



**CENTRE FOR
SUSTAINABLE FOOD
SYSTEMS AT THE UBC FARM**

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2029

FULL VERSION WITH ACTION PLANS

RESEARCH PROJECT AT WORK
Effect of Artificial Light at Night on Insect Activity
This device is part of a project at the UBC Farm to study the effect of artificial light at night on insect activity.
Please look, but don't touch or tamper with any of the equipment.
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UBC Sustainability UBC FARM



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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.

Sean Smukler

Director, CSFS at the UBC Farm
Associate Professor
Chair of Agriculture and Environment
Faculty of Land and Food Systems, UBC

Clare Cullen

Operations Director,
CSFS & UBC Farm

OUR IMPACT GOALS

Improve Regional Food Security *Enhance Biodiversity*
Adapt to & Mitigate Climate Change *Decolonize Our Approach*



About the CSFS at UBC Farm

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm (CSFS) serves as the academic home for the research and teaching related to the cultivation activities at the UBC Farm, as well as sustainable food systems work that takes place across the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus, British Columbia, 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. Currently, the CSFS consists of 38 research associates from across the UBC campus. CSFS 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.

The UBC Farm is located on the Vancouver campus of UBC, on the traditional ancestral and unceded territory of the hə́nqəmíhəm-speaking xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people, which was, until recently, a forest where the Musqueam harvested and hunted food, taught, and learned. Situated within a 90-year-old coastal hemlock forest, 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.

A vision for an integrated farm system on campus was first proposed in 2000 by students. After a decade of uncertainty regarding its long-term future, the UBC Farm embarked upon a new academic plan in 2010 called Cultivating Place, with commitments from the university to retain the integrated farm system as a land-based academic facility, where the land is designated as "Green Academic". As a result of this plan, the CSFS was created. In 2016 a new Strategic Plan was developed and brought focus to developing infrastructure at the UBC Farm to support research and teaching and to establish networks that connect researchers across the globe. Since that time the CSFS has achieved important milestones including establishing the Diversified Agroecosystem research cluster, developing a data portal to catalogue, and share data and results, formalizing CSFS Associate membership, and expanding the number of education programs and courses at the UBC Farm site. The CSFS has also grown the number of people from the campus and neighbourhood that are part of our community.

In 2023, a new academic Centre was created at UBC: Indigenous Land-Based Education, Research and Wellness at xʷčičəsəm 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.

We now have over 30,000 people come to the UBC Farm every year for food literacy events and programming, and to walk through the cultivated annual crop fields, perennial hedgerows, orchards, pasture, Indigenous-led gardens, and forest stands that comprise the 24-hectare farm.

Highlights

Metrics from 2023-2024

- 14 active research projects
- Over 200 varieties of vegetables and fruits grown
- 12,000 plus market transactions
- 92,780 lbs of food grown
- 13,000 lbs food went to UBC Food Services
- 39 UBC student work learns mentored
- 1279 UBC students participated in 18 CSFS-related courses across 6 faculties

Our Strategic Planning Process

In the spring of 2023, the CSFS embarked on the development of a new strategic plan. The process included nine workshops with over 300 people engaged as well as an open online survey and numerous one-on-one meetings. In reflecting on our current and past work and strategic plans, we recognized the need to integrate more closely with groups on campus with similar missions and goals.

Our goal was to answer the following questions in this process:

- Why does the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems (CSFS) at UBC Farm exist?
- What do we want to achieve?
- What must we learn, and what work must we do to achieve our vision?
- What values, mindsets and principles will guide our approach to the work?

To ensure our work would integrate with existing UBC strategies we looked carefully at the following plans:

- UBC Academic Plan- Shaping UBC's Next Century
- Faculty of Land and Food Systems Action Plan - Navigating a Better Future
- UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan
- UBC Climate Emergency Response - Climate Emergency Task Force Report
- Sustainability Hub Strategic Plan

Definition

Agroecology

Agroecology is a holistic and integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management of sustainable agriculture and food systems. This approach has been shown to result in agriculture and food systems that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, improve soil health and sequester carbon, build resiliency to climate breakdown, reduce the need for external inputs, support biodiversity and empower farmers.

What we heard

We built a draft strategic plan and received feedback from a range of people involved with the Centre. We heard that we need to exercise caution about how we use the terms regenerative agriculture, innovation, agri-tech and sustainability. We heard a wide range of concerns about the state of our current food system, and the health of our planet and its ecosystems. We heard that the role of the CSFS should not just be focused on research and education but to have an impact we need to focus on policy and knowledge mobilization across agricultural and food system communities. It was also clear from the feedback from staff that we need to focus on building support for our internal team. While lots of time and energy went into the development of this plan, the work is intentionally not finished. This plan is designed to be a living document that will be updated and adapted as we progress, particularly our action plan, which we commit to reviewing and revising annually.

Addressing Challenges & Opportunities

Our food system is in a moment of critical opportunity given the current global challenges of food insecurity, climate breakdown, biodiversity loss, societal inequities, 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.

