

Question 1:

To quote one of BC's livestock associations, if you eat, you are involved in agriculture. Today's BC Liberals embrace this philosophy by ensuring food systems initiatives are coordinated between all levels of government. This includes:

- Food Safety – working closely with the Ministry of Health and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to support programs like meat inspection.
- Health – supporting programs that educate and encourage improve nutrition, such as:
 - BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program, which provides BC grown fruit and vegetable snacks to students 12 times a year.
 - Farm to School BC Program, which brings healthy, local food into schools, while providing hands-on learning opportunities that encourage food literacy.
- Social Supports – a recent investment of \$10 million to Food Banks BC to help the organization's 100 food banks throughout the province receive, store and distribute fresh, healthy food to children and families in need. This includes funding for safe transportation of perishable foods from farms, grocery stores and restaurants, as well funding to fully equip food banks with adequate refrigeration to receive and redistribute available perishable products.
- Community development – Amendments to the Local Government Act to ensure that if changes to an official community plan might affect agricultural land, the proposing local government must consult with the Agricultural Land Commission.
- Provincial Farmers' Food Donation Tax Credit, a non-refundable income tax credit that encourages farmers and farming corporations to donate surplus agricultural products that they produce – such as fresh vegetables, meat, grain and dairy – to local food banks and charities. Our 2017 platform commits to make this tax credit permanent.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to advance and coordinate food systems initiatives across government.

Question 2:

Today's BC Liberals know that the most effective way to reduce poverty is to create jobs and opportunity through a strong economy. And we've done exactly that – leading Canada with over 226,000 new jobs since 2011.

And B.C. has seen a reduction in the number of people dependent on income and disability assistance of 59,000 (24%) since 2001.

BC has some of the most comprehensive supports for low-income individuals and their families in Canada, including subsidized housing, child-care subsidies, dental and optical care for children, free MSP and Pharmacare, child and seniors benefits, and employment services.

We recently provided \$10 million to Food Banks BC to help foodbanks throughout BC distribute fresh, healthy food to those in need. A significant portion of this funding will be used to add

refrigeration capacity for food banks in B.C., giving vulnerable families have more consistent access to a greater variety of nutritious foods. This funding builds on the Provincial Farmers' Food Donation Tax Credit, which is designed to connect families needing food supports with healthy, fresh food by encouraging food producers and farmers to donate fresh vegetables, meat, grain and dairy to local foodbanks and charities.

We are also increasing funding by \$6 million annually for the BC Healthy Kids Program to include coverage for hearing aids and improve rates for dental services for children. Almost \$23 million a year is currently invested in the program which provides dental care and prescription eyewear to children living in low-income families. About 166,000 low and moderate-income families are eligible for Healthy Kids supports.

To help communities address the root causes of poverty at the local level, Today's BC Liberals are investing \$7 million for a new Community Poverty Reduction Fund that will support community-driven programs tailored to the unique circumstances and needs of each region. The fund will be administered by the Vancouver Foundation and support initiatives such as developing local strategies to reduce poverty, growing local partnerships and launching poverty reduction pilot projects that are either innovative or proving successful in other jurisdictions.

Just as importantly, we're making record investments in skills training and programs like the Single Parent Employment Initiative to get people out of poverty and into training and work. 92% of participants in this program are single mothers and, so far, we've helped over 4,600 moms and dads transition off social assistance.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to invest in the success of the Single Parent Employment Initiative with a goal of having 10,000 single parents apply for the program and 5,000 starting jobs. We will also develop a Low Income Families in Transition (LIFT) pilot program that will provide temporary assistance to low-income single working parents so they can take time away from their current employment, or reduce their hours without financial penalty, and assist with training, childcare and transit costs while upgrading or acquiring new skills.

Moving forward, Today's BC Liberals will continue to focus our efforts on growing the economy, creating jobs, and investing in targeted supports for families that need them.

Question 3:

School districts receive \$52 million through CommunityLINK to help them fund programs to support vulnerable children and youth – things like breakfast and lunch programs, inner-city and community school programs, as well as school-based support workers and counselling. The BC Liberal government also created the B.C. School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program, to improve the nutritional health of students by delivering fresh B.C. fruits and vegetables, milk and healthy eating resources directly to B.C. public and First Nations schools twelve times throughout the school year. The program has expanded from 10 pilot schools to 1,375 public schools and 80 First Nations schools, serving over 500,000 students from K-12.

There are also Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools, which are used in every school district to maximize students' access to healthier options and eliminate the sale of unhealthy foods and beverages in B.C. schools.

Today's BC Liberals will work to ensure school aged children continue to have access to healthy meals and the information they need to make nutritious food choices.

Question 4:

In 2015, Today's BC Liberal government introduced the Agrifood and Seafood Strategic Growth Plan. One of the objectives of the plan is to identify and implement opportunities to support the success of First Nations, new entrants, and youth in the agrifood and seafood sector.

With respect to aquaculture, the government committed to working with First Nations and northern communities to develop aquaculture businesses and maximize growth opportunities. Significant steps were taken in marine management with the completion of plans under the Marine Partnership Planning. The initiative is a partnership with 18 First Nations that developed marine use plans for B.C.'s North Pacific Coast, providing recommendations for key areas of marine management, including uses, activities and protection. The plans will inform decisions regarding the sustainable economