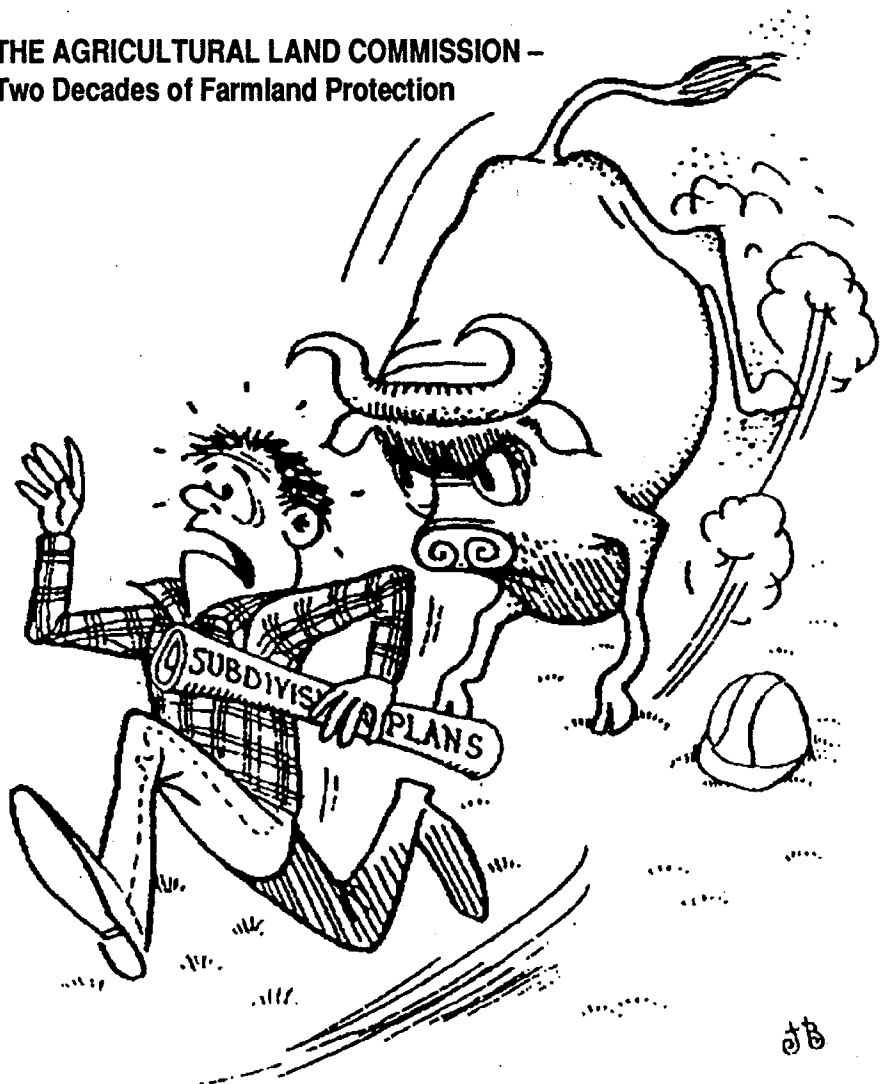


# P I B C news

## AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

THE AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION –  
Two Decades of Farmland Protection



Volume 35  
Number 3  
June 1993

**"Special Reprint"**

# AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

## Special Reprint

The June 1993 edition of the Planning Institute of British Columbia News included three articles concerning the Agricultural Land Commission. The articles were timely, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the passing of the original Land Commission Act in 1973. For many persons engaged in land and resource management, the Provincial agricultural land preservation program has had an important impact on land use decision making in both our rural and urban communities.

Gone are the days when this year's corn field is next year's residential subdivision. While preserving our foodlands, the Agricultural Land Reserve has had a positive impact on the way we approach the planning for urban and industrial expansion and will continue to play a complimentary role in the provision of open space and wildlife habitat.

The three articles provide an overview of the program and its achievements and a hint at its future direction.

- \* The first article, "Farmland Preservation - A Personal Reflection" was written by Jim Plotnikoff. Few persons are in a better position to provide an informed look at the Commission's work over the past two decades. Jim, currently the Director of Strategic Planning & Corporate Policy, has been with the Commission for nearly all of its 20 years.
- \* The second article, "B.C.'s Agricultural Land Commission: Preserving our Foodlands?" provides an overview of the program's background, how the Commission approaches its mandate, and a brief summary of its record and future initiatives.
- \* On March 19, 1993, the Commission undertook a successful day long symposium on 'Urban Growth and the ALR'. The third article summarizes the events of the day.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge and thank the Planning Institute for the opportunity to provide this 'special reprint' of the **PIBC News**.

