

**British Columbia
Food Quality & Safety
Steering Committee**

**Food Quality & Safety
Strategic Plan**

**5 Year Plan
2004/05 – 2008/09**

May 29, 2003

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Agri-Food Futures Fund, a joint federal/provincial initiative was established in 2001 for the purpose of both strengthening the Agri-Food Industry and facilitating the Agri-Food Industry to lead and finance its own development. Through support of this fund, the Food Quality & Safety initiative received a planning grant to develop a Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan, for the purpose of providing strategic direction to the BC Food Industry.

To guide the development of the Strategic Plan the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries established an industry-led steering committee through invitation with a mandate to develop a Strategic Plan that would guide the BC Food Industry over the next 5 years.

Terms used in the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan contains commonly used terms in the area of food quality and food safety. The list below outlines the Steering Committee's usage of those terms.

Food quality refers to those attributes of Agri-Food products that are desired by users of those products. Those attributes could include product safety, size grade, colour, price, origin, production method, etc.

Food safety refers to Agri-Food products that do not expose users to undue biological, physical or chemical hazards when used under 'normal' circumstances.

Quality Assurance (QA) refers to any program which provides assurance that an Agri-Food product has specified attributes. QA programs include HACCP and non-HACCP programs.

Traceability/tracking/traceback is the ability to follow an animal, plant or food item from one point in the supply chain to another, either backwards or forwards.

Identity Preservation systems provide confidence that product attributes (characteristics or qualities), in particular origin and method of production, are sustained as the product moves through the food supply chain.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a systematic approach to food safety which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety. Food safety programs in Canada are HACCP or HACCP-based.

Recognition is the process and outcome of verifying that a program meets pre-determined standards.

Range and Scope of the Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan seeks to advance the BC Agri-Food industry with respect to both food quality and food safety, to encourage development, adoption and implementation of programs to enhance food safety and encourage utilization of quality programs as enabled by the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act (BC).

The Steering Committee recognizes that food quality and safety must be continuous from the pre-production through to end user. The Committee considers the stages of Agri-Food production to be:

- Agri-Food inputs (e.g. feeds, seeds, fertilizers, crop and livestock protection products, land and water, veterinary, agrology and nutritional expertise)
- production (growing/rearing of agricultural products)
- processing (grading, processing, transforming Agri-Food products into food products ready for end use)
- distribution/transportation (storage, transportation to markets)
- marketing (transfer of product to end user)
- end use (preparation and consumption of the food product)

This Strategic Plan focuses on support to address food quality and safety issues in the production stage, and on the needs of farm direct marketing and small scale processing, so as to provide benefits to 'downstream' stages and end users.

Challenges to the Industry

Key challenges to BC's Agri-Food Industry include:

- BC's food safety and regulatory system operates in a complex jurisdictional context with food quality and safety responsibility divided between federal, provincial and regional governments;
- Industry is finding it increasingly difficult to stay competitive in the face of changing technology, changing consumer demands and preferences and the requirements of inter-provincial and international trade;
- Many processors and food manufacturers can have as many as 5 different Quality Assurance (QA) programs they have to implement, monitor, verify and comply with, resulting in high costs and structural changes;
- Competing in National and International Markets will likely require recognized quality assurance and/or traceability programs;
- Consumer interest and awareness of food quality and safety issues is increasing and they are looking to government and industry to provide assurances of product quality and safety;
- Implementing QA programs takes a large commitment of time and people as well as dollars and education materials; and
- Food quality and safety issues in smaller or less sophisticated operations can affect markets in much broader sectors.

Industry Vision

The diverse BC Agri-Food industry is committed to and will be universally recognized for safe food of high quality.

Industry Mission

The BC Agri-Food industry will provide quality food for the consumer through a realistic (financially feasible and operationally realistic) and achievable framework that promotes:

- Education and awareness
- Recognized safety standards
- Risk assessment and management of food safety
- Implementation of recognized safety programs
- Formation of alliances within the Agri-Food sector

Strategic Plan Goals

Based on the industry’s vision and mission, and the Environmental Scan, the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee developed three broad goals to guide the development of food quality and safety for BC’s Food Industry over the next five years:

1. Develop and deliver education and awareness programs to BC’s food industry: primarily producers and processors.
2. Facilitate and promote the development and delivery of recognized safety/quality standards and programs to the BC food industry; primarily producers and processors.
3. Research and prioritize food safety risks.

These goals reflect priorities established by the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee. The total notional allocation for the fund is \$1.748 million. Disbursement of AFFF funds for projects supporting the three goals will be guided by the Strategic Plan as follows:

| Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan Goals | Proposed AFFF Contributions & Percentage of Fund Allocated to Projects | |
|--|---|-----|
| Develop & Deliver Education and Awareness Programs to BC's Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing. | \$681,200 | 39% |
| Facilitate and Promote the Development and Delivery of Recognized Safety/Quality Standards and Programs to the BC Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing, by 2009. | \$800,100 | 46% |
| Research and prioritize food safety risks. | \$266,700 | 15% |

Implementation of the Strategic Plan

Once the Strategic Plan and Initial Work Plan are approved, the Food Quality & Safety Advisory Committee (FQS Advisory Committee) will be established. The FQS Advisory Committee will be responsible for developing the annual work plans and overseeing the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

The make-up of the Committee will be:

- 5 Industry members (1 food scientist; 1 small scale food processor; 1 crop producer; 1 animal producer; 1 direct farm marketer)
- Administrator
- 1 ex-officio representative from BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries
- 1 ex-officio Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada representative
- 1 ex-officio from BC Investment Agriculture Foundation (Trustee)

Functions of the Committee will include, but not be limited to:

- Development of the Funding Agreement with the Trustee
- Implementation of the Communications strategy
- Development of criteria for project approval
- Advertisement of Requests for Proposal, where appropriate
- Evaluation of project proposals against work plan objectives and criteria
- Monitoring of project progress and evaluation of project completion
- Reporting back to the Trustee as required in the funding agreement.

Administration and Financial Accountability

A requirement of the AFFF is that the funds must be held by a legal entity, authorized to hold and manage funds. The Food Quality and Safety Steering Committee may seek an agreement with the BC Investment Agriculture Foundation to administer the funds for the Food Quality and Safety initiative. Should the parties not reach an agreement the Steering Committee will seek Requests for Proposals (RFP) for managing funds on behalf of the FQS Advisory Committee from the BC Agriculture Council, the BC Centre for Disease Control, the BC Science Council and similar agencies. An administration charge in the range of 8% will be negotiated by the Steering Committee as part of this selection process. It will be paid annually based on the amount of money managed that year. The legal entity would be required to complete all required administrative support services and fully support the FQS Advisory Committee in their role of managing the Fund.

Upon approval of specific projects by the FQS Advisory Committee, a Conditional Grant Agreement would be produced by the legal entity to be signed by the proponent and the chair of the Advisory Committee. This will trigger the phased-in release of funds to the proponent.

Project Application and Approval Process

Two categories of projects will come before the FQS Advisory Committee for approval:

1. Those projects that are set as priorities by the FQS Advisory Committee and advertised through Request for Proposal.
2. Those projects that are consistent with the Strategic Plan and are priorities to Industry, submitted to the FQS Advisory Committee by Industry or professional individuals/organizations for review and approval.

Requests for Proposal will be advertised giving applicants ample response time. Advertising venues may include: BCAC website, MAFF website, and Industry and Association newsletters and the proposed new FQS website.

Funding dollars available for projects will be advertised in advance giving industry and professional organizations ample opportunity to develop and submit project proposals for review and approval.

Application Procedure

Application forms and approval criteria will be available and may be posted on BCAC, MAFF, and FQS websites. Project applications must be complete in order to be reviewed and must include:

1. A detailed project description.
2. Identification of which Strategic Plan goal or percentage of multiple goals the project falls under.
3. A complete budget including identification of funding partners, actual dollars and in-kind contributions.
4. Project timeline and work plan.
5. Clearly defined deliverables.
6. Clear description of the benefit to industry or sector.
7. Background information on the proponent.
8. Method to evaluate and demonstrate success of the project.
9. Identification in the work plan or method and timeline for submission of Final Report.

Proposed Financial Strategy

Cost sharing between Industry and AFFF is a principle of the Agriculture Food Futures Fund, and it is expected that Industry will contribute an average of 50:50 cost sharing over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan. It is anticipated that financial contribution from Industry will come from check-offs and levies, cost recovery where appropriate (e.g. training or certification program) as well as other partnering dollars to be determined. Industry contributions will include industry cash and may include up to 50% in-kind. Preference may be shown to proposals with lower ratios of in-kind. In-kind contributions, including such values as time, effort, etc., must be directly related to achieving the objectives of the project, must be incremental to the normal activities of the contributor, and are recognized at current market value.

A notional amount of \$ 1.748 million of the AFFF trust has been allocated over a five-year period. The proposed cost sharing strategy of the Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan is to maintain a ratio between AFFF funding and Industry funding that remains achievable for Industry throughout the plan. It is anticipated that greater AFFF assistance will be needed in the first year for projects benefiting Industry at large, such as cost benefit analyses, where outcomes may not directly benefit a specific industry, therefore not attracting as much Industry contribution.

Recognizing the need for assistance at the front end of the Plan, and roll-out of projects benefiting the Industry at large, the cost sharing proposal begins with a higher level of AFFF funding and a lower percentage of Industry funding. The strategy ramps up to a 49:51 dollar matching by year three, and continues to support Industry contribution to achieve a credible balance that Industry is able to support by year 5 for a ratio of 34:66.