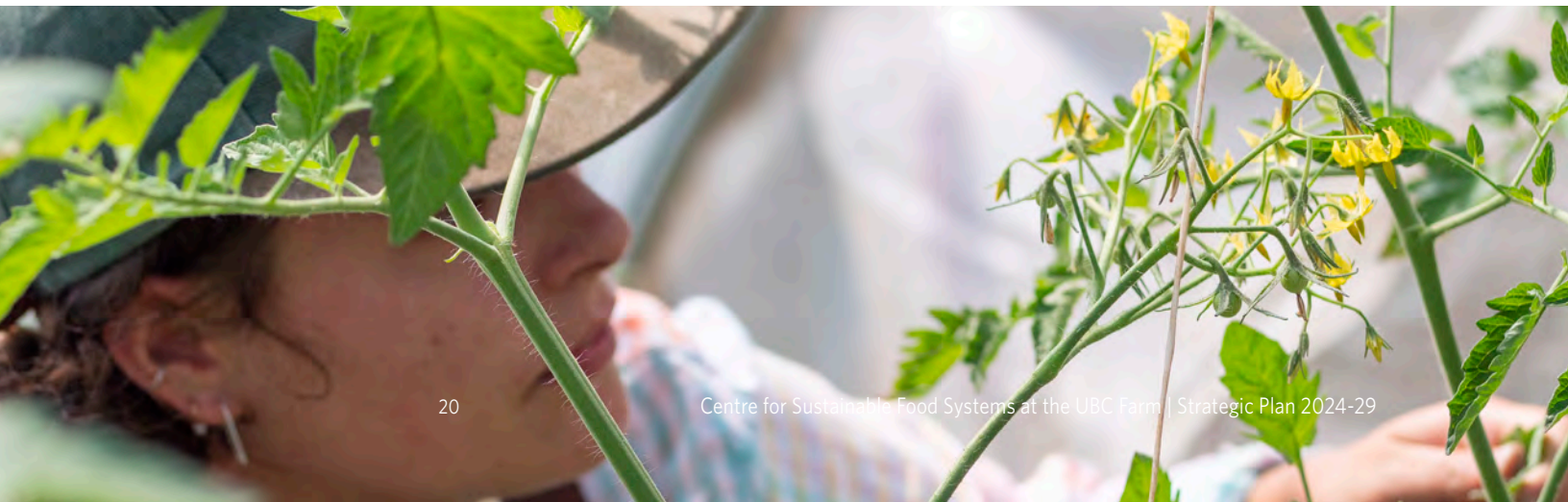
Over the past few years, British Columbia has experienced firsthand many of the impacts of climate breakdown that scientists have long predicted. Floods and landslides, drought, fires and extreme heat are having a serious impact on food supply chains, crops, habitat and biodiversity, as well as on our communities and infrastructure. The urgency to address these challenges cannot be overstated. The changes required to build food system resilience will take planning, funding and time, yet we are already nearing 1.5° C: the mean change in global temperature that scientists have identified as a threshold for safety. Avoiding catastrophic climate breakdown requires immediate reductions of greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors including those

from our food system. Agriculture is both a driver and a casualty of climate change.

We have an opportunity to shift our agricultural systems. To provide food, fibre, and fuel for an increasing population in a just and healthy way that regenerates soil, reduces the impact on the climate, supports local communities, increases resiliency, provides habitat for diminishing biodiversity, and helps to ensure many of the other ecosystem services we need.

Our work will focus on land stewardship and building relationships. Through our stewardship of the UBC Farm, we aim to support people to reconnect to the land, transform the way we think of and grow food, and advance planetary well-being.

We aim to have an impact in four key areas: **food security, climate, biodiversity, and decolonization**. We will achieve impact in these areas 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 recognize that there may be trade-offs among our strategies, whereby efforts devoted to one strategy could come at the expense of another. Importantly there are likely synergies among our strategies, where our efforts, through coordination, can lead to greater outcomes than each strategy on its own. We thus prioritized our objectives and actions within each strategy so they would minimize potential trade-offs as much as possible and maximize synergies.



Vision, Mission, Values

We have refreshed our vision, mission and values to reflect the feedback received during the strategic planning process.

Our Vision

Resilient, thriving, and socially just food systems for all.

Our Mission

To design, facilitate and model food system change through innovative research, place-based learning, knowledge mobilization, community building and stewardship of the UBC Farm.

Our Guiding Values

Long-Term Thinking

We consider the mixed legacies of past generations and the needs of future generations, keeping us accountable as we work to make the urgent changes needed today.

Land Stewardship

We see our role as shared caretakers of the land and recognize our interdependence with all species and people.

Collaborative Leadership

Working with a diversity of partners will help achieve the impact we want to see in the world.

Who do we aim to impact?

We aim to focus our impact and to do this by considering who is affected by our work. Our new focus of impact is the following groups:

The campus community, growers, and learners.

The campus community includes UBC students, instructors, researchers, campus residents, Musqueam community members and those who live adjacent to the campus.

Growers include those who grow food in British Columbia now and in the future.

Learners include UBC students, children and youth, adult learners, and international students.

Decolonizing Our Work and Developing Partnerships with Indigenous Communities

Those of us who drafted this strategic plan identify primarily as descendants of settlers on this land. Recognizing that we and UBC have much work to do in the area of anticolonial advancement, we will support our Indigenous partners with an intention to be allies and draw on existing Indigenous action frameworks, including the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP) in what we do.

Staff at CSFS have already undertaken the ISP Self-Assessment and we will move together as a unit to work on the ISP Action Toolkit. In each of our strategies, we have developed objectives to help address some of the issues identified in the ISP Self-Assessment and anticipate that these objectives may be refined, or others added as we work through the Toolkit.

The CSFS will work to build trust and stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, faculty, staff, students and community members. Several Indigenous-led initiatives already thrive at the UBC Farm. We do not list these to take credit or imply program ownership. We do aim to be excellent neighbours and co-stewards of the shared site. We are excited to share space with these projects and to explore greater opportunities for collaboration, better relationship building, cross-pollination and mutual support, here on stolen Musqueam land.

