



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Agriculture, Environment & Wildlife Fund Announced**

**Abbotsford, B.C. – February 19, 2009** Enhanced environmental stewardship on B.C. farms will be the result of a new fund announced today by the B.C. Agriculture Council (BCAC) and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. (IAF).

Over \$800,000 has been committed to the establishment of the Agriculture, Environment and Wildlife Fund (AEWF). Funded by the IAF with the support of industry groups, the AEWF will continue to strengthen the successful partnerships between industry, government and funding partners that have evolved through recent joint agri-environmental initiatives.

The goal of the AEWF is to reduce agricultural impacts on the environment through improved on-farm management practices, while simultaneously mitigating the impact of wildlife on the economic viability of agricultural operations. The new fund will support a broad range of projects including environmental stewardship, wildlife impact mitigation, agricultural by-product management, invasive species management, area planning, education and awareness, technology transfer, and research related to its objectives. Eligible applicants include producer, agricultural, environmental and related organizations, as well as regional and local governments.

In announcing the AEWF, BCAC Chair Garnet Etsell comments, "The continuing support by the IAF for environmental initiatives sends a very positive signal to the public about the commitment of the agriculture industry to address environmental issues."

"The approval of this fund will allow the Agricultural Environment Initiatives Management Committee, which is responsible for the delivery of the program, the opportunity to be responsive to the high priority issues and be more proactive in building the partnerships needed to respond effectively to industry concerns," states Committee Chair George Hamilton.

Funding for the AEWF is provided by the Investment Agriculture Foundation through the Agri-Food Futures Fund, a provincial trust funded from money under the former federal-provincial safety nets framework.

"This funding will allow the agriculture industry and its many partner groups to continue their collaborative efforts to address immediate concerns while providing long term benefits to both the environment and agriculture in B.C." said B.C. Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Ron Cantelon.

Producer groups are encouraged to apply for funding for projects that increase producer and public knowledge and understanding of issues related to agricultural and environmental stewardship. For AEWF funding guidelines and application forms, please visit the BCAC website at [www.bcac.bc.ca](http://www.bcac.bc.ca).

The AEFW is managed by the B.C. Agricultural Research and Development Corporation (ARDCORP), a subsidiary of the B.C. Agriculture Council.

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