Table A: Proposed Industry Cost Sharing Fiscal Years 2004/05 – 2008/09

| Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan Proposed AFFF & Industry Cost Sharing Fiscal Year 2004/05 – 2008/09 | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| Fiscal Year | Total Budget | Total AFFF | | Total Industry | |
| 2004-05 | \$619,000 | \$407,000 | 66% | \$212,000 | 34% |
| 2005-06 | \$780,000 | \$448,000 | 57% | \$332,000 | 43% |
| 2006-07 | \$790,000 | \$390,000 | 49% | \$400,000 | 51% |
| 2007-08 | \$733,000 | \$305,000 | 42% | \$428,000 | 58% |
| 2008-09 | \$574,000 | \$198,000 | 34% | \$376,000 | 66% |
| TOTAL | \$3,496,000 | \$1,748,000 | | \$1,748,000 | |

To encourage participation by BC commodities and sectors, and to make funds available for multiple industry-led projects, the Food Quality & Safety initiative will provide a maximum of \$100,000 per commodity or sector for the development and implementation of recognized national food safety programs, and a maximum of \$50,000 per applicant group for other projects.

Communication Plan

The Food Quality and Safety Steering Committee has developed a communication strategy to ensure that the BC Agri-Food Industry is aware of the initiative and the outcomes. This communication strategy includes web site postings and linkages, mail-outs and distribution centres (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, BC Agriculture Council, etc), as well as promotional materials, direct promotional communication by the administrator with commodity groups, and progress reports. The communication plan will be funded through a portion of the administration fee (10%). During the first year of the plan the communication budget will be slightly larger than in other years in order to fund the FQS website.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Agri-Food Futures Fund, a joint federal/provincial initiative was established in 2001 for the purpose of both strengthening the Agri-Food Industry and facilitating the Agri-Food Industry to lead and finance its own development.

Supporting the improvement of food quality and safety, creating consumer confidence, and building a reputation of safe foods that have been humanely produced, are identified as purposes within the Agri-Food Futures Fund. As such, Food Quality & Safety was eligible to receive a planning grant to develop an Industry Strategic Plan.

The purpose of an Industry-driven strategic plan is to bring Agri-Food Industry members together to provide strategic direction over the next 5 years to the BC food industry, with respect to improving food quality and food safety. A Strategic Plan with clearly defined goals and actions, coupled with financial contributions from the Agri-Food Futures Fund, presents a significant opportunity for the Agri-Food Industry to further the development of food quality and safety, realize financial benefits and strengthen the future of the Agri-Food Industry in British Columbia.

Range and Scope of the Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan seeks to advance the BC Agri-Food industry with respect to both food quality and food safety, to encourage development, adoption and implementation of programs to enhance food safety and encourage utilization of quality programs as enabled by the Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act (BC).

The Steering Committee recognizes that food quality and safety must be continuous from the pre-production through to end user. The Committee considers the stages of Agri-Food production as:

- Agri-Food inputs (e.g. feeds, seeds, fertilizers, crop and livestock protection products, land and water, veterinary, agrology and nutritional expertise)
- production (growing/rearing of agricultural products)
- processing (grading, processing, transforming Agri-Food products into food products ready for end use)
- distribution/transportation (storage, transportation to markets)
- marketing (transfer of product to end user)
- end use (preparation and consumption of the food product)

Collectively these stages are considered as the 'farm to fork' continuum (some stages, e.g. supply chain, may occur more than one time)

The stages above involve varying ownerships and responsibilities. While governments, agricultural suppliers, farmers, transporters, distributors, processors, marketers and end users all have roles to play, many players already have established food quality and safety programs and

practices. This Strategic Plan focuses on support to address food quality and safety issues in the production stage, and on the needs of farm direct marketing and small scale processing, so as to provide benefits to 'downstream' stages and end users.

Methodology

Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee

To guide the development of the strategic plan the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries established an industry-led steering committee through invitation. Through Ministry staff, the Minister canvassed both government and Industry associations for recommendations of prominent members of the Agri-Food Industry who would be assets to the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee.

An information meeting for Industry members was held on January 9th, 2002 with the purpose of a) explaining the goals of the Strategic Plan Initiative and to ask Industry for their level of interest, and b) to suggest Industry representatives for the Steering Committee. On the basis of the recommendations received by government and industry, a list of potential Steering Committee members was submitted to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Geographic representation, gender, commodity type and balance through the food chain (from producer through retailer), were taken into account. Letters of invitation were sent from the Minister to select Industry members to provide for a Steering Committee make-up with broad representation.

Mandate of the Food Quality and Safety Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was tasked with developing a strategic plan for food quality and safety to guide the BC Agri-Food Industry over the next 3 to 5 years. This Committee will remain functional until BC Investment Agriculture Foundation approves the Strategic Plan and Initial Work plan. Upon approval, an Advisory Committee will be established to oversee implementation and administration of the Strategic Plan.

GOVERNANCE

Development of the Strategic Plan

To guide the development of a Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan, a Steering Committee was established, comprised of Industry members. The role of the Committee is to develop a strategic plan to guide the development of food quality and safety for the BC Agri-Food industry for the next five years. The term of this Committee will be until approval of the Strategic Plan by BC Investment Agriculture Foundation.

Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee Members

1. Baumann, Roland (BC Cattlemen's Association)
2. Byra, Chris: Co-chair (Greenbelt Veterinary Services)
3. Christiansen, Lynn (Skeena Valley Farmers Market)
4. DeWit, Jack (BC Pork Producers Association) Jensen, Clarence (BC Pork Producers Association) is the alternate for Jack DeWit)
5. Fernie, Dave (Rodier Meats)
6. Hertgers, Cornelis (BC Milk Producers Association)
7. Jansen, Harv (BC Egg Producers Association)
8. Jeffries, Maria: Co-chair (BC Raspberry Industry Development Council; BC Blueberry Council; Fraser Valley Strawberry Growers Assoc.)
9. Ormrod, Dave (Agrologist and consultant)
10. Wakeling, Glenn (Certified Organic Associations of BC and Sprouts Canada)

Six Steering Committee members participated in meetings and conference calls through to the development of the first draft of the Strategic Plan. They have since stepped down from their role on the Steering Committee due to work and time commitments. They made valuable contributions during their participation on the Steering Committee and their efforts are reflected in the First Draft of the Strategic Plan. Those past-committee members are:

1. Christensen, Phil (Phil's Farms)
2. Galey, Judy (BC Potato & Vegetable Grower's Association)
3. Brynne, Abra (Consultant; Small Scale Food Processors Association)
4. Morriseau, Bob (Capers Community Markets)
5. Kingsbury, Clive (BC Food Protection Association)
6. Calissi, James (BC Fruit Growers Association)

Inter-government Advisory Committee

Support for the Industry Committee is provided by an Inter-government Advisory Committee comprised of:

1. Buchanan, Stephen (BC Centre for Disease Control)
2. James, Marney (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
3. Moore, Annette - until Feb 28, 2003 (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
4. Roberts, Brian (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
5. Ruth, Patricia (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
6. Sidaway-Wolf, Daphne (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
7. Weismiller, Bill (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
8. Wetzstein, Merv (BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
9. Wilson, Stuart (Canadian Food Inspection Agency) (Alternate – Greg Bielhartz)
10. Marg Bancroft (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) (Alternate – Philip Bergen)

Committee Roles

Co-chairs of the Committee were appointed by the Committee members:

1. Chris Byra
2. Maria Jeffries

(Abra Brynne served as co-chair until she stepped down in January 2003, at which time Maria Jeffries was appointed to replace her.)

Communication Support

Communication to support the Co-chairs is provided by Cornelis Hertgers. His role as volunteer is to assist in the flow of information between committee members and Co-chairs, particularly with regard to input to the strategic plan in between committee meetings and conference calls.

Industry Vision

The diverse BC Agri-Food industry is committed to and will be universally recognized for safe food of high quality.

Industry Mission

The BC Agri-Food industry will provide quality food for the consumer through a realistic (financially feasible and operationally realistic) and achievable framework that promotes:

- *Education and awareness*
- *Recognized safety standards*
- *Risk assessment and management of food safety*
- *Implementation of recognized safety programs*
- *Formation of alliances within the Agri-Food sector*

Implementation of the Strategic Plan

Food Quality & Safety Advisory Committee

Once the Strategic Plan is approved, the Food Quality & Safety Advisory Committee (FQS Advisory Committee) will be established. The FQS Advisory Committee will be responsible for developing the annual work plans and overseeing implementation of the Strategic Plan.

The make-up of the FQS Advisory Committee will be:

- 1 Food Scientist
- 1 Small Scale Food Processor
- 1 Crop Producer
- 1 Animal Producer
- 1 Direct Farm Marketer
- Administrator
- 1 ex-officio representative from BCMAFF
- 1 ex-officio Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada representative
- 1 ex-officio from BC Investment Agriculture Foundation (Trustee)

The Administrator and ex-officio representatives will not have voting rights. The Advisory Committee will elect a chair person from within the first five positions. Initial terms for voting members are: 2 persons for 3 years, 3 persons for 2 years.

The Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee will advertise publicly to solicit interest from Industry members for representation on the FQS Advisory Committee. As well, the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee may put forth recommended names of prominent Industry members or members from the FQS Steering Committee for consideration.

The FQS Advisory Committee will be selected by the Food Quality Steering Committee on the basis of demonstrated competency and experience in the following areas:

- Knowledge of food quality and safety issues.
- Ability to evaluate project proposals, and match proposals with Food Quality & Safety Strategic Goals and work plan.
- Commitment to the development and improvement of Food Quality & Safety across all commodity groups and throughout the food chain.
- Consideration of geographic representation.