Kirk Miller  
Chair, Agricultural Land Commission

# AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

## Farmland Preservation – A Personal Reflection

By Jim Plotnikoff

### The Initial Challenge

I remember very distinctly the first Chairman of the Land Commission, Mr. W.T. Lane, explaining to local governments—elected officials and planning staff—that the process for designating the Agricultural Land Reserves (ALR) had consciously left out of the ALR sufficient areas to accommodate five years growth for most regions and communities. The analogy was that of a runaway freight train. You couldn't expect to stop it on a dime. You had to gradually apply the brakes to slow it down and bring it to a halt over a longer distance. The message was clear. The five year framework was to provide some breathing space to allow local governments, and I think more particularly, we as professionals, time to change our thinking about agricultural land. The old notion that farmland was simply a repository for any number of non-farm uses was to end. We were expected to look at agricultural land as developed land—developed in an agricultural sense for its highest and best use—the production of food. We were challenged to rethink our concepts of growth and to devise and implement alternative growth options and new methods that would make better use of our existing land base without utilizing our scarce and precious agricultural resource.

Perhaps it was my naivety at the time, but I really believed that we were capable of taking up the challenge.

### The Present Reality

It is now 20 years later and while I believe we have made some significant strides forward, I am often seized with a sense of desperation that we have not taken the issues of farmland preservation seriously. Simply put, far too many people have yet to realize that the Agricultural Land Reserve is a reserve of land for agriculture.

I am disheartened by the fact that

cial community plans 'the promise' of applying new urban growth strategies, these are often coupled with a demand for, "a few more areas of agricultural land for urban expansion to allow a period of transition". Harkening back on my initial comments, the period of transition has already been provided—two decades ago.

In many cases there appears to be little consideration given to rethinking

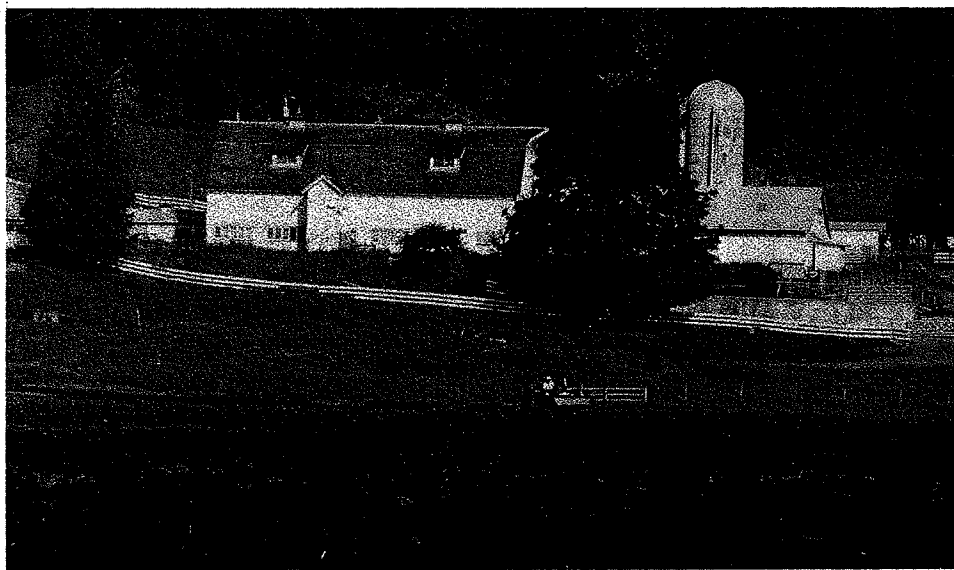
how existing land bases are used or of finding and promoting alternative options or forms of growth, be they more expensive or more challenging. Over the past 20 years there have been too few examples of communities defining an ultimate urban containment area or developing policy directions that anticipate and prepare the

public for a gradual stabilizing of the defined extent of urban expansion.

Innovation appears too often lost to a modus operandi that is simply more of the same—the same kind of policy direction that caters to outwardly expansive growth on to farmland with little more to its credit than a certain operational familiarity. I believe we have now reached a point where repeating the past at the direct expense of our agricultural resource is simply not good enough.

Lest my friends in local government fear I am singling them out, I have to say that some provincial and federal

(Continued On Page 3)



many local governments now routinely appear before the Commission at their regular five-year update of the Official Community Plan with what they believe to be almost perfunctory requests to have more land taken out of the ALR because they have 'run out' of land or may have (and this is my opinion only) poorly used some of their land base and now want a larger 'sandbox' in which to accommodate future growth projections.