These groups include:

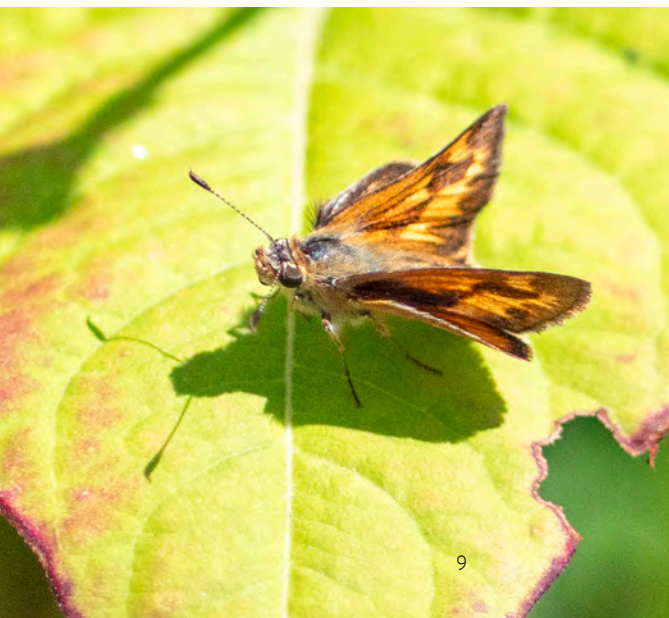
Indigenous Design & Engagement in Applied Science and Land and Food Systems (IDEAL): a micro-certificate program that uses the Farm as a site for land-based components.

Tal A'xin, Maya in Exile Garden: established in 2000 as one of the longest-running community-based projects at the UBC Farm, members of the Mayan community in the Lower Mainland grow and sell traditional foods and flowers, practice ceremony and provide educational opportunities for the broader community.

Culturally Relevant Urban Wellness Program (CRUW): developed in 2011 by Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society for Indigenous youth to reconnect with their culture and traditions.

Musqueam Garden: a community-run space for teaching, learning and gathering as well as growing food for Musqueam community members.

Centre for Indigenous Land-Based Education, Research and Wellness at x̓w̓ič̓ič̓əsəm Garden: a UBC centre that supports sociocultural reciprocity, Indigenous resurgence and self-determination, decolonization processes, and social transformation fostering the development of alternative, sustainable learning environments for everyone.



Definition

Decolonization

Decolonization is the process of dismantling colonial systems and undoing colonizing practices. It requires understanding historic injustice and the current systems that perpetuate inequities. A critical component of decolonization is the continued reflection of structures and power dynamics that indigenous people experience. In support of UBC's Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP), the X̓wi7x̓wa Library Decolonization & Anti-Racism guide assists in finding and facilitating decolonial and anti-racist research.

Governance

The CSFS at UBC Farm is managed by the Faculty of Land and Food System (LFS), which has appointed a director who reports to the faculty's Associate Dean of Research. The director along with an operations director, a small team of managers and farm staff help to facilitate collaboration among faculty and staff from across the UBC campus and support their work at the UBC Farm. As part of this new strategic plan, we have developed teams associated with each of our five strategies that enable this broader CSFS community to be active participants in decision-making for the centre. We have also created an External Advisory Committee made up of representatives from many of the parties that we aim to serve. This will ensure that we are drawing on a range of ideas and expertise and are held accountable to this plan.

The CSFS has, since its inception, been responsible for stewarding the land considered the UBC Farm as well as managing the operations, staff, human resources and financial management of the space. Given that there are now two centres (the CSFS and the Centre for Indigenous Land-Based Education, Research and Wellness at xʷčičəsəm Garden) sharing the UBC Farm site, we recognize that there is a need for a new paradigm in governance and land stewardship. A critical component of this strategic plan is to develop this new paradigm. We aim to work with the various groups at UBC Farm and our Musqueam hosts to develop a shared vision for the site and a pathway for making decisions about the stewardship of the land. We envision the formation of a decision-making group with broad representation that can guide the development of a thoughtful, collaborative, long-term site plan and decision-making process. We are working to create this group and are open to suggestions regarding membership.

Our Strategies for Impact

As we considered the next steps for the CSFS and the UBC farm, we recognize our potential and responsibility to have important positive impacts on students, staff and faculty at UBC as well as our local community partners and beyond. We want these impacts to ultimately make a difference in addressing what we see are the most urgent and important challenges facing our food system today. Over the next five years, we want our work to have sizable, tangible outcomes that help:

- Improve Regional Food Security
- Adapt to and Mitigate Climate Breakdown
- Enhance Biodiversity
- Decolonize our Approach



In this strategic plan, we outline five key strategies that will guide our efforts over the next five years to achieve impact in these areas. These strategies have been titled:

Lead: Transformational Agroecological Research

Learn: Place-Based Education

Mobilize: Systems and Policy Change

Grow: Community Well Being through Social Enterprise

Thrive: Sustainable Organization and Shared Agroecological Site.



LEAD

**Transformational
Agroecological
Research**

LEAD

Transformational Agroecological Research

The Challenge

As a society, we need to be able to produce healthy food in an economically viable, environmentally friendly, and socially just way. Climate breakdown now threatens already struggling farmers and food security and will, inevitably, become more challenging in the coming decades. We urgently need to develop practices that will help meet national and global emission reduction targets and reduce agriculture's impact on the climate. At the same time, 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. Our work will benefit growers, eaters, biodiversity, and ecosystems.

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.

OUTCOME

We are a model organic farm and agroecological research station



Project Spotlight **Biodiversity Monitoring**

The UBC Farm provides a unique opportunity to monitor the biodiversity important for agroecosystem food production and other ecosystem services (benefits we can receive from the natural environment), with future opportunities to connect this to other socio-ecological outcomes relevant to the broader community and food systems. Long-term biodiversity monitoring will ensure that the diversity of life at the UBC Farm, including birds, plants, and insects, is recorded each year. This will help us understand how biodiversity at the UBC Farm is changing over time and how this affects important ecosystem services that aid people, help crops grow, and contribute to overall ecosystem sustainability.



LEAD

Our Objectives Continued

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.