Functions of the FQS Advisory Committee

The FQS Advisory Committee will oversee the implementation of the Industry Strategic Plan. It will be the responsibility of this Committee to follow the first year work plan and to develop annual work plans thereafter. Duties of the Committee will include:

- Development of the Funding Agreement with the Trustee.
- Development and implementation of a communication strategy for distribution of the Strategic Plan, including advertisement of funding dollars available.
- Development of a job description for, and hiring of a part-time Program Administrator and Communication Coordinator.
- Administration and development of annual work plans.
- Identification of Committee driven projects and development of requests for proposal, where appropriate.
- Advertisement of Requests for Proposal, where appropriate.
- Evaluation of project proposals against work plan objectives and criteria.
- Approval of projects on a majority decision.
- Development and issuance of contracts for projects.
- Notification to the Trustee of project approval and authorization for dispersal of funds.
- Monitoring of project progress and evaluation of project completion.
- Development of the Funding Agreement with the Trustee.
- Reporting back to BC Investment Agriculture Foundation as required in the Funding Agreement.
- Preparation of annual report for public review.
- Election of replacement Advisory Committee members, if necessary.
- Development of Committee guidelines, decision making process and quorum, etc.

Conflict of Interest

If any real conflict of interest arises for any of the FQS Advisory Committee members, that member will identify the conflict of interest and remove himself/herself from any discussions or decisions regarding the matter. If a potential or perceived conflict of interest arises, the member will identify the potential or perceived conflict of interest and may participate in discussions or provide clarification, but would refrain from voting or participating in any decision pertaining to the matter.

Criteria for Project Approval

1. Must meet application dead lines
2. Applications are to be made on Strategic Plan Program Forms (modeled after IAF forms)
3. Complete and accurate application procedure
4. No duplication of projects, and/or assurance of linkages with other projects
5. Consistency with Strategic Plan
6. Verification of funding source of applicant
7. Verification of schedule for payments

Reimbursement of Expenses

Committee members will be reimbursed for expenses incurred while performing committee related duties commensurate with government standards/allowable expenses Group II.

Administration and Financial Accountability

A requirement of the AFFF is that the funds must be held by a legal entity, authorized to hold and manage funds. The Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee may seek an agreement with the BC Investment Agriculture Foundation to administer the funds for the Food Quality & Safety Initiative. Should the parties not reach an agreement the Steering Committee will seek Requests for Proposals (RFP) for managing funds on behalf of the FQS Advisory Committee be with the BC Agriculture Council, the BC Centre for Disease Control, the BC Science Council and like agencies. An administration charge in the range of 8% will be negotiated by the Steering Committee as part of this selection process. It will be paid annually based on the amount of money managed that year. The legal entity would be required to complete all required administrative support services and fully support the FQS Advisory Committee in their role of managing the Fund.

Upon approval of specific projects by the FQS Advisory Committee, a Conditional Grant Agreement would be produced by the legal entity to be signed by the proponent and the chair of the Advisory Committee. This will trigger the phased-in release of funds to the proponent.

Project Application and Approval Process

Two categories of projects will come before the FQS Advisory Committee for approval:

1. Those projects that are set as priorities by the FQS Advisory Committee and advertised through Request for Proposal.
2. Those projects that are consistent with the Strategic Plan and are priorities to Industry, submitted to the FQS Advisory Committee by Industry or professional individuals/organizations for review and approval.

Requests for Proposal will be advertised giving applicants ample response time. Advertising venues may include: BCAC website, MAFF website, and Industry and Association newsletters.

Funding dollars available for projects will be advertised in advance giving Industry and professional organizations ample opportunity to develop and submit project proposals for review and approval.

Application Procedure

Application forms and approval criteria will be available and may be posted on BCAC and MAFF websites. Project applications must be complete in order to be reviewed and must include:

1. A detailed project description.
2. Identification of which Strategic Plan goal or percentage of multiple goals the project falls under.
3. A complete budget including identification of funding partners, actual dollars and in-kind contributions.
4. Project timeline and work plan.
5. Clearly defined deliverables
6. Clear description of the benefit to industry or sector.
7. Background information on the proponent.
8. Method to evaluate and demonstrate success of the project.
9. Identification in the work plan or method and timeline for submission of Final Report.

Project Approval

Projects will be sent to the FQS Advisory Committee and will be evaluated on the basis of the above criteria. They will also be evaluated against the total funding allocation for each goal area. Those allocations, as guided by the Strategic Plan are:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Development and Delivery of Education and Awareness Programs | 39% |
| 2. Facilitate & Promote the Development and Delivery of Recognized Safety/Quality Standards & Programs | 46% |
| 3. Research and prioritize food safety risks | 15% |

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Any number of physical, chemical or biological contaminants may contaminate food at any level of the food supply chain. Bacteria and other infectious organisms occur naturally in the environment and if not properly controlled contaminate the raw food product. Crops can be contaminated during harvesting or improper storage or transportation. Food-producing animals may become health risks to humans due to contaminated feed, diseases, misuse of veterinary drugs or poor farming practices. Food may become contaminated during harvesting, transporting or processing due to malfunctioning or poorly maintained equipment, misuse of cleaning materials, rodent and insect damage, or improper storage or cross contamination from outside sources (e.g. raw product). Food can also become contaminated at the retail and restaurant level or in the home, through improper storage, food handling practices or preparation. Agri-food industries have a wide array of strategies to address food safety issues.

Addressing quality attributes desired by food users and consumers can increase and assure market access and enable greater market returns. Quality programs provide valuable tools for BC Agri-Food participants to compete in the marketplace. BC needs ways to ensure that products are produced with quality attributes that consumers want, and that those attributes are both sustained and traced through the farm to fork continuum.

As a result of increased knowledge of food hazards and of dynamic Agri-Food markets, consumers are increasingly demanding food safety and quality control programs. Agri-Food suppliers, from international agencies to producers, are responding by designing and implementing FQS programs. This environmental scan will attempt to demonstrate how each sector is dealing with FQS programs presently as well as answer the following questions:

Section 1. Sector Profile:

- What are the broad trends impacting us (government, business, international, national, regional, short and long term)?
- What are our markets, and what is happening in them?
- Who is our competition, and what are they doing?
- Where are our competitive advantages?

Section 2. SWOT analysis

What are our strengths and weaknesses; opportunities for, and the threats to, our sector?

Sector Profile

Government

The Government of Canada, together with provincial and territorial governments, have recently agreed in principle on an integrated Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) that encompasses a number of issues including food safety and quality. Proposed APF actions for food safety and quality are to facilitate industry-led development of food safety, quality and traceability systems throughout the Agri-Food chain. Where appropriate, government is advancing recognition systems, research, food safety surveillance and information systems by funding food safety and quality initiatives.

Acting on funds from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development Fund, the Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Program (COFFSP) has partnered with the federal government and national producer organizations to introduce and encourage the development of food safety programs. Administered by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) the program is to provide funding dollars for the development of national Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) models and training materials. Government and Industry experts provide technical guidance to assist the national commodity groups to develop HACCP models and training materials.

The federal government has broad responsibilities with respect to food safety and quality including labeling, animal and plant health, and inter-provincial and export trade. This is achieved through the following agencies:

- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is committed to enhancing the safety of food produced, sold or imported into Canada, contributing to the health of animals, and protecting the plant resource base. To meet these commitments, the Agency administers and/or enforces 13 federal acts and their respective regulations.
- Health Canada develops policy, sets standards, and conducts risk assessment and research related to food safety and evaluates effectiveness of programs.
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada works with provincial and territorial governments through the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) to develop and provide initiatives to build on and solidify Canada's reputation as a producer of safe, high-quality food.

On a provincial level, British Columbia's food safety regulatory system operates in a complex jurisdictional context involving federal and provincial systems and standards. Responsibility for food quality and safety is divided between all 3 levels of government: federal, provincial and local (e.g. regional health authorities) agencies.

Governments deliver their respective mandates in food safety and quality through regulation, licensing, education and inspection systems. The inspection systems often focus on food processing activities and range from resident federal inspection of meat plants to periodic visits/audits of federally registered low acid canned food plants, to infrequent visits to other food processing plants, to provincially inspected dairy farms, to municipally inspected processing in grocery stores and restaurants. The inspection system is very complex, is not always driven by food related risks, and may not always be fully integrated. This strategic plan will focus on

initiatives which enhance and are compatible with the food safety and quality activities of governments.

The province has authority to legislate food safety/quality standards and animal and plant health standards that apply only within the province. The Ministry of Health Services (MOHS) is the primary agency for food safety legislation within the province. All the agencies, (regional health authorities; Health Canada, CFIA; BC Centre for Disease Control; Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (MWLAP); and, the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) work with MOHS to develop food safety and quality policy and programs, and provide inspection and enforcement. Through this partnership the different authorities share expertise and resources to encourage compliance with the legislation throughout the food supply chain.

The Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act SBC 2000, Chapter 20, assented to in July 2000 and last updated in May 2001, is the main food quality legislation for BC. Under this Act, Industry can voluntarily establish quality standards for products or practices and receive certification that the standards are met.

The Health Act is the provincial legislation governing food safety. It will be replaced by the Food Safety Act upon proclamation.

Changing Environment

To address consumer concerns the Agri-Food sector is embracing HACCP and/or Quality Assurance programs (QA). Food safety and quality issues are not new to the Agri-Food sector; however, the scope, controls, and effects of occurrences have changed. Some relevant changes are outlined below:

1. Processors are now larger and more centralized. If a product is contaminated the greater volume provides a greater risk of cross contamination across the entire plant and other products. Larger staff numbers with a variety of cultural backgrounds also result in training and communication issues that may not have been there before with smaller plants.
2. Fewer numbers of operations (farms, processors, and distributors) mean larger volumes of raw product being handled and potentially contaminating larger volume of the finished product.
3. Awareness of food issues throughout the world has increased through increased media coverage, improved detection technologies and broader food borne illness education. Quite often a small outbreak in one part of the world will have an impact on growers far removed from the region actually involved. For example, *Shigella* in spinach in Cloverdale impacted growers in other parts of the province where no problem existed, and reports of *E.coli* in apple juice in Michigan, USA raised consumer and retailer concerns here in BC.
4. The majority of food safety problems occur in the home. Consumers may not practice safe food handling practices or may be unfamiliar with the food safety requirements of unfamiliar ingredients.