In a parochial sense, jurisdictions are often reluctant to accept regional solutions when local urban growth alternatives of an expansive nature are lessening. While seeing within some offi-

# AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

## Farmland Preservation – A Personal Reflection– (Cont.)

ministries and agencies have been equally, and in some cases, more reluctant to accept the reality of the ALRs.

I hasten to add that these reflections are not necessarily universal in application. At the same time they are far from isolated. At the core is a continuing perception, that our agricultural resource is simply 'vacant land' being held or banked until it is considered needed for urban, industrial or infrastructure use. Despite some limited potential for multiple use, agriculture must be recognized as the legitimate end use of the ALR.

### Are We Land Short?

In many instances the Commission has felt that there are lands available for development outside the ALR. Certainly these lands may not be immediately serviceable and will often demand forward thinking and sensitive co-ordination to make them available. They may require replotting, long range sewer and water and local services planning. They may require a commitment on the part of the Provincial Government to co-ordinate and fund transportation linkages and major infrastructure programs as well as possibly resolving jurisdictional issues between and amongst municipalities and electoral areas. This is of course just dealing with new lands being brought on for development to say nothing of the rather

substantial opportunities that exist for infill and redevelopment of some of our existing urban areas.

Approximately 2 years ago, the Commission had had enough of being placed in a reactive role to local government requests for expansion of urban areas. It was decided that an effort was needed to identify lands with urban suitability of a long-range nature.

### The Lower Mainland Context

In the Lower Mainland setting, through its work in reviewing Community Plans and its general knowledge of the area, the Commission was convinced that there were substantial areas of non-farmland with long term urban potential.

During 1990, under the umbrella of the Choosing our Future program, the GVRD enhanced our understanding of urban growth opportunities, particularly in the shorter range. The Commission, not wishing to repeat this work, concentrated its efforts on longer range urban growth opportunities. As a starting point the now defunct Plan for the Lower Mainland of B.C. adopted in 1980 was examined. Particular attention was paid to the Urban Reserve and Urban 2 areas – the lands designated for long term urban growth a decade ago.

Layered onto this information, often representing an updating of the regional planning work, were the official community plans, rural land use bylaws and other urban suitability studies completed during the intervening years. Finally an assessment was made through air photo interpretation and onsite work of recent developments which have utilized portions of the 'urban reserve' areas.

What emerged was a generalized understanding of the extent of the Lower Mainland's longer term urban resource,

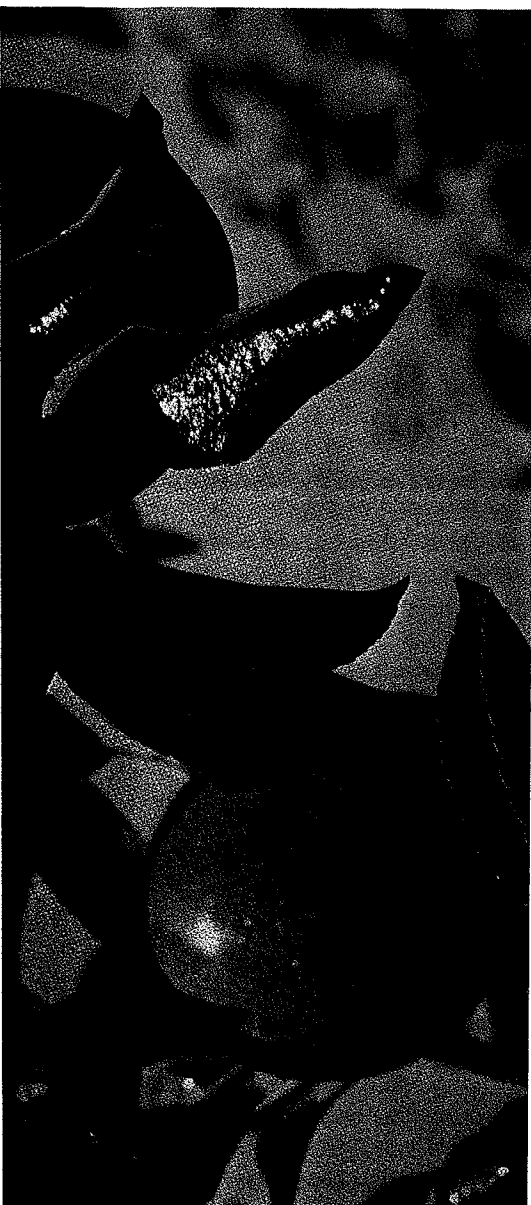


its location, and its relationship to our agricultural resource.