Programs, Projects, & Initiatives

- On-site research program
- Off-site research networks
- Data management and sharing
- CSFS Associate membership

Metrics

- Number of new practices trialled at the UBC Farm
- Number of CSFS research projects
- Number of peer-reviewed publications
- Number of staff and research associates trained in decolonial research approaches
- Number of research associates
- Number of participants in research events

Partnerships

- Researchers across the UBC campus
- Local to international university and government researchers
- Agricultural support and technology companies
- Local and regional governments

Project Spotlight **Canadian Organic Vegetable Improvement (CANOVI)**

CANOVI aims to contribute to the resilience and growth of Canada's organic vegetable sector through the characterization and development of certain varieties that excel in Canadian organic farming systems. The CANOVI team works with regional farming organizations to coordinate on-farm variety trials where farmers generate and share data about regional variety performance. This project provides farmers with relevant information on commercial variety performance, and data from the on-farm trials contribute to a broader understanding of crop-environment interactions.



A woman with braided hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and jeans, is working in a garden. She is holding a small green plant in her right hand and a bunch of green leaves in her left. The garden has rows of plants covered with white plastic mulch. There are yellow markers in the soil. In the background, another person is visible working. The sky is blue with some trees.

LEARN

Place-Based Education

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. Our work engages with UBC students and faculty, teachers, children, youth community programs, current and future farmers, and Indigenous partners.

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.

OUTCOME

Our educational programs are flourishing and positively impacting learners



Program Spotlight **Farm Wonders**

The Farm Wonders program is a community education initiative that allows preschoolers to secondary students to engage in hands-on activities at the UBC Farm through day camps and field trips. Children learn about the social and ecological aspects of the food system through science-based, experiential learning.

LEARN

Our Objectives Continued

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.

Programs, Projects, & Initiatives

- Academic courses, labs and site visits
- Practicum program
- Short courses
- Continuing education
- Children and youth programs
- Academic tours

Metrics

- Number of educational collaborations
- Number of CSFS education projects
- Number of academic tours
- Number of practicum graduates
- Number of children and youth participants
- Number of courses using the Farm as a "classroom"

Partnerships

- Educators across the UBC campus
- International universities
- Regional and international ECE programs and K-12 schools
- Regional youth programs

Program Spotlight UBC Farm Practicum

The UBC Farm Practicum in Sustainable Agriculture's mission is to inspire and cultivate new farmers and sustainability educators who will transform their communities and their food systems. Practicum students learn a wide array of skills including crop propagation, sustainable cultivation methods, soil fertility management, business management, and marketing. The program launched in 2008.





MOBILIZE

**Systems &
Policy Change**

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. To ensure our climate provides livable conditions for us and the other species that share our planet we must change our agricultural practices and employ alternative technologies. To ensure the viability of our agricultural systems in a rapidly changing climate we need large-scale investment in infrastructure that anticipates the needs of future generations.

The Strategy for Impact

We are instigating systems change through knowledge translation and mobilization, and through the development of transformative networks. Our work benefits farmers, growers, policymakers, decision-makers, researchers, and food security and farmland access organizations.

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.

OUTCOME

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



MOBILIZE

Our Objectives Continued

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.

Programs, Projects, & Initiatives

- Knowledge mobilization program
- Policy analysis and development program
- Collaboration with organizations and their networks working to improve food system and agricultural policy and practices
- Communications and outreach
- CSFS speakers series

Metrics

- Number of staff and associates trained in decolonial and equity-based frameworks
- Number of research and policy briefs produced
- Mobilization events hosted
- Number of farmers participating in events
- Number of industry staff engaged
- Number of partnerships established
- Number of networks and decision-making groups with CSFS representation

Partnerships

- Researchers across the UBC campus
- Local to international university and government researchers
- Food system and agricultural non-governmental organizations
- Local and regional governments

Network Spotlight

The CSFS collaborates closely with several organizations and their networks that are working to impact food system and agricultural policy and practices including:

BC Agricultural Climate Action Research Network (BC-ACARN)

The network's mission is to foster collaboration among researchers, universities, government and producer organizations across the province in order to catalyze effective, research-backed climate solutions for BC food producers. Powered by collaborative scientific research, BC food producers implement climate adaptation and mitigation practices that build thriving and resilient food production systems at every scale—locally, regionally and provincially.

BC Food Web

The BC Food Web is a freely-accessible online portal designed to increase access to food systems research results and other resources for producers, processors, policy-makers, educators, and the general public. The BC Food Web intends to meet the needs of those interested in increasing the sustainability and resilience of food systems using knowledge generated through high-quality, cutting-edge research.

BC Seed Co-op

A producers' co-operative growing and providing 100 per cent BC-grown vegetable, herb, flower, and grain seed that is ecologically grown and certified organic, open-pollinated, regionally selected, and GE-free. All seeds are grown by members on farms across the province.



GROW

Community Well-Being through Social Enterprise

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



GROW

Community Well-Being through Social Enterprise

Program Spotlight

Volunteer Program

The CSFS Volunteer Program enhances community food literacy, increases student experiential learning, and supports organic food cultivation at the UBC Farm. Market volunteers gain business and retail experience at the UBC Farm Farmers' Market. Volunteers with Farm Wonders learn to lead children's food literacy activities.

Program Spotlight

Markets

Our markets explore and exemplify healthy and sustainable food systems, encourage sustainable food literacy, foster socially just food systems for all, and cultivate the local food economy. We host three weekly markets during the growing season: we sell our produce at Tuesday evening and Saturday markets at the UBC Farm and a Wednesday market outside the UBC Bookstore. At our Saturday market, we provide opportunities for regional farms and food businesses to sell their products to the campus and neighbourhood community. Our markets strive to increase food literacy and we have an outreach booth at each market providing food systems knowledge mobilization and sharing how the students and the community can get involved with food systems learning and action.