5. Possible acts of sabotage or terrorism may affect the Agri-Food system, and raise concerns that the system rapidly detects and addresses such acts.
6. Buyer concentration has increased, and large buyers are demanding specific quality and safety standards on behalf of their consumers. These requirements may determine market access, but they may not always be compatible with regulatory requirements, nor may they be based upon scientific analysis of risks.
7. Wide ranges in size of operations and in sophistication exist within the Agri-Food system. Safety and quality issues in some operations may affect markets in much broader sectors (e.g. *Listeria* in soft cheeses or *Shigella* in spinach likely affected markets beyond those directly involved).

Are All Programs The Same?

Processors and food manufacturers can have as many as 5 different QA programs that they have to implement, monitor, verify and follow. Each program has associated costs and requirements and multiple programs may create conflict or confusion. Varying requirements are due to differences in buyer's expectations (e.g., organic, animal welfare) and in market requirements. The national commodity organizations and the government are trying to encourage and promote one on-farm food safety program for each commodity. However, in some industries this is not happening. Multiple programs can increase the cost and diminish the benefits of QA programs.

Competing in National and International Markets

To compete in markets outside of the province, the BC Agri-Food Industry will likely require "recognized" quality assurance programs and/or traceability programs. Countries such as Japan are already beginning to demand this for such commodities as blueberries, tomatoes and milk products. Companies that operate in more than one province may also require national QA programs to mitigate confusion and ease the costs of varying standards.

In the USA meat industry "Country of Origin Labeling" (COOL) will soon be required. The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) predicts the cost for its own industry's compliance to be \$2 billion. COOL may create inequities and differential costs of production that may disadvantage some exporters. Some countries however see COOL as an opportunity: Australia is aligning their dairy industry to meet market demands that their competitors are not ready to meet.

International trade agreements are also raising the profile of standards. Through Codex Alimentarius, trading countries discuss issues such as equivalency and whether standards are being used as trade barriers. This trend is leading to increased demand on governments and industries to assist in developing, monitoring and enforcing quality/safety standards that are standardized around the world. However, differing viewpoints, standards, methodologies of production and trade issues make this process difficult and slower than the market demands.

Producers and Food Safety/Quality Programs

Producer demand for QA programs has varied, often historically rooted in either regulation or extension efforts. Quality assurance programs and inspection processes have varied both within a commodity and across the country and largely related to the available infrastructure and industry demand. The dairy industry, for example, has historically been the most regulated and inspected to ensure milk safety and quality. Other commodities have been less regulated, but still have end product monitoring by either the federal or provincial governments.

Many producers are skeptical of the need for QA programs, and may require training, price incentives, or market requirements to adopt them. Program administrators should be aware of producer skepticism and seek approaches that engage producers and foster support for quality and safety programs.

National Food Safety/Quality Programs

Twenty-four commodities are in varying stages of developing or implementing a HACCP based quality assurance program. The list includes: beef, dairy, hogs, broiler hatching eggs, eggs, broilers, turkeys, bison, sheep, mushrooms, sprouts, honey, cervids, grains oilseeds pulses and specialty crops, fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs and spices, maple syrup, wild boar, goats, ducks and geese, raticities and horses. Each national commodity group is at varying levels of readiness with some complete and already implementing programs at the farm level (pork) to others that are still developing very generic and non-commodity specific HACCP models (Canadian Horticulture Council).

The level of an individual commodity's state of readiness however is not related to their intended start date. Dairy for example has been working on their plan since 1997, and is now beginning implementation across the country primarily as an awareness program rather than as a requirement. Others like the produce, chicken and pork industries are implementing their HACCP-based plans very quickly. Both groups are striving to have their programs implemented quickly to meet demands and to use as an important marketing tool.

Cost of Food Safety/Quality Programs and of Food Borne Illness

Food borne illness costs the Canadian economy an estimated \$2 billion/year.

The costs of developing QA systems throughout the Agri-Food chain are not known. However, one cost estimate for the Canadian Quality Milk (CQM) program is \$350 million, including research, program development and initial pilot trial in BC. To begin implementation of a national program, a provincial commodity group can expect costs associated with a provincial program coordinator, program materials, and training, as well as on-farm costs. The BC Pilot Trial of the Canadian Quality Milk program, found that the average initial cost to each dairy producer would be \$3,000, followed by annual costs of about \$1,000.

Responsibility to Produce a Safe and Quality Product

Producers of food, whether farmers or processors, have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that their products are safe. Consumers expect safe food. Agri-Food organizations are increasingly able to trace products back to their source(s), and are aware of potential product liability. A quality assurance system may be seen as evidence of “due diligence” that industry is addressing their food safety obligations.

Most raw Agri-Food products are safe and of high quality, but substandard products can heavily impact the entire industry. Although consumers may expect QA programs to catch all risks, they cannot do so. Risk managers working for buyers are evaluating programs for potential liability, and sometimes are changing them. For example, when the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors' (CCGD) Vendor Recognition Program identified potential liability associated with ‘recognizing’ their suppliers, they ceased to do so and now only review current practices.

How FSQ programs may affect a farmer’s personal liability is still undetermined. During the Walkerton-*E.coli* situation, the farmer that was identified as the source of the *E.coli* 0157:H7 avoided potential litigation because he had successfully completed a government recognized Environmental Farm Plan. Investigators are also addressing other cases where producers had a food quality or safety problem while on an on-farm FSQ program. We do not know if having FSQ programs will protect producers from litigation.

Implementation Resources

Implementing QA programs takes significant human and infrastructure resources, as shown below:

1. Time and people commitment (vary depending on commodity acceptance and complexity of program):
 - Training trainers or validation auditors – (5 days - CFIA generic training course plus 3-5 days of commodity specific training)
 - Introductory workshops for producers – (2 - 4 hrs)
 - Program training workshops for producers – (2 - 4 hrs)
 - Maintenance of detailed records required by the program (10 - 50 hours)
 - Farm audits – (2-3 hours every 3 years, or as required, plus, 30 min - 1 hr every year). Other on-farm audits can vary from commodity to commodity 1-3 yr rotation and usually depends on the shelf-life and risk level of the product.
 - Follow-up visits/calls during training period – (est. 1 hour /farm/month) farmers on certified farms may ‘drift’ away from program, particularly in the beginning.
 - Program Audits – (est. 8 hours/ program) All programs must be audited by a 3rd party auditor.

2. Resources for implementation. How well a particular commodity will implement a QA program will depend on the infrastructure in place within a province: e.g. people trained in food safety/quality issues, linkages developed with related information resources, communications within their organization as well as with their processors, retailers, producers and regulatory agencies. For example:
- Ontario dairy farmers – their milk board, Dairy Farmer’s of Ontario, represent all producers, is the regulatory agency, does extension and offers a troubleshooting service with their udder health technologists and works closely with OMAFRA extension specialists.
 - BC sheep growers – BC has an estimated 2,000 sheep farms, of varying size and management capabilities. The 10 regional producer organizations do not all have well established links with the BC Sheep Federation. All of the sheep organizations are run by volunteers (producers) with many having no formal training in food quality and safety issues or troubleshooting.

How Do On-Farm QA Programs Work?

The Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) approach is a way of approaching the management of chemical, physical and biological hazards that affect food production. It shifts the focus away from costly, and many times inconclusive, end product testing to a more rigorous and scientific management of food production and processing activities on an on-going basis. This system has been around in the food-processing sector since the early 1960’s, but is recently being recognized for its potential on-farm. Obviously the farm is very different than a manufacturing plant so some modifications to the HACCP principles have been made and hence, for farms a *HACCP-based* approach is used. **Table 1** shows the current status of HACCP-based programs across Canada and BC.

TABLE 1: Status of level and type of quality assurance programs (QA) underway across Canada, Industries and Commodities

| Commodity or Group | QA Program Best management practices written and available? | QA Program Records written and available | Implementation program underway? | Voluntary (V) or mandatory (M) | Price, market incentives | % or activity on program | Who is initiating it? | Implementers |
|---|---|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| Retailers – Vendor Recognition Program. | Checklists | Checklists | Program is being developed | V->M | Access to market | Education program emphasis Thrifty's and Safeway implementing components | Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors –with support from: Safeway, Thrifty's, Sobeys, Provigo's, and the Overwaitea/ Save-On Foods | Retailers QA personnel and private auditing firms e.g. Primus Labs |
| Processors/ Packers | HACCP or FSEP programs | Federal plants for dairy, meat, honey, maple products, shell egg, will eventually be fully implemented Provincial plants developing a HACCP-based program for plants inspected under the BCCDC Food Protection Program (e.g. dairy, meat, retail, etc) | Yes. | V -> M | Market access | Slow e.g. Canada – dairy only 40 | Gov't | Federal – CFIA Provincial – both BCCDA and Industry (e.g. via private auditing firms) |
| Beef | Yes. Available for Feedlot and Cow/Calf | Available for Feedlot. Being prepared for Cow/calf | information only | V | No | 0 | Canadian Cattlemen's Association | Likely BCCA with our support |