There are considerable opportunities for urban growth within the Lower Mainland, without urbanizing the Agricultural Land Reserve. These include:

- redevelopment of existing urban areas;





- undeveloped capacity and infill within our presently designated urban areas;
- currently identified 'urban reserve' lands of over 22,000 hectares (almost twice the size of the City of Vancouver) with over half these lands located in GVRD;
- rural lands (not in ALR) of over 18,000

hectares.

This represents a range of 22,000 – 40,000 hectares of land, outside the Agricultural Land Reserve with physical qualities and attributes suitable for urban development. The actual population these lands can support will be determined by the choices we make regarding quality of life, density of development and servicing infrastructure. It is important that effort be expended to further analyse and more precisely determine the capabilities of our urban resource, to develop policy directions to foster its efficient use and to determine the infrastructure necessary to allow its effective utilization. The work of Seelig and Artibise in their recently released "From Desolation to Hope" is an encouraging start.

For those who would accuse the Commission of being inflexible and not making adjustments in 'grey areas' let me assure you that we have been more than accommodating in allowing adjustments to ALR boundaries in cases where the agricultural potential or long-term suitability of land may be in question and therefore considered not to form part of the long term agricultural future of the province. However, memories are often short and people tend to forget about past exclusions that have been done to conciliate growth objectives. There are times when I suspect that every request for exclusion before us is based on the premise that there have not been any adjustments to the ALR boundary in the past. Within the Lower Mainland alone there has been an amount of land excluded or in the process of being excluded since 1974 approximately equivalent to the size of the City of Vancouver.

After 20 years of amendment, review and adjustment, the ALR in the context of the Lower Mainland, Van-

couver Island, the Okanagan, and several other areas of the Province has been 'fine-tuned' and now represents a clear definition of the best of British Columbia's remaining food producing lands. Given this history of change to our agricultural land base, what is now needed is a commitment to firmly entrench a long-term agricultural/urban interface. If we are to have a sustainable agricultural future, I for one do not agree that the provincial policy direction as set out in the Agricultural Land Commission Act is one where the Commission acts as a ration board to incrementally whittle away at the Agricultural Land Reserve.

#### Can We Do It?

It is no longer credible to regard our foodlands as a form of quick-fix urban land bank. This attitude must be replaced with an understanding that the urbanization of the ALR is *not* inevitable and that the preservation of our agricultural resource is a necessary context within which the planning for urban growth must be undertaken. As our population grows, so will the importance of maintaining our food producing lands.

I have said earlier that I have been somewhat disappointed with our performance of the past 20 years in meeting the challenges of growth. However, there is optimism because I am convinced that attitudes and opinions

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# AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

## Farmland Preservation – A Personal Reflection– (Cont.)

are beginning to change. I am heartened by the "Creating our Future" program of the GVRD, particularly the green zone concept that identifies areas of 'green' significance where a 'non urban development' priority will be established. This includes our agricultural lands which are foremost a working landscape of food production and also an important amenity resource. The delineation of green spaces and agricultural areas in perpetuity will in effect also provide a clear definition of our urban resource. In turn this will provide a focus for greater innovation in ensuring the development of more complete, efficient, environmentally responsive and liveable communities. This concept is turning the traditional planning focus on its ear and it is not only in the Lower Mainland that this is beginning to happen. Some Okanagan communities are pursuing this direction and I have even heard of one community on lower Vancouver Island that is considering a proposal whereby any change to the existing urban containment boundary would require a full referendum as opposed to the more routine public hearing, Council vote to change the Official Community Plan, etc. process.

The Commission itself will need to foster and encourage these new concepts and our 'Up Not Out' symposium was a first step. We have been working with the GVRD in promoting growth on the North Shore of the Fraser River in areas with the least possible impact on our farmlands, and with Interior communities on similar optional growth strategies. We are encouraged by some communities such as Langley and Delta who have recently undertaken meaningful rural land studies and developed such innovative notions as the Delta Farmland Wildlife Trust. Exciting stuff.

Can we do it? Yes I think we can

but it will not be without the pain that comes from changing your mental attitudes about notions of growth, different densities, different sensitivity levels and kinds of servicing, and the difficulties brought about by the need for a considerably increased level of co-op

eration at all levels, federally, provincially, regionally and locally.

Perhaps its now not even a question of 'can we do it' but rather 'we must do it'.

■ ■ ■

### FACTS ABOUT B.C. AGRICULTURE

- The agriculture and food industry is a \$12 billion industry in B.C.
- We produce 203 agricultural commodities and 83 fish commodities.
- We provide over 60% of British Columbians' food requirements.
- The industry employs over 212,000 people.
- Non-Canadian exports are valued at \$1.2 billion
- 25% of all retail sales in B.C. are food and beverage related.
- The total investment in land, equipment and stock is now over \$4 billion.

From: PIBC News February 1973



and then on the 9th day the minister said ... FREEZE THE LAND!

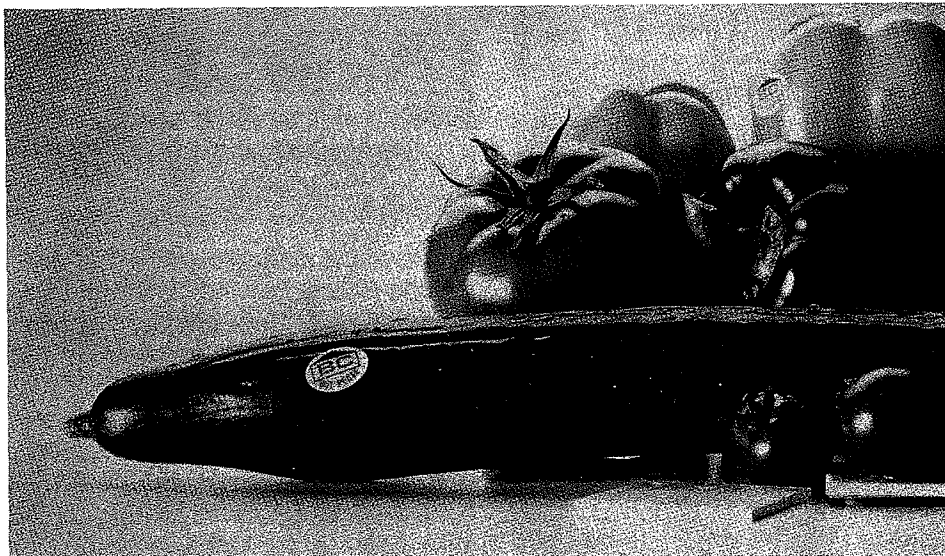
# B.C.'s Agricultural Land Commission: 'Preserving Our Foodlands?'

*"We're proud of the Agricultural Land Commission. It's the steward of our valuable agricultural land. It's a preserver of an important way of life in British Columbia with a track record of 20 years of hard work and success. We are committed to ensuring that it continues to work in the best interests of British Columbians."*

*Kirk Miller,  
Chair and General Manager,  
Agricultural Land Commission  
of British Columbia*

*"The Agricultural Land Commission is here to stay."*

*Mike Harcourt, Premier*



## Background

Since World War II agricultural land has been rapidly disappearing all over the world. In B.C. in the early 1970's the estimated loss of 'prime' agricultural land was about 6,000 hectares/year. Other jurisdictions attempted to protect agricultural land by land banks, the purchase of development rights, local zoning and other regulatory controls. In British Columbia the provincial government decided to maintain a single, consistent approach to preserving agricultural land by establishing the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission.

The creation of the Agricultural Land Reserve was founded on a clear desire by the Provincial government to ensure the preservation – in the long term – of the relatively scarce but essential resource upon which British Columbians relied for a healthy and substantial portion of their food needs. The creation of such a reserve in a province almost twice the size of France was a large undertaking and not without controversy.

With the approval of Order-in-Council 4483 on December 21, 1972

and Order 157 on January 18, 1973 the agricultural land preservation program was born. With these legislative actions the non-farm use of farmland, as defined by the Orders, was prohibited. In February, 1973 Bill 42, the forerunner of the Land Commission Act was introduced and proclaimed into law on April 18. By the following month the five initial appointees to the Land Commission were made, with Bill Lane as the first Chair and Gary Runka as General Manager.

The original Act had nine separate objectives including the preservation of agricultural land, greenbelt, a land bank and parkland. However, land placed in a greenbelt, land bank or park reserve had to be first purchased or acquired. The name of the Act was changed to the Agricultural Land Commission Act in 1977. With this came a narrowing of the objectives of the Act to deal only with agricultural land.