Programs, Projects, & Initiatives

- Food distribution through public market, restaurant, and dining hall sales
- Community supported agriculture, and food donations
- Public market for other farms and food businesses
- Venue rentals
- Community events, tours and workshops
- Volunteer program

Metrics

- Pounds of food sold
- Pounds of food sold to students
- Dollars of social enterprise revenue
- Number of community events hosted
- Number of event and program participants

Partnerships

- UBC campus and neighbourhood organizations
- Regional farms and food businesses
- Food security non-governmental organizations



A woman with short brown hair, wearing a grey baseball cap and a yellow apron over a black tank top, is seen from the side, sorting through a large blue plastic basket filled with red potatoes. She has several tattoos on her left arm, including a large one of a bird in flight. In the background, more yellow and blue gloves are hanging, suggesting a farm or food processing environment. The word "Thrive" is written in a large, bold, dark font in the upper left corner.

Thrive

**Sustainable
Organization & Shared
Agroecological Site**

THRIVE

Sustainable Organization & Shared Agroecological Site

The Challenge

The UBC Farm is a site that has great meaning and importance to our Musqueam hosts and multiple Indigenous organizations that share the site for programming. The UBC Farm also holds great value for researchers and educators across UBC's many Faculties. We, however, do not have a shared vision of the long-term future of this space. Furthermore, the current model of funding and support for the CSFS and the UBC Farm is inadequate for the long-term needs of a thriving research and education centre, team and a shared site. Finally, our research, education and social enterprise potential is limited by our existing facilities.

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



THRIVE

Sustainable Organization & Shared Agroecological Site

Program Spotlight

Food Cultivation

Food is foundational to all we do. The cultivation and sharing of food at the UBC Farm are what makes grounded, applied research and learning possible. Cultivating food is essential to increasing food systems literacy and moving toward a food-secure and sustainable future. Food sales through our farmers' markets, CSA and wholesale outlets such as UBC Food Services create community partnerships, experiential learning and training opportunities for students and staff, campus food engagement, as well as providing a key revenue source to support the academic mission of the CSFS.

The UBC Farm practices organic agriculture, modelling a small-scale diversified farm. What and how we cultivate reflect the interests of our researchers, instructors, students, and customers with a focus on experimentation and innovation to achieve sustainable agricultural practices. We are committed to sharing our knowledge gathering and research, as well as demonstrating transparency in our production practices, including our organic certification process, harvesting, crop rotation and seed saving. We are proud to share our farming practices, informed by research and knowledge gathering, and to support farmers across our region, continent and beyond.

Programs, Projects, & Initiatives

- Farm operations (growing food)
- Site operations including care and maintenance
- Student Work Learn program
- New Farm Centre development
- Workplace equity diversity, inclusion, and indigeneity (EDI.I) initiatives
- Workplace well-being improvement

Metrics

- Net GHG emissions of the UBC Farm
- Variety and number of species at the UBC Farm
- Number of Work Learn students and staff trained
- Job satisfaction of staff
- Dollar-value of external support received

Partnerships

- Various UBC administrative and support offices
- Philanthropic organizations and donors
- Food system and agricultural non-government organizations



THRIVE

Sustainable Organization & Shared Agroecological Site

Project Spotlight **A New Lab & Farm Centre**

To achieve our mission, the CSFS is developing new facilities at the UBC Farm: an agroecological research lab and Farm Centre. Through a combination of new construction and renovation of existing buildings, these facilities will enable the CSFS and UBC to present a globally unique research and teaching environment aimed at improving the sustainability and resiliency of regional, national, and global food systems. These facilities will better enable us to

bring students, researchers, and industry partners together to develop, test and demonstrate scalable agricultural approaches, technologies, and social, economic, and environmental interventions within a living agroecosystem.

Our Farm Centre will enhance our capacity to bring together partners, host events for the campus community, and facilitate hands-on learning year-round, regardless of the weather. We envision a facility that incorporates and demonstrates leading-edge sustainable building principles and provides a pathway to experience, learn about, and develop a relationship with the land through intersecting and collaborative lenses.



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

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

GROW



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

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

The CSFS Team of Teams

For each of our five strategies, we have identified faculty and staff who have helped develop the strategies' specific objectives and actions and will continue to guide their implementation. Each of these teams will work with the support of key personnel from our management team to provide continuity and synergy among the strategies. The External Advisory Committee is made up of leaders from other faculties, key units across campus, industry and government. This advisory committee will provide feedback and accountability. We firmly believe that teamwork is a cornerstone of our collaborative ethos, as it not only strengthens our community but also promotes our interdependence.

Land and Food Systems

Rickey Yada, Dean
David Kitts, Associate Dean of Research

Current Directors

Sean Smukler
Clare Cullen (Operations)

Current Management Team

Tim Carter (Field and Site)
Camil Dumont (Education)
Melanie Kuxdorf (Communications &
Knowledge Mobilization)
Elena Donskikh / Doris Hernandez
(Finance & HR)

Current Associates

Faculty from across the UBC campus from
a diversity of disciplines

Andrew Black
Anubhav Singh
Cindy Prescott

Claire Kremen
Emily Kennedy
Leonard Foster
Jennifer Black
Jerry Spiegel
Juli Carrillo
Kai Chan
Kerry Greer
Kristen Walker
Loren Rieseberg
Maja Krzic
Mark Johnson
Matthew Mitchell
Navin Ramankutty
Patrick Culbert
Andrew Riseman
Risa Sargent
Sean Smukler
Robert Vanwynsberghe
Sandra Brown
Simone Castellarin
Siyun Wang
Terry Sunderland
Tara Ivanochko
Will Valley
Hannah Wittman

Former Directors

Mark Bomford
Amy Frye
Andrew Riseman (Academic)
Hannah Wittman (Academic)

Key Founders of the UBC Farm include:

Art Bomke, Kristina Bouris, Barb
Campbell, Derek Masselink, Rosy Smit, Moura
Quayle, Ben Willing, and many more.