| Commodity or Group | OA Program Best management practices written and available? | OA Program Records written and available | Implementation program underway? | Voluntary (V) or mandatory (M) | Price, market incentives | % or activity on program | Who is initiating it? | Implementers |
|--------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| Dairy | Yes | Yes | Varies widely across provinces | V->M | No | ~200 x-Canada | Dairy Farmers of Canada | Provincial program coordinators and in some provinces program staff (~20) |
| Eggs | Yes | Yes | Yes | V->M? | | 100% | Canadian Egg Marketing Agency | CEMA/BC Producers |
| Broiler hatching | Second Draft Being distributed in BC | | No | V->M? | | 100% | CBHEMA | BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission/ Producers |
| Broilers | Yes | Yes | Yes | V->M? | | ? | Chicken Farmers of Canada | BCCMB/Producers |
| Turkey | ? | Yes | Yes | V->M? | | Most | National Turkey Marketing Board | BC TMB / Producers / Processors |
| Sheep | Draft stage | Draft stage | Pilot trial to begin 2003 | V | No | | Canadian Sheep Federation | Have application in for hiring of a national coordinator |
| Hogs | Yes | Yes | Yes | Some provinces/ packers M (Ontario, Manitoba, Maritimes) | Market access and some have a "quality bonus" factor | Approx figures: Canada: 65% enrolled, 25% recognized BC 5% enrolled 6% recognized | Canada Pork Council and locally BC Hog Commission with assistance from Alberta Quality Pork | Trainers/verifiers are private vets. Auditor/over seer to be determined |
| Mushroom | BC and National program | Yes | Yes | BC M linked to license | Market access | 100% | BC Mushroom Marketing Commission | Commission |

| Commodity or Group | OA Program Best management practices written and available? | OA Program Records written and available | Implementation program underway? | Voluntary (V) or mandatory (M) | Price, market incentives | % or activity on program | Who is initiating it? | Implementers |
|--------------------|---|--|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Bison | Yes | Yes | No | | | 0 now although have done pilot trial | Canadian Bison Association | No one right now |
| Greenhouse | 1. CHC generic model 2. BC using Primus Labs standards | 1. No 2. Yes | 1. No 2. Yes | 1. Na 2. M for exporters | 1. Na 2. Market access | 1. 0 2. Major players | 1. CHC 2. BC Hot House, BC Greenhouse Industry Council | 1. N/A 2. Primus Labs |
| Berries | BC specific – yes | BC specific-draft | Food safety training focusing primarily on harvest hygiene | V->M | Market access | Increasing | BC Blueberry and Raspberry Councils | Council staff and some private auditors as required by buyers |
| Nursery | Canadian Nursery Certification Program – specifically with the movement of pests. | Yes | Yes | V | Market access | ~3 (few) | Canadian Food Inspection Agency | CFIA |

| Commodity or Group | OA Program Best management practices written and available? | OA Program Records written and available | Implementation program underway? | Voluntary (V) or mandatory (M) | Price, market incentives | % or activity on program | Who is initiating it? | Implementers |
|----------------------|---|--|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Field Vegetables | Yes 1. Can. Hort. Council 2. BC Veg. Marketing Assoc. | 1. No 2. Yes | 1. No 2. Yes but only with regulated veg. | V | 1. N/A 2. Market access | 1. 0 2. Depends on buyers' requirements | 1. CHC 2. BCVMA | 1. N/A 2. BCVMA, private auditors |
| Tree Fruits | Yes – Growing with Care | Yes | Yes | V | 1. N/A 2. Market access | Pilot project stage | CHC/BCFruit Growers Assoc | Growing with care - BCFGAs |
| BC Certified Organic | Yes | Yes | Yes | M | Yes and market access | 100% | Organic Associations | Certified organic auditors |

Identification of Major Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The food safety strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for BC Agri-Food industries rest on having credible and sustainable QA programs. To be credible it must be reliable, transparent, simple and realistic and not just built on market perception. To be sustainable it must show cost/benefit, address liability issues and function within the industry's infrastructure, jurisdictional authority and resources. The following table outlines a number of these issues.

| Issue | Background | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| Education and awareness | BC produces over 280 commodities, many of which are produced by relatively small-scale operations. BC processors are also mainly small to medium sized operations. | National and provincial industry associations have developed educational programs. Increasing food safety awareness. | Many operations cannot see the benefit of food safety & quality programs. There is no industry umbrella organisation that co-ordinates education or monitoring of food safety & quality issues. | Educating industry will raise standards and improve performance for all. Improved performance will enhance BC's reputation for safe, high quality food. Reduced liability to the industry as a whole. | Problems at one operation reflect badly on all. Less access to markets if programs not implemented Increased producers concerns may limit participation |
| Food quality & safety programs | There are 23* sectors developing national standards and programs * see table 1 BC's food industry has not uniformly implemented existing food quality & safety programs. There are no standards or programs for some sectors or parts of sectors. | National programs provide models for other commodities & sectors. Provincial programs that are unique to sector or region Providing "due diligence" and allowing for faster solutions by pinpointing problems If programs kept simple easy to adopt by both large and small operators. | National programs may not be suitable for small-scale operations. Implementation of a program can be costly and time-consuming. | Many sectors are implementing programs. Opening new markets nationally and internationally. | Those who don't participate may not be able to sell in some markets. Increased liability if no programs in place. If not kept simple but made to match "pure HACCP" like in processing industry will limit ability of small operations to compete. |

| Issue | Background | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| Multiple programs | A number of programs may apply to one sector or commodity, e.g. food quality & safety, environmental farm plans. | Provides niche market recognition and certification Allows a phased in approach. | Increased cost for compliance. Maintenance of a variety of standards. Consumer confused by all the standards/ programs. | Niche markets Creates employment for food safety auditing/training industry. | Multiple programs/ recognition processes will lose credibility. |
| 3 rd party audits | Companies do exist (e.g. SGS, Primus Labs, etc) Operate under recognized standards. National On-Farm auditing and training recognition process being developed. | Some BC industry has had experience with 3 rd party audits. (e.g.: organic, lettuce, tomatoes, blueberries). | Diverse industry is spread across the province, adding to costs of audit. Trained auditors experienced in agriculture and national programs are few. | Better proof of due diligence by having 3 rd party audit and improved credibility. | Cost range is wide spread (\$65 to 1400 per visit) Multiple audits being required Multi-layering – gov't inspection (prov and fed); national program auditors; provincial program auditors; farm auditors – Is it an effective approach for prevention? |
| Identity preservation and Traceability | No "gate to plate" tracking. National livestock identification for dairy, beef, bison and soon sheep. Some vegetable tracking but only on regulated produce and on buyer demand. | Reduces losses when a recall occurs. Minimizes risk when hazard is identified as identification of affected product can be accounted for better and faster. Allows for identity preservation by assuring purity of product. Supports label claims e.g. wheat free. Brand protection USA requiring country of origin labeling (COOL). | Costly Requires infrastructure to collect and maintain data. | Better product control and quality. Better consumer/buyer confidence. More export market access. | Required under HACCP programs Confidentiality of data |

| Issue | Background | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| Consumer confidence | <p>Industry tends to react to crisis rather than be proactive.</p> <p>Occurrences will still challenge consumer confidence.</p> | <p>Awareness programs continually show that Education Programs about food safety efforts alleviate many consumer fears.</p> | <p>Consumer awareness campaigns are expensive.</p> <p>Lab results may be unreliable; public doesn't understand limits.</p> <p>Increased consumer knowledge of practices may make them feel worse.</p> <p>Industry not experienced on how to deal with the media/public.</p> | <p>More confident consumers buy more.</p> | <p>Consumer confidence lessens every time a story about a food safety problem hits the news.</p> |
| International trade | <p>International requirements for standards programs may be inconsistent with BC standards.</p> | <p>BC food is recognized internationally as safe, high quality product.</p> | <p>May be costly to meet required standard or provide certification.</p> <p>Products coming in do not meet same standards or have the same costs.</p> | <p>BC has wide variety of products, is close to major US and Asian markets.</p> | <p>Trade agreements may allow foreign products without same standards to come into BC market.</p> <p>BC programs may not be recognized by foreign markets.</p> |
| Animal diseases | <p>Some animal diseases are a potential food safety threat.</p> <p>Some zoonotic diseases are reportable.</p> | <p>System is in place for this.</p> | <p>Some animal diseases are linked to human diseases.</p> | <p>Export markets</p> <p>FSQ programs can improve public health.</p> | <p>More research is needed.</p> <p>Tracking, monitoring and preventing disease is costly.</p> <p>Effective control of non-reportable zoonotic diseases depends on QA programs.</p> |

| Issue | Background | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats |
|--------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| Regulatory changes | <p>Governments at all levels unable to take any new inspection/audit roles.</p> <p>Only a limited number of commodities/processors are inspected/audited</p> <p>Governments are reducing their regulatory role and requiring industry to develop programs to meet standards.</p> | <p>BC has legislation to provide for quality certification programs.</p> <p>National OFFS and industry adoption of QA programs.</p> | <p>On-farm programs may not replace regulation as many commodities do not have jurisdictional authority to prevent production i.e. may de-certify, but food will still find its way to the public through other avenues</p> | <p>Better quality/safety of food overall</p> <p>Industry is more aware that quality and safety programs provide marketing opportunities.</p> | <p>Increase costs of production and of food itself</p> <p>Banks may not extend loans for upgrades related to standard requirements</p> <p>Demand is more rapid than the industry can adapt</p> |

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Based on the Vision and Mission for Food Quality and Safety in the province, the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee developed three broad industry goals to guide the enhancement of food quality and safety with the British Columbia food industry over the next 5 years:

1. Development and Delivery of Education and Awareness Programs to BC's Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing.
2. Facilitate and Promote the Development and Delivery of Recognized Safety/Quality Standards and Programs to the BC Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing, by 2009.
3. Research and prioritize food safety risks.