Despite the earlier broader mandate, the Commission's primary focus has always been the preservation of agricultural land. In its first years this

manifested itself in the establishment of Agricultural Land Reserves within each of the 28 (now 29) regional districts. To begin this process the then Department of Agriculture developed proposed 'ALR' plans based upon the Department's extensive technical and practical knowledge of agriculture in the Province. These proposals were forwarded to each regional district to be discussed with member municipalities and the public through information meetings and hearings. The plans were modified based upon local input prior to being forwarded to the Commission. Following Commission review, including an extensive consultative process and the consideration of further amendments, the proposed ALR plans were forwarded to Cabinet. As a final check, several other government departments and agencies also reviewed the plans before Cabinet's final deliberation and approval.

In March, 1974, less than one year after the passage of the Act, the ALR of the Okanagan-Similkameen Regional

**(Continued On Page 7)**

# AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

## B.C.s Agricultural Land Commission (Cont.)

District was the first to be designated. Before the end of 1974 ALR plans were designated in 23 of the 28 regional districts. Another four plans were designated in 1975 and in December, 1976 Mount Waddington Regional District's ALR plan was the last to be designated. This completed the initial phase of the Commission's work (the administrative fun had just begun). At this point the initial 'land freeze', as it was commonly known, was replaced by the duly designated Agricultural Land Reserve plans of each regional district.

The total area of the original ALR was about 4.7 million hectares, representing less than 5% of the province. It is interesting to note that today we have more area in B.C. dedicated as provincial and federal parkland than Agricultural Land Reserve.

The ALR can be characterized as a provincial land use zone in favour of agriculture wherein non-agricultural uses are strictly regulated and farm activities re encouraged. It includes both private and Crown land; and land currently being farmed as well as land with agricultural potential.

### Approach

The Agricultural Land Commission consists of at least 5 members who report to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Commissioners are drawn from all areas of the province and are chosen for their demonstrated leadership and skills from a cross-section of agricultural and other sectors. Their mandate is to preserve British Columbia's agricultural lands, to encourage the establishment and maintenance of farms and to encourage the use of agricultural lands in a manner compatible with agricultural purposes.

The ALC strives to meet its mandate first and foremost by encouraging

*It is interesting to note that today we have more area in B.C. dedicated as provincial and federal parkland than Agricultural Land Reserve.*

effective land management. To this end it works closely with local governments including elected officials, planning and technical staff, the farm community, landowners and the general public.

To date the Commission has received over 30,000 applications from landowners to remove land from the ALR, or to subdivide or establish non-farm uses. In the last two years the number of applications increased at the rate of 5% per year; in the last year alone over 1,200 were received. Not only is the number of applications increasing, so are their degree of complexity. There is also more public opinion and awareness of each application, with the growing public concern over environmental issues.

Apart from the regular business of processing subdivision, non-farm use, exclusion and inclusion applications, the Commission participates in several planning, review and action-oriented programs to:

- refine the ALR boundary,
- ensure consistency of local plans and bylaws with Provincial foodlands policy, and,
- ensure that initiatives of other government agencies support the ALR and the agricultural economy.

In this regard the Commission takes the initiative to resolve problem situations, to avoid and reduce applications in specified areas and to ensure greater coordination between levels of government consistent with the objectives of the Act. As well, the Commission endeavours to improve communi-

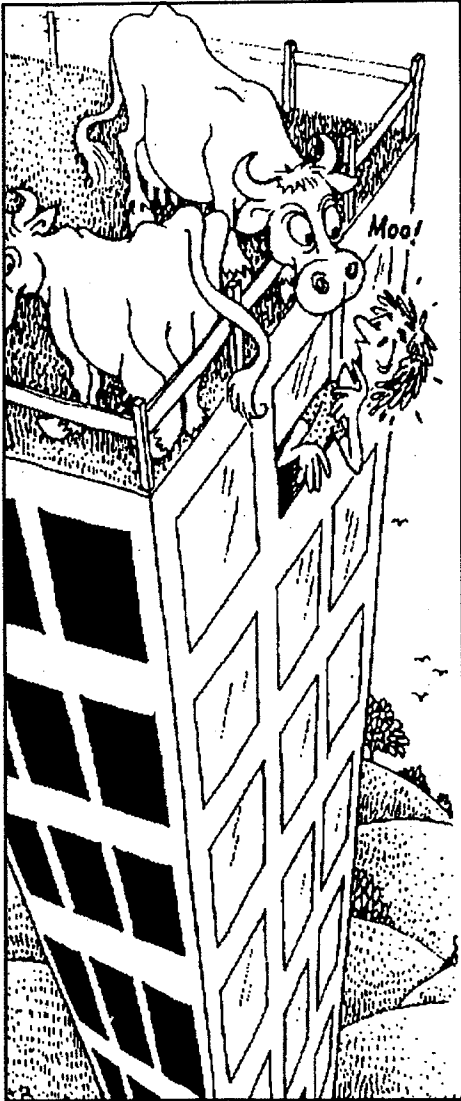
cations with local government, planners and farm organizations.