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

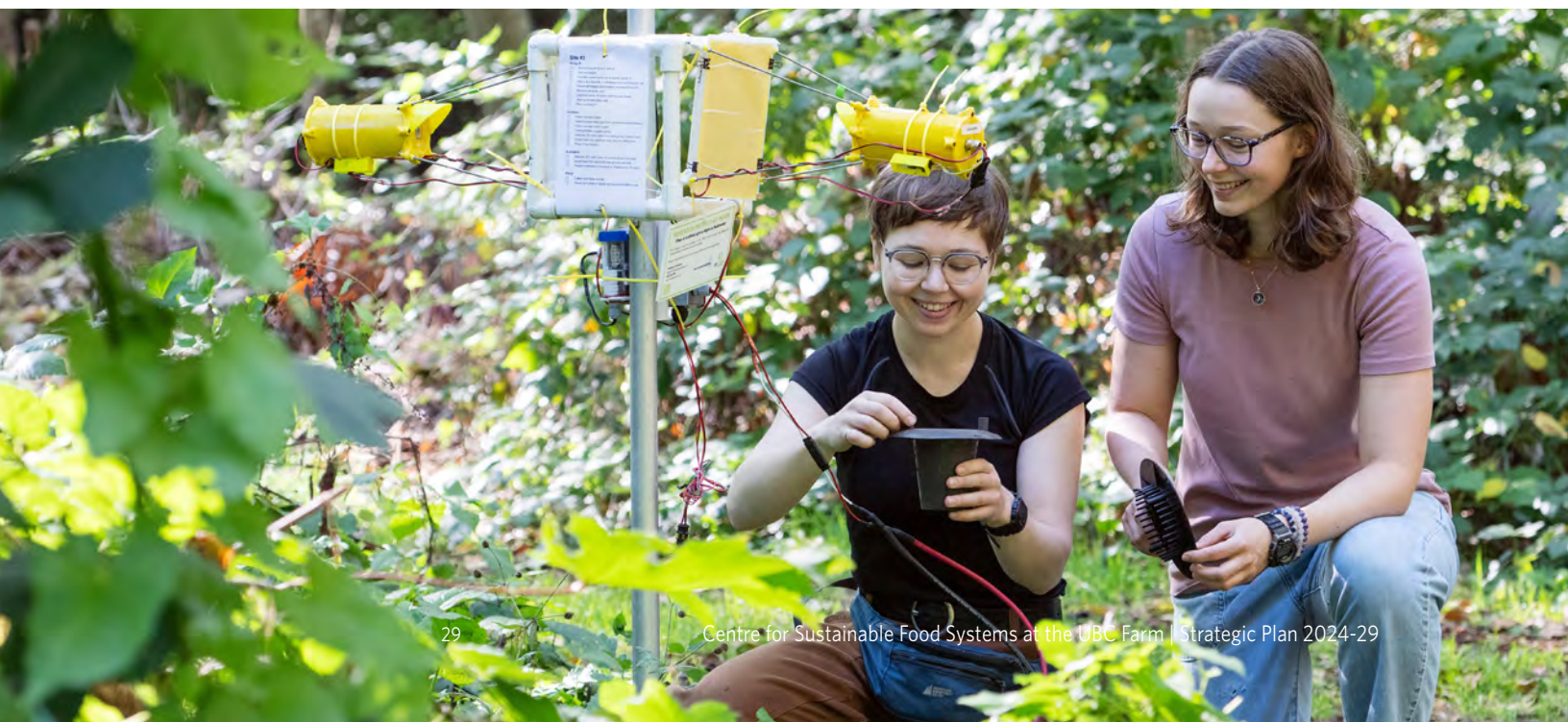
Evaluation and Accountability

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. We plan to integrate evaluation at research, community, and Farm events. Regular communication with interested parties will provide insights to refine strategies and align them with the UBC Farm community's interests. To enhance transparency, we will create a digital dashboard featuring key metrics from each strategy. This visualization tool will be accessible on our website, as a reminder of our objectives and indicator of our progress. Each fall we will compile our key performance indicators to share with our teams and with our External Advisory Committee. Feedback through this process will be used to revise our planning for the following year. Each spring our communications team's storytelling expertise will be utilized to connect metrics with real-world impact, offering a compelling narrative about the outcomes associated with our strategies. We plan to host an annual reflection event to further revise our planning and increase engagement in our strategic vision. The team of teams will share insights on what's working, what's not, and what needs to shift, creating an ongoing process of evaluation and feedback.

The Importance of Collaboration and Partnerships

We want to acknowledge the importance of nurturing our current partnerships as well as the care needed in developing new collaborations. One of the first actions we have identified is to map the networks and relationships engaged in sustainable food systems and land stewardship work on campus and beyond. This mapping will allow us to better understand our role in these networks. Our success relies on our relationships and partnerships. In partnership, we can effectively leverage resources and expertise to achieve our goals in sustainable food systems and agro-ecological practices. Building trust among our partners is fundamental and we aim to foster open communication and cooperation towards successful implementation of our strategies and actions. Clear agreements regarding roles, responsibilities, and practices will support our implementation of new programs and practices.

We invite you and your organizations to connect with the management team directly about collaborations and partnerships as we seek new ways of working together. Please subscribe to our newsletter as we will be inviting groups to engage in our work as we move forward.



Appendix: Detailed Action Plan

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Lead -Transformational Agroecological Research						
1. Develop a baseline and set of short to long-term experiments that will provide clear guidance for improving agroecological sustainability.						
Establish a preliminary baseline for UBC Farms sustainability						
Develop and prioritize GHG emission reduction research questions and create research plan						
Review, compile and synthesize the latest science on best practices for climate breakdown mitigation						
Review agroecological research applicable to UBC Farm production. Plan and implement applicable best practices and provide ongoing feedback to researchers.						
Establish additional short and long-term research projects to identify GHG emission reduction strategies						
Review and revise a baseline for UBC Farms sustainability: social, economic and environmental						
Establish additional short and long-term research projects to identify biodiversity enhancing strategies						
Evaluate improvements in UBC Farm sustainability metrics						
Collect and analyze data and publish results						
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.						
Develop a decolonizing research framework as part of the CSFS Indigenous Strategic Initiatives action plan						
Host trainings on ethical, decolonizing, and culturally safe research for CSFS staff and research associates						
Evaluate activities and revise decolonizing research framework						
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.						
Revise CSFS research associates terms of reference and recruit new associates						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Host UBC Farm research workshops for staff, research associates and campus community						
Develop and prioritize agroecological research questions and create research plan						
4. Support the establishment of a network of on-farm trials to help develop, contextualize, and promote agroecological research.						
Support cover crop trials on 15 organic vegetable farms						
Support cover crop trials on 4 perennial row crop farms						
5. Enhance research infrastructure and instrumentation and develop data collection, analysis, and synthesis approaches to become an internationally recognized agroecological research station.						
Do a needs assessment for production and research facilities and instrumentation						
Update data management system						
Develop a CFI proposal for research infrastructure renovation and new instrumentation						
Renovate and construct research facilities						
Learn - Place-Based Education						
1. Create new and stronger connections to courses at UBC, from Land and Food Systems as well as other Faculties.						
Host a series of workshops in order to develop guiding principles and a theory of change for faculty and instructors teaching at the farm with a focus on climate, decolonizing and food security.						
Develop a model for course cost recovery and revise or establish MOUs with partnering faculties						
Develop and implement a plan for improving tours at the UBC Farm						
Connect with on campus and off campus climate & food security & sustainable agriculture groups on educational initiatives						
Offer APBI 365, 465 as separate courses						
2. Apply a decolonized and equity lens to all CSFS teaching pedagogy. Grow, support, and enhance Indigenous initiatives and partnerships, and Indigenous Garden collaboration.						
CSFS team to utilize trainings ("Weaving Relations" and "Facing Human Wrongs") to reflect on current practices and develop pedagogical guidance.						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Enhance relationship with Musqueam Garden and Musqueam Health						
Host new partners on site in "Summer Institute" (also below)						
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.						
Hire project manager to build online version of practicum curriculum						
Develop a strategy for expanding practicum programs to increase UBC student participation, and include online and micro-credential offerings that are coordinated with on-site practicum						
Develop a funding model to minimize the cost of practicum program offerings						
Host a workshop to develop guiding principles for practicum programs including a theory of change						
Evaluate the practicum, analyze its impacts and synthesize and write up the results for publication						
Partner with other farmers to support more learning at more farms						
Build a post practicum community with other farms and farmers and establish a farm incubator site						
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.						
Develop and pilot - 1 week climate leadership camp for Grade 10 (out of school)- experiential, leadership, food, climate week						
Work with the Master of Education Cohort to plan and implement strategies to engage with teachers on food system education						
Develop a youth climate leadership camp						
5. Enhance and develop unique learning spaces and laboratory facilities at UBC Farm to better support and inspire place-based learning.						
Prepare renovations of children's' garden - remove garden boxes need and re-landscape						
Develop project in collaboration with UBC Childcare and Teacher Education to renovate the children's' garden, to re-enable programming in the space.						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Develop outdoor cooking infrastructure						
Renovate the children's greenhouse						
Mobilize - Systems and Policy Change						
1. Establish and adopt a decolonial and equity-based framework for engaging in knowledge mobilization and policy development.						
Develop a framework as part of the CSFS ISI action plan						
Host decolonial and equity-based mobilization and policy development trainings for CSFS staff and research associates						
Evaluate knowledge mobilization and policy activities and revise framework						
2. Engage in agricultural knowledge translation and mobilization through connections to extension specialists and networks, workshops, seminars, and the development of communication materials.						
Develop 10 research briefs on agricultural GHG reduction strategies						
Support knowledge translation by providing research briefing service through BC Food Web						
Work with CSFS research associates to develop a plan for areas of knowledge translation focus and activities						
Identify mobilization funding options, develop a funding plan and apply for funding						
Build regular communication between CSFS and industry associations						
Host one field day per year to facilitate knowledge transfer focused on CSFS research						
Provide training in knowledge sharing best practices for CSFS researchers and their students - e.g. best practices for science communications for farmers, how to host a successful field day						
Host quarterly virtual meetings with industry association communications staff and UBC CSFS researchers to share information on new research results and projects to identify opportunities for knowledge sharing through industry communications						
Support CSFS research associates with coordination of field days						
Create videos and other communications materials to communicate research, enhance agroecological knowledge and boost extension.						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
3. Facilitate and support the development and/or strengthening of networks that connect farmers, researchers, policymakers, industry, and the community.						
Map the networks that we currently work with and those that we would like to be working with, and determine our role in these networks.						
Survey key partners on how we can work together.						
Work with ACARN to engage CSFS staff and research associates in networking events with farmers, industry and policymakers						
Participate in Organic BC and Lower Mainland Horticulture Growers Short Course						
Host events geared towards the campus and neighbourhood community						
Increase food and agriculture education for the campus community, learners and growers at the UBC Farm.						
Increase food and agriculture literacy for campus community, learners and growers at public events (Seeds of Knowledge, etc.) and identify new areas for outreach.						
Support and participate in the BC Eco Seed Co-op						
Facilitate meetings with grower communities focused on developing research questions and sharing innovations						
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.						
Develop and prioritize a list of organizations that CSFS will engage with and establish representation on each (e.g. Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust, Provincial Soil Health Working Group).						
CSFS associates and staff will continue to sit on committees to influence policy						
Build a collaboration with the UBC Network for Climate Solutions to build the capacity of researchers to contribute to policy change and identify policy opportunities						
<u>Build a partnership with the UBC School for Public Policy and Global Affairs to offer training for CSFS research associates in policy communications (e.g. policy report workshop series)</u>						
Build relationships between CSFS researchers and national and provincial organizations working on agriculture policy, e.g. Farmers for Climate Solutions, Nature United and the National Farmers Union, BC Agriculture Council						
CSFS to host annual meetings with researchers and the BC Ministry of Agriculture Corporate Policy & Priorities Branch (includes Legislation Branch and Strategic Climate Initiatives Branch), this could also include an annual "Policy Day" where researchers go to Victoria						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grow - Community Well-Being through Social Enterprise						
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.						
Provide local sales channels such as community supported agriculture program, wholesale and on-campus markets						
Donate produce to local community programs						
Offer discounts to underserved communities						
Work with campus community to expand student access to food						
Restart Community Kitchen						
Review sales channels for produce and value-added items						
Assess our capacity to increase food donations and the needs of local community groups						
Develop partnerships with new community groups to reach underserved communities via donations and collaboration						
Assess the potential to increase collaboration with community partners to provide food to underserved communities						
2. Work with Musqueam and other Indigenous communities to create a shared vision of how the CSFS can support their initiatives.						
Organize visioning session and communications plan with Indigenous programs at UBC Farm						
Activate ISI projects, including "Indigenous Foodways", IDEAL/Weaving Relations						
Support CUES and other funding applications for Indigenous community projects						
Support and/or provide leadership for activities/ events with Indigenous community (i.e. Sept 30, Red Dress Day)						
Consult w Centre for Indigenous Land-Based Education and Wellness re. how CSFS can support their work						
Consult w Musqueam and Indigenous communities re. the development of Indigenous spaces in new Farm Centre						
Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29