These goals reflect priorities established by the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee.

Disbursement of funds for projects supporting the three goals will be guided by the Strategic Plan as follows:

| # | Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan Goals | Proposed AFFF Contributions & Percentage of Fund Allocated to Projects | |
|---|--|--|-----|
| 1 | Develop & Deliver Education and Awareness Programs to BC's Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing. | \$680,200 | 39% |
| 2 | Facilitate and Promote the Development and Delivery of Recognized Safety/Quality Standards and Programs to the BC Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing, by 2009. | \$800,100 | 46% |
| 3 | Research and prioritize food safety risks. | \$266,700 | 15% |

Strategies and Actions

Following are the specific strategies and actions that will support the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Goal 1: Develop and Deliver Education and Awareness Programs to BC's Food Industry; Primarily Production and Processing.

| | Strategy | Actions | Expected Outcomes | Performance Measures |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| 1 | Develop a method to communicate with producers and processors for the purpose of education and awareness regarding food safety and quality. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a data base of all commodity groups. 2. Research and identify a willing organization to host, develop and implement a communication plan. | <p>Consolidated inventory of commodity groups.</p> <p>Method and administrative support developed for efficient and consistent communication across all commodities.</p> | <p>Comprehensive Data Base of Commodity Groups.</p> <p>Communication Tools established and distributed:</p> <p>Website on line with appropriate links established and promotion of website.</p> <p>Written publications/newsletters</p> |
| 2 | Develop industry awareness of existing educational programs for Food Quality and Safety across all commodities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and create an inventory of educational programs that currently exist. 2. Conduct a gap analysis to identify what new programs are needed and for which target market. 3. Identify costs/benefits of developing, implementing food quality & safety programs for all commodities as well as a model for applying food safety programs at each level of the supply chain. 4. Develop a plan to promote the advantages and value of the Industry Food Safety Program to members of the supply chain. | <p>A higher level of awareness of the existing programs, matched with target commodity groups.</p> <p>An understanding of where the gaps are in the existing educational programs.</p> <p>A Food Safety Program acceptable to industry members is implemented.</p> <p>Industry members recognize the benefits of implementing Food Safety Programs.</p> <p>All levels of supply chain are confident that they have reduced their level of risks/liability by implementing Food Safety Program.</p> <p>Less media attention of food safety risks and incidents.</p> <p>Consumer confidence of Canadian food supply.</p> | <p>Inventory of existing education programs developed, printed and distributed across all commodities</p> <p>Gap Analysis prepared and utilized to identify need in educational programs.</p> <p>Increased industry participation in recognized Food Safety Programs</p> <p>Industry recognition of the 'due diligence' need for Food Safety Programs</p> |

| | Strategy | Actions | Expected Outcomes | Performance Measures |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| 3 | Facilitate the delivery of existing education and awareness programs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a strategy for program delivery across all commodities 2. Develop and facilitate specific methods of delivery where appropriate, e.g. one-on-one site visits to increase awareness and assist in changes. | <p>A higher level of awareness and understanding across all commodities of the importance of food quality and safety standards.</p> | <p>Food Quality & Safety Educational Training Strategy developed</p> <p>Infrastructure to oversee and deliver education awareness programs to industry</p> |
| 4 | Develop and deliver new training programs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and deliver new training programs to meet the background, commodity, educational and linguistic needs of industry groups. | <p>Thorough consultation of commodity groups.</p> <p>Greater education and awareness across commodities.</p> <p>Positive changes in food quality and safety.</p> <p>Comprehensive training program for Food Quality & Safety across commodities in BC.</p> | <p>New programs are developed and delivered.</p> <p>Distribution of printed and translated material.</p> <p>Trainers are trained.</p> |

Goal 2: Facilitate and Promote the Development and Delivery of Recognized Safety/Quality Standards and Programs to the BC Food Industry, Primarily Production and Processing, by 2009

| | Strategy | Actions | Expected Outcomes | Performance Measures |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | Research and development of food safety and quality standards programs for the BC Food Industry, primarily Production and Processing. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise and assist with national groups and support development of new programs that meet the needs of BC industries. Where no national program continue with points 2 & 3: Develop a family of food safety & quality programs for plant and animal industries; Develop strategy to utilize recognized standards, e.g. HACCP Facilitate affordable on site 3rd party audit programs for voluntary quality/safety programs. | <p>Increased standards and programs for food quality and safety in BC.</p> <p>Consistency with national programs.</p> <p>Successful audit program</p> <p>Standardized protocols</p> <p>Effectively verifies compliance with the goals of the Food Safety Program.</p> <p>Consequences for non-compliance are implemented.</p> | <p>Programs developed for different aspects of the food chain, i.e. primary vs. retail/food service.</p> <p>Market recognition of audit program.</p> <p>Affordable access to 3rd party audit capability for affected farms.</p> |
| 2 | Facilitate the implementation of safety and quality standards | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support industry led programs that implement safety and quality programs. Develop a food safety validation program, developing, implementing and testing effectiveness of protocols. | <p>Industry implementation of programs.</p> <p>Successful validation program</p> <p>Standardized protocols</p> <p>One-on-one site visits to validate food safety practices.</p> | <p>Specific plans accepted by stakeholders</p> <p>2 voluntary programs established by 2008</p> <p>Market recognition of validation program.</p> <p>Increased voluntary participation by industry</p> |
| 3 | Facilitate the implementation of Food Quality & Safety Programs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with voluntary compliance Assist in achieving mandatory compliance in situations where mandatory compliance is required. | <p>Greater participation by BC Food Industry particularly processing and producers, in developing and participating in voluntary certification programs.</p> <p>Compliance with mandatory programs in existing BC industries.</p> | <p>Voluntary Certification Programs designed for each commodity.</p> <p>Increased industry participation in established programs</p> <p>Checklist for stakeholders Written information and guides distributed.</p> <p>Systems in place to verify that standards have been met.</p> |

| | Strategy | Actions | Expected Outcomes | Performance Measures |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| 4 | Facilitate the development and implementation of identity preservation and traceability systems. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and create an inventory of identity preservation and traceability technologies. 2. Educate industry about risks/benefits. 3. Facilitate development and implementation of IP and traceability systems. | <p>Increased level of information on IP and traceability options available to industry.</p> <p>Increased capability to track products</p> | Increased industry participation in IP and/or traceability programs |

Goal 3: Research and prioritize food safety risks.

| | Strategy | Actions | Expected Outcomes | Performance Measures |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Identify and prioritize the food safety risks for BC Agri-Food Commodities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food Safety risks prioritized by each production group. 2. Actions to mitigate the risks identified by each production group. | Consolidated information of food safety risks for Agri-Food commodities | Prioritized data base of risk factors. |
| 2 | Support research that leads to development of food safety risk assessments and standards. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research projects | Estimates of potential costs and benefits of programs. | <p>Risk assessments and standards.</p> <p>Standards for 2 new commodities.</p> <p>Cost/benefits study completed by 2006; analysis/study for all sectors of industry completed by 2009.</p> <p>Better Food Quality & Safety systems.</p> |

FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Cost Sharing

Cost sharing between Industry and AFFF is a principle of the Agriculture Food Futures Fund, and it is expected that Industry will contribute an average of 50:50 cost sharing over the lifetime of the strategic plan. Cost sharing will indicate Industry's commitment to the role food safety and quality plays in the future health of the Agri-Food Industry. While the ultimate goal of the AFFF is dollar for dollar matching, eligible in-kind contributions will be accepted. Of the 50% Industry cost share, at least half must be actual cash contributions, and no more than half may be in-kind contributions.

In order for the strategic plan to reach the 50:50 cost sharing ratio, it requires commodities to affirm their commitment to food quality and safety by bringing dollars, as well as in-kind contributions to the table to support the projects identified in the strategic plan.

Principles of Cost Sharing

A cost sharing strategy is needed to support implementation of the Strategic Plan that will meet the requirements of AFFF, while securing Industry interest and motivation by remaining achievable and realistic.

To construct a cost sharing strategy that will result in successful implementation of the strategic plan, and to assist the Food Quality & Safety Advisory Committee in approving projects for funding, guiding principles are required. The following principles are presented for consideration:

- Equal opportunity for all commodities to participate in strategic plan initiatives.
- Higher level of AFFF funding support for Strategic Plan goals that are a priority and benefit BC's Agri-Food Industry in general.
- Higher level of Industry funding support for Strategic Plan goals that will have direct and immediate benefits for specific commodity groups.
- Industry contributions must average at least 50% cash and cannot exceed 50% in-kind over the five-year funding period (a commodity that prefers to contribute actual dollars may contribute a higher percentage of dollars/lower percentage in-kind for a specific project.)
- Adjustment in the ratio of in-kind dollars awarded to an individual project dependent upon the degree of benefit to the industry at large (e.g. a project that provides immediate, direct benefits to a particular commodity group would be eligible for a lower ratio of in-kind to actual dollar contribution. Conversely, a high level project that promotes food quality and safety benefits to the overall Agri-Food industry over the long-term would be eligible for a higher level of in-kind contribution.)
- High level projects that benefit the overall industry would be eligible for a higher level of AFFF support while projects that relate more directly to specific sectors may be required to come in with a higher proportion of industry contribution.

Proposed Cost Sharing Strategy

A notional amount of \$1.748 million of the AFFF trust has been allocated over a five-year period. The proposed cost sharing strategy of the Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan is to maintain a ratio between AFFF funding and Industry funding that remains achievable for Industry throughout the plan. It is anticipated that greater AFFF assistance will be needed in the first year for projects benefiting Industry at large, such as cost benefit analyses, where outcomes may not directly benefit a specific industry, therefore not attracting as much industry contribution.