A major part of this work is the review of local government land use plans and zoning bylaws. Ensuring consistency between local land use policy and provincial foodland policy is an effective way to reduce applications and uphold the integrity of the ALR. As well, the Commission reviews B.C. government plans and projects such as highway and utility corridors. Taken together, the Commission has reviewed over 700 such planning projects to date.

Periodically the Commission reviews the ALR boundary in a particular area – a process known as 'fine tuning'. A community plan review, the concentration of applications in one area, a lack of accurate technical information or discussion with local governments are common reasons for initiating such a review. The Commission's goal in these situations is to create more credible and defensible ALR boundaries.

Finally, the Commission actively engages in other policy and program initiatives that support farmers and the farm economy. One such exercise is the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's Green Zone Program. This aims to reduce the conflicts between farm and non-farm uses and ensure that farmers can carry out legitimate farm management practices without undue restriction. The Commission also develops specific policies (e.g. homesite severances) that provide farmers with flexibility, give policy guidance to local government or streamline administra-





tive procedures. These policies are passed as general orders of the Commission.

#### A Record of Success?

Has the B.C. Agricultural Land Commission met the goals and challenges assigned to it by the Provincial Legislature and the people of B.C.?

Of the 4.7 million hectares of land originally designated as ALR, about

103,000 hectares have been excluded - (2.2%) in 20 years. Of these, 77% had secondary agricultural capability ratings (Classes 4 through 7). While this land was being excluded, other lands were included in the Reserve, although most were concentrated in the northern half of the Province.

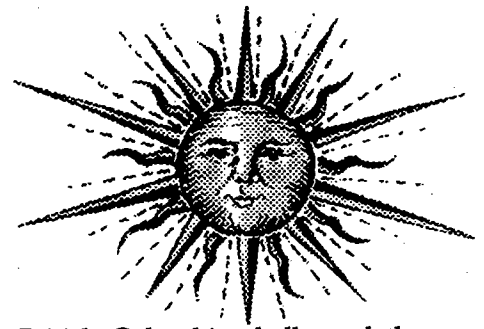
Considering both exclusions and inclusions, there has been a net loss of some 20,000 hectares from the Reserve, or about 0.4%.

In hindsight, it appears that the early years of the agricultural land preservation program were marked by a period of appraisal and adjustment. During the initial nine years there was an average annual loss of 4,400 hectares of ALR. However, in the seven year period between 1983 and 1989 there was an average annual increase of 2,800 hectares. Much of the land excluded over the years was of poor or marginal agricultural quality.

Perhaps the most telling fact is the estimated annual loss of 6,000 hectares of 'prime' agricultural land in the 1970's dropped to fewer than 700 hectares per year today.

Furthermore, B.C. is doing well compared to the rest of Canada. Environment Canada estimates between 1971 and 1986, 215,350 hectares of rural land was converted to urban uses within Canada's 70 urban-centred regions. Of these, 120,245 or nearly 56%, was prime agricultural land (Classes 1-3). In Ontario, 78% of all rural land similarly converted to urban uses was prime agricultural land. Compared to other provinces during this period, B.C. with 22% was second only to Newfoundland in having the lowest percentage of prime agricultural land lost to urbanization.

With respect to the encouragement of farming, according to Statistics Canada, in the period 1971-1991 "...only



British Columbia challenged the national trend, by showing a 4% increase in the number of census farms...". In 1991, British Columbia had 19,225 farms compared to 18,400 in 1971, an increase of 825.

Between 1971 and 1991 the number and proportion of farms with larger gross farm receipts was also increasing relative to smaller operations. The number of farms with gross farm receipts less than \$10,000 (in 1990 dollars) declined by 841. Conversely, the number of farms with gross farm receipts between \$10,000 and \$49,000 rose by 461, and the number of farms with receipts greater than \$50,000 increased by 1,205.

#### What's in Store for the Commission in Years To Come?

Among the challenges the Commission needs (and wants) to undertake for the future are:

- to improve communications and information about the work of the Commission;
- to place renewed emphasis on regional planning in support of agriculture and the ALR;
- to advocate stronger integration of government policies and programs to effectively support the agricultural land preservation program in a coordinated manner;
- to create closer policy development links between planning for urban growth and efforts to preserve agricultural resources;
- to push for a broad Provincial agricultural strategy to better coordinate the preservation program with agricultural activities and policies; and
- to advocate the review and improvement of programs to enhance farm viability, as a positive step towards ensuring the preservation of agricultural land.

