



# News Release

For immediate release

## 1500 FARMS IN B.C. TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT

**LANGLEY, British Columbia, April 27, 2007** – In British Columbia (B.C.), 1500 farms have completed Environmental Farm Plans (EFP), announced the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board at an event with Honourable Pat Bell, B.C. Minister of Agriculture and Lands, and B.C. Agriculture Council (BCAC) Chair Dick Klein Geltink.

The announcement took place at Driediger Farms, where participation in the Environment Farm Planning program resulted in conversion to a drip irrigation system to improve water efficiency.

“As demonstrated yesterday with our new Environmental Regulatory Framework, Canada’s New Government believes in tangible and realistic action to improve our environment,” said Minister Strahl. “I am proud that as a result of the Environment Farm Planning program, there are now 1,500 British Columbia farmers and ranchers taking concrete action to ensure their farms are more environmentally safe.”

“B.C. farmers have long balanced the need to produce top-quality products with the need to protect the land they are farming on and the environment as a whole,” said Minister Bell. “This government is committed to protecting the environment and combating the effects of global warming – the EFP program is a positive step in that direction.”

The Environmental Farm Planning Program is delivered by the BCAC and funded by the federal and provincial governments under the Agriculture Policy Framework Agreement. The program helps B.C. farmers and ranchers to identify environmental risks in their operations and develop and implement a plan to reduce risks over the long term.

The National Farm Stewardship Program (NFSP) provides assistance to producers in implementing their EFP. The Environmental Farm Plan and NFSP in British Columbia receive \$18 million, over five years, in federal funding for on-farm beneficial management practices. Applications to the National Farm Stewardship Program can only be made once producers have successfully completed an EFP. The program runs until March 31, 2008.

“The B.C. Agriculture Council takes environmental farm planning seriously and we recommend all farmers and ranchers take advantage of this program,” said BCAC Chair Klein Geltink. “We see this program as vital to a prosperous, sustainable future and the ongoing confidence of our consumers.”



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Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) is working with provincial and industry partners to develop programs and promote farming practices which contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment for all Canadians and safe, healthy food for consumers.

For more information on AAFC's stewardship programs, visit [www.agr.gc.ca](http://www.agr.gc.ca) or for more information on Environmental Farm Plans in British Columbia, please visit [www.bcac.bc.ca/efp\\_programs.htm](http://www.bcac.bc.ca/efp_programs.htm).

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