Recognizing the need for assistance at the front end of the Plan, and roll-out of projects benefiting the Industry at large, the cost sharing proposal begins with a higher level of AFFF funding and a lower percentage of Industry funding for a ratio of 66:34. The strategy ramps up to a 49:51 dollar matching by year three, and continues to support Industry contribution to achieve a credible balance that Industry is able to support by year 5 for a ratio of 34:66.

It is anticipated that financial contribution from Industry will come from check-offs and levies, cost recovery where appropriate (e.g. training or certification program) as well as other partnering dollars to be determined. Allowing for a 50:50 dollar to in-kind contribution from Industry may facilitate greater involvement by those commodities lacking availability of Industry dollars. In-kind contributions include such values as time, effort, etc., must be directly related to achieving the objectives of the project, must be incremental to the normal activities of the contributor, and are recognized at current market value.

Table A: Proposed Industry Cost Sharing Fiscal Years 2004/05 – 2008/09

| Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan Proposed AFFF & Industry Cost Sharing Fiscal Year 2004/05 – 2008/09 | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| Fiscal Year | Total Budget | Total AFFF | | Total Industry | |
| 2004-05 | \$619,000 | \$407,000 | 66% | \$212,000 | 34% |
| 2005-06 | \$780,000 | \$448,000 | 57% | \$332,000 | 43% |
| 2006-07 | \$790,000 | \$390,000 | 49% | \$400,000 | 51% |
| 2007-08 | \$733,000 | \$305,000 | 42% | \$428,000 | 58% |
| 2008-09 | \$574,000 | \$198,000 | 34% | \$376,000 | 66% |
| TOTAL | \$3,496,000 | \$1,748,000 | | \$1,748,000 | |

To encourage participation by BC commodities and sectors, and to make funds available for multiple industry-led projects, the Food Quality & Safety initiative will provide a maximum of \$100,000 per commodity or sector for the development and implementation of recognized national food safety programs, and a maximum of \$50,000 per applicant group for other projects. The Food Quality & Safety Advisory Committee will review annually these maximum funding levels and adjust them if necessary.

Budget Allocation by Goal

Strategic Plan Goal 1 (Education and Awareness) and Goal 3 (Research) were deemed to have a greater global rather than specific benefit; therefore, contribution from industry was modified. The industry contribution was reduced by 20% for Goals 1 and 3 and increased correspondingly (24% on a weighted basis) for Goal 2, under which projects would have direct measurable benefit to specific commodity groups. These modifications are shown as ‘Adjustment of Weighting’ in the tables below.

In addition, the Advisory Committee is encouraged to solicit projects having broad benefits and a longer project length thereby providing the framework and structure through education and research to successfully develop and implement food safety and quality programs that have high compliance. Budget allocation in year one emphasizes Goals 1 and 3 (30% of their respective total 5 year allocations) whereas only 15% of the total Goal 2 allocation is to be spent in the first year.

Discretion for the annual proportion of the allocation by goal of future year’s budgets will be developed by the Advisory Committee and identified in their annual work plan. It is anticipated that budgets for Goal 2 projects (Development and Implementation) will increase in years 2 and 3, winding down in the last two years of the program. Industry support is expected to grow in the later years, eventually sustaining Food Quality & Safety Programs.

Table B: Proposed Allocation of Budget by Goal Area – AFFF / Industry

| Goal | AFFF Contribution | | Adjustment of weighting for benefit to any specific industry ¹ | Industry Contribution | |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Goal 1: Education | 39% | \$ 681,200 | 80% | 32% | \$ 538,960 |
| Goal 2: Development and Implementation | 46% | \$ 800,100 | 124% | 56% | \$ 995,680 |
| Goal 3: Research | <u>15%</u> | <u>\$ 266,700</u> | 80% | <u>12%</u> | <u>\$ 213,360</u> |
| Total | 100% | \$1,748,000 | | 100% | \$1,748,000 |

¹ Goal 1 and 3 were thought to benefit all of agriculture rather than just a specific commodity. As a result, commodity groups would be less willing to contribute equally for such projects. The industry contribution for Goal 1 and Goal 3 would therefore be reduced to only 80% of their half or 32%. To balance the industry contributions over the entire duration of the project, Goal 2 industry contributions, supporting projects that benefit the specific commodity group, would have to be increased to 124% of their half equaling 56%.

Administration Budget

The cost to administer the fund and projects has been estimated at 10% of the total combined fund of AFFF and Industry contribution (totaling \$3.5 million), and is to be cost shared 50:50 with AFFF and Industry. It is proposed that the Administration budget be split 50:50 between the position of Program Administrator/Communication Coordinator, and the costs of the Trustee for financial management.

The administrative budget would, therefore, cover the cost of three functions:

1. Financial Management (Trustee)

The Trustee would be responsible for financial management of the fund which would include:

- Holding the funds
- Issuing cheques for projects approved the FQS Advisory Committee

(An RFP will be issued to organizations with the legal structure and capability to hold and administer funds, to determine the most effective financial management services and cost. Financial Management is estimated to cost no more than 50% of the total administration fee. If the successful proponent of the RFP comes in with a budget of less than 50% of the overall projected administration budget, the administration budget will be reduced accordingly.)

2. Program Administration (see Work Plan Appendix A)

An administrator will be contracted to provide support to the Advisory Committee.

3. Communications (see Work Plan Appendix A)

The Communications Plan will be implemented by the Project Administrator.

- Development of a website as a primary communications tool will increase the budget for administration contributed by AFFF (communications function) in the first year by \$20,000, balanced by a greater industry contribution in later years.

Table C: Year One – Funding Allocation for Each Strategic Plan Goal

| Goal | Year | AFFF Cash | % | AFFF Admin | AFFF Projects | Industry Contribution to: Admin | Industry Contribution to: Projects | Total Industry Contribution | % |
|-----------|----------|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----|
| Goal #1 | Year One | \$ 207,360 ² | 30% | 33,769 ³ | 179,591 ⁴ | \$ 5,690 ⁵ | \$ 51,206 ⁶ | \$ 56,896 ⁷ | 10% |
| Education | | | | | | | | | |
| Goal #2 | Year One | \$ 120,015 | 15% | 18,995 | 101,020 | \$ 14,935 | \$ 134,417 | \$ 149,352 | 15% |
| Dev & Imp | | | | | | | | | |
| Goal #3 | Year One | \$ 80,010 | 30% | 12,664 | 67,346 | \$ 1,067 | \$ 9,601 | \$ 10,668 | 5% |
| Research | | | | | | | | | |

Five Year Expenditures by Goal

| | AFFF | | | Goal Summary Industry Contribution | | | Total |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Cash | (Admin) | (Projects) | Cash | (admin) | (projects) | |
| Goal 1: Education | 681,200 | 112,998 | 598,202 | 284,480 | 0 | 538,960 | 538,960 |
| Goal 2: Development and Implementation | 800,100 | 129,107 | 670,993 | 497,840 | 0 | 995,680 | 995,680 |
| Goal 3: Research | <u>266,700</u> | <u>42,374</u> | <u>224,326</u> | <u>106,680</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>213,360</u> | <u>213,360</u> |
| | 1,748,000 | 284,480 | 1,493,520 | 889,000 | 0 | 1,748,000 | 1,748,000 |

² Goal total times percent of AFFF fund spent that year

³ Contribution based on percent of year 1 AFFF cash going to goal times the year 1 AFFF

⁴ The remaining year 1 AFFF cash for goal 1

⁵ 10 percent of expenditures by industry on year 1

⁶ Remainder of expenditure in year 1

⁷ The percent of goal total times spend in year 1

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee has developed a communication strategy to ensure that the BC Agri-Food Industry is aware of the Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan, and how to access the fund. One of the first projects in the first year work plan is to solicit an RFP to work with the FQS Advisory Committee as Project Administrator as well as implement and promote the communication strategy (See Work Plan).

The Food Quality and Safety Advisory Committee and the Administrator will promote the fund to generate applicant-driven proposals, and advertise for Requests for Proposals for projects of the Implementation Committee. The Advisory Committee will report on the overall implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Advisory Committee will require project proponents to communicate project outcomes for all funded projects.

The Advisory Committee and the Administrator will:

- Communicate with industry groups through press releases, producer newsletters, general agricultural newsletters (such as the Investment Agriculture Newsletter), and agricultural newspapers. Other industry communications may include presentations at industry organizations' annual general meetings, industry training events, and trade shows (such as the Pacific Agricultural Show in Abbotsford).
- Post reports on the BCAC website, and seek opportunities to link with, or provide reports to, other commodities' websites.
- Introduce the plan and fund to local commodity groups that are less likely to access the other communication venues.
- Report annually to the Agri-Food industry on the on-going and completed projects under the fund.
- Modify the communication plan as new needs and opportunities are identified.

PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Expected Outcomes

- Greater buy-in across commodities to Food Quality & Safety Programs
- Stronger confidence across commodities in reduction of risk/liability by implementing Food Safety Programs
- Less media attention of food safety risks and incidents
- Better food quality and safety systems
- Stronger consumer confidence in BC products
- Positive changes in food quality and safety in British Columbia

Evaluation and Performance Measurement

Accounting Procedures

Each project will be required to submit a budget and a final report demonstrating how dollars were spent accurately and efficiently. The financial records will be available for inspection by the Committee and the Trustee. The following procedures will be followed:

1. Annual work plan submitted to and approved by Investment Agriculture Foundation
2. Investment Agriculture releases annual allotment to the Trustee
3. Project proposal approved by the Food Quality & Safety Advisory Committee (twice yearly)
4. Advisory Committee authorizes Trustee to release funds to proponents of approved projects
5. Proponents undertake projects. Submits reports and satisfies project completion requirements of Advisory Committee
6. Advisory Committee authorizes Trustee to release final payment to proponent

Evaluation and Performance Measurement

Proponents will be required to submit a final report to the Advisory Committee providing information regarding: project description, key objectives, benefits, project deliverables, outcomes, specific measures for how each project will be monitored and results evaluated upon completion of the project.