Develop and equip Indigenous spaces in new Farm Centre						
Consult w Musqueam and Indigenous communities to evaluate Indigenous spaces in new Farm Centre						
Implement changes/ improvements to Indigenous spaces						
3. Improve site-based programs, activities and events to strengthen our campus and neighbourhood community while increasing revenue for the CSFS.						
Evaluate current events and workshop programming; identify possible new site-based activities including audiences, ROI and rationale						
Implement new events and workshop programming						
4. Improve eating, cooking, gathering and workshop spaces to enhance the delivery of community programs and events.						
Outline kitchen and dining spaces in new Farm Centre						
Maintain and improve outdoor gathering spaces, such as Poplar Grove, Events field and Children's Garden.						
Ensure kitchen and storage space are tidy and maintained for program use. Upgrade kitchen equipment as needed						
Equip kitchen and dining spaces in new Farm Centre						
Develop new community and educational programs for new Farm Centre						
Hold revenue-generating events in new Farm Centre						
Thrive - Sustainable Organization and Shared Agroecological Site						
1. Work with partners to co-develop and implement a land stewardship plan and decision-making process for the UBC Farm						
Build relationships and develop land stewardship committee						
Land stewardship committee establishes terms of reference and policy for decision making						
Develop long term land stewardship plan, including decision-making processes for project evaluation.						
Review and revise land stewardship plan						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
2. Be a model agroecological farm that provides realistic research and learning opportunities while helping financially support programming.						
Revise and adopt a cropping plan that optimizes for meeting the multiple objectives of all of our strategies						
Evaluate management options for minimizing GHG emission and develop implementation plan.						
Adopt new climate mitigation management strategies						
Evaluate management options for enhancing biodiversity and develop implementation plan.						
Adopt new biodiversity enhancement strategies						
Evaluate management options for enhancing farm resilience to climate breakdown and develop implementation plan.						
Adopt new climate resiliency strategies						
3. Develop and implement a plan to improve Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity (EDI.I)						
All staff to complete "Weaving Relations"; Management team to complete "Facing Human Wrongs"						
Develop detailed EDI.I plan and cultural safety framework						
Implement EDI.I plan and cultural safety framework						
Evaluate CSFS EDI.I and cultural safety and revise approach						
Implement revised EDI.I plan and cultural safety framework						
4. Improve internal operational systems, ensure sustainable staffing, financial sustainability and strengthen governance						
Develop 5-year budget plan for achieving sustainable finances						
Establish external advisory committee						
Develop detailed operations needs assessment, prioritization and plan						

Activity by Objective	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Implement plan to address operational needs						
Identify and foster relationships for new revenue sources (i.e. industry, government, foundations)						
Develop mechanism for staff to provide feedback on job satisfaction						
Reviewing JD's to ensure roles and responsibilities, as well as hours allocation reflect the strategic priorities						
Evaluate salary and benefits for all employees and revised 5 year budget plan						
Identify and implement career development supports for staff						
Implement employee salary, benefit and other workplace improvements						
Re-evaluate salary and benefits for all employees and revised 5 year budget plan						
Implement additional employee salary, benefit and other workplace improvements						
5. Enhance site infrastructure and complete the construction of a farm centre that will extend the capacity to deliver programs and support activities year-round.						
Develop detailed facility needs assessment, prioritization and plan						
Guide and support the new farm centre architectural design process						
Develop a CFI proposal to support research infrastructure including instrumentation, power and wireless upgrades and renovation of the old farm centre						
Facilitate adaptation of operations in advance of new farm centre construction						
Guide and support the new farm centre construction process						
Guide and support the research infrastructure enhancements						

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. 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