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# AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

## The 1993 Symposium on Urban Growth And The ALR

March 9th of this year marked an important date for the Commission with the holding of the Symposium on "Urban Growth and the ALR". This was not only a day of reflection; it provided practical advice on how B.C.'s farmland preservation program should proceed and be improved in the coming years. The day also commemorated 20 years since the introduction of the original farmland preservation legislation establishing the ALR.

At the Symposium, Premier Mike Harcourt and Agriculture Minister Bill Barlee reaffirmed the B.C. Government's commitment to the Agricultural Land Commission and its mandate to preserve B.C.'s foodlands. "The ALC is here to stay," Harcourt told delegates. "The introduction of the Land Reserve system in 1973 was one of the wisest and most far-reaching decisions ever made by the provincial government," he said. "After twenty years it's no longer a question of whether we should have an Ag-

### B.C.s AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION (Cont.)

In order for British Columbians to enjoy a consistent supply of safe, nutritious and wholesome food, and to derive the many other benefits of a healthy agriculture and food industry, the agricultural land in this province must be preserved as a working landscape for our producers and farm families. The model developed in British Columbia will continue to evolve and change, and set the standard for other agricultural land preservation programs. Our program has been successfully meeting the diverse needs and conflicting demands of British Columbians – and preserving our foodlands – for over 20 years.



**"We must [either] stop growing, abandon our country side to urban sprawl or find better ways of accommodating growth."**

ricultural Land Reserve – the issue now is how to make it better."

In their remarks to 150 representatives of local government, agriculture, the development community, planners and others attending the Symposium, Harcourt and Barlee said that preservation of agricultural land has never been more important than it is today. They reminded everyone from land speculators to local governments that lands in the ALR are there for present and future agricultural use and not for other purposes. To back up their commitment, the Premier announced the Government's intention to introduce changes to the Agricultural Land Commission Act in the current legislative session "to strengthen the integrity of the Agricultural Land Commission." Mr. Barlee outlined the role of the Government, saying his government will "create a favourable climate for agriculture to grow and strengthen, not only at home but in the global marketplace."

As well as hearing from the Premier and Minister Barlee, Symposium delegates reviewed Dr. Bill Rees' paper "Why Preserve Agricultural Land?". Among his conclusions, Dr. Rees notes:

*"Arable land is considered to be a form of productive natural capital with only a limited potential for technological substitution. Its unique properties and immeasurable value as an essential component of our global life support system justify the exclusion of adequate stocks of agricultural land from competing land markets. In short, a range of considerations and values beyond short-term efficiency bear on critical land use decisions. This is more likely to ensure food security in a world of rapid ecological change and political uncertainty. As a bonus, we may succeed in preserving important elements of rural life and landscape, a*

*significant part of our national heritage."*

Symposium delegates also responded to presentations by Ray Spaxman ("Urban Form in a Sustainable Region") and Gary Runka ("Agriculture in the Urban Shadow"). Mr. Spaxman noted "...we have few choices left. We must [either] stop growing, abandon our country side to urban sprawl or find better ways of accommodating growth." Gary Runka, a noted land and resource consultant, commented: "...it is safe to say there is significantly more agricultural land and food production within the urban shadow than there would have been without the ALR..."

A panel consisting of Delta Mayor Beth Johnson, Fraser Valley farmer Herman Driediger and Bosa Group executive Eric Martin responded to these papers. Symposium working groups then met in the afternoon to address the question "What initiatives should B.C.'s farmland preservation program pursue in the next 20 years?". In roundtable discussions, delegates focused on the respective roles of the Agricultural Land Commission, the Province in general, local government, agricultural producers and the business community.

Among the general themes which emerged was an endorsement of the Premier's "UPNOTOUT" message. With few exceptions, delegates agreed that the best way to relieve pressure on agricultural lands was to move urban growth UP in the urban densities, UP onto non-arable hillsides and UP into emerging non-farm regions of the Province; but not OUT into rich foodlands.

The Symposium proceedings are now being prepared and anyone wishing a copy may contact the Commission.



For additional copies of this 'Special Reprint' of the PIBC News please contact the B.C. Agricultural Land Commission at Room 133, 4940 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 4K6 or Telephone: (604) 660-7000; Fax: (604) 660-7033.