highly committed to growing organic food, land stewardship, and community building.

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UBC FARM
Centre for Sustainable Food Systems