Administrative Policies and Procedures

The Advisory Committee will develop administrative policies and procedures to be undertaken by the Program Administrator to ensure fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability. Annual reports will be submitted to Investment Agriculture including:

- Comprehensive evaluation and status of the annual work plan.
- Assessment of which strategic plan objectives and outcomes have been met by the projects completed and which have yet to be completed.
- Assessment of whether the funding allocation in future work plan; evaluation of projected vs. actual outcomes.

APPENDIX A – LETTERS OF SUPPORT

March 6, 2003

Attn: Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee

BC Pork Producers support your leadership and guidance in trying to fulfill our efforts towards achieving and implementing our strategic plan of producing and marketing food safe pork products of the highest standards. All agriculture representatives have worked at this strategic plan for the past year and are expecting to have the plan approved in its final version. The results will allow all agriculture food producers to take advantage of the economic opportunity to design, to implement, and to obtain some market separation for their food safe products.

BC Pork Producers agree wholeheartedly with the three goals of developing and delivering education and awareness programs to BC's food industry, facilitating and promoting the development and delivery of food safety and food quality standards to the BC food producers and processors, and developing food safety research priorities and risk assessments. With these goals in place BC food producers will reach or exceed the criteria for food safety and food quality established by other provinces and foreign countries.

Clarence Jensen,
BC Pork Producers

BRITISH COLUMBIA BLUEBERRY COUNCIL

PO BOX 8000-730

ABBOTSFORD, BC V2S 6H1

TEL: 604-864-2117

FAX: 604-864-2197

EMAIL: bcblueberries@direct.ca

WEB: www.bcblueberry.com

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March 19, 2003

Attn: Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee

Re: Draft Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above Strategic Plan.

This letter is to confirm our intended participation and support of the Plan, its goals and strategies. The BC Blueberry Council and Industry are committed to ensuring not only the viability of our industry but also in continuing to provide consumers with the highest quality, safest product possible. We believe that in supporting and participating in groups such as your committee that our shared goals will be achieved.

We look forward to continued cooperation and the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

Geraldine Auston
Marketing & Business Manager

Food Quality and Safety Steering Committee
 Attention Bill Weismiller, Manager Food Safety and Quality Unit
 BCMAFF, 1767 Angus Campbell Road
 Abbotsford, BC, V3G 2M3



By email to: Bill.Weismiller@gems7.gov.bc.ca

March 17, 2003

Dear Mr. Weismiller:

Attached is our letter of support for the Food Quality and Safety Strategic Plan (FQS Plan), as well as an interim estimation of support needed to introduce a program for beef producers in B.C.

BC Cattlemen’s Association actively supports participation on National and Provincial boards to establish the guidelines for On Farm Food Safety and Quality Programs. At the spring meeting the BCCA Board of Directors was informed about the progress being made on the FQS strategic plan. BCCA will make applications in the future to the Strategic Plan in order to inform it’s members about FQS programs, explain the benefits of participation and liaise with other” animal” commodities to establish a “cross commodity” provincial organization to implement the COFFS program.

Application priorities

1. Create a benefit/cost study for beef producers to show advantage of participation in **voluntary** FQS programs and farm certification
2. Hire and train PR/communication experts to travel across Province to producer meetings to explain the benefits of voluntary FQS programs and farm certification. Create and produce PR material.
3. Establish program training and verification/audit services, possibly “cross commodity”, to deliver COFFS provincially.

| Estimated costs associated and time frame | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Year 1 | Priority1 | \$30,00.00 | Priority2 | \$75,000.00 |
| Year 2 | Priority2 | \$75,000.00 | | |
| Year 3, 4, 5 | Priority3 | \$300,000.00 | | |
| Total | | \$480,000.00 | | |

Cost sharing: BCCA \$ 240,000.00
Strategic Plan \$ 240,000.00

B.C. Cattlemen's Association
10145 Dallas Drive, Kamloops, B.C. V2C6T4
Phone: 250 573-3611 Facsimile: 250 573-5155 *bccattle@kamloops.net*

The estimated BCCA portion noted in "cost sharing" above is subject to revision as more details are available, and to our ability to obtain funds from beef industry development funds. We reserve the right to adjust those estimated costs.

Yours truly,

David Borth
General Manager
B.C. Cattlemen's Association
10145 Dallas Drive, Kamloops, B.C. V2C6T4
Phone: 250 573-3611 Facsimile: 250 573-5155
bccattle@kamloops.net

Fraser Valley Strawberry Growers Association
2669 Deacon Street, Abbotsford, BC. V2T 6H3
Telephone: 864-0565 Fax: 864-0575 Long Distance: 1-800-366-8066

TO: FOOD QUALITY & SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN
Steering Committee

FROM: Henry L. Wiens

March 20, 2003

RE: FOOD QUALITY & SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN - GOALS

In addition to this Association, this is a response on behalf of the following:

BC POTATO & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION
FRASER VALLEY COLE CROP GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Food safety has been an important issue for our members. We have been and continue to be supporting efforts to improve the grower awareness of the importance of this issue.

We fully support a broad based focus on quality and food safety as is proposed in the Strategic Plan Goals as stated in the February 3, 2003 document. This reflects the basic feelings of our members.

We look forward to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and we anticipate a very positive impact from the resources that are directed toward achieving the stated goals.

APPENDIX B – DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Meeting Guidelines

The Steering Committee members agreed to guidelines for the purpose of effective and efficient meetings:

- Each meeting to be guided by a clear agenda sent out two weeks prior to each meeting.
- It is to be sent out as a draft for review and comment by Steering Committee members.
- Meetings are to be run according to the agenda, while allowing for flexibility within the agenda.
- Minutes will be taken and circulated within one week following each meeting.
- Decisions and action items will be recorded, clearly identifying who is to do what, and by when.
- Decisions and action items will be identified in an executive summary.
- Each meeting will have a designated facilitator.
- The facilitator will have the authority to moderate and implement Steering Committee guidelines.
- Each Steering Committee Member is responsible to come prepared by reading background material in advance of the meetings.
- A speaker's list will be used by the facilitator to ensure only one person speaks at a time. Interest in being placed on the speakers list is to be indicated by a raise of hands.
- To facilitate understanding and promote efficient use of time.
- Members will speak loudly so all can hear and will be respectful of "airtime" by being succinct.
- When involved in discussion ensure that everyone who wants to speak has had a chance to do so before a person can speak again on the same point.
- No side talk.
- No use of cell phones within the meeting.
- An Alternate may attend meetings if a Steering Committee member is unable to attend. However, an Alternate does not have the right to vote.

Decision Making Process

The Committee decided against a formal decision making process, e.g. Robert's Rules of Order. The following process was agreed upon:

- It was agreed to strive for consensus. In respect of time, if consensus cannot be readily achieved, 75% majority vote will stand.
- A suggestion/motion will be presented for a vote. Discussion will follow. Followed by a show of hands.
- In the interest of group cohesiveness, those who are not in the majority vote agree to accept the decision of the majority.

Conflict Resolution Process

The Steering Committee agreed that respectful, open communication would eliminate most forms of conflict. Specifically, there was agreement to address ideas, not people and to respond to ideas through the facilitator and to be willing to stretch their own perspective when listening to the views of others.

Should conflict or disagreement occur, the committee agreed to the following as a method of settling disputes:

- If discussion gets heated or energy gets tense, a time-out or cooling down period will be taken.
- The Steering Committee will respect the Facilitator to be the “gate keeper”, allowing the Facilitator to moderate in times of disagreement.
- A person experiencing frustration or unresolved disagreement may speak with the Facilitator privately.

Internal Communication Policy

The Committee agreed it was important that their work be transparent and shared with their commodity groups. It is the responsibility of each representative to ensure that their respective commodity group is kept informed of Committee progress.

Industry Principles and Values

- Industry leadership
- commitment to providing safe, high quality food
- co-operation throughout the food chain, from producers to consumers
- commitment to continued education
- commitment to innovation
- nationally (and internationally) harmonized standards

Steering Committee Values

- Individual accountability and responsibility
- Fair opportunity to be heard
- Respect of differing opinions

Development of the Food Quality & Safety Strategic Plan

Progress to Date

The Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee held its first meeting March 21 and 22nd, 2002 in Richmond, BC, followed by a second meeting in Richmond on April 13 and 14, 2002. Support was provided to the Steering Committee through members of the Government Liaison Group, which included representation from BC Ministry of Health, BC Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, as well as the services of a professional facilitator. Through the visioning and strategic planning workshops, the Steering Committee developed the vision, goals, strategies and actions for the Strategic Plan. Following these workshops a Strategic Plan Framework was developed and reviewed by the Steering Committee. A tele-conference on November 22, 2002 provided Steering Committee members with an opportunity for further discussion and revision of the plan. The first draft of the Strategic Plan was presented to the Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee on December 13, 2002.

The Food Quality & Safety Steering Committee reviewed the 1st draft and, together with teleconferencing and input from industry members and Government review committee, created a 2nd draft of the Strategic Plan. The 2nd draft was released for public review on February 15th, 2002. A Steering Committee meeting March 2 & 3rd, 2003 gave Committee members an opportunity to report back on Industry feedback, and to make revisions to the 2nd draft.

Next Steps

The 3rd draft of the Strategic Plan will be submitted to the AFFF Management Committee and Investment Agriculture for review and/or approval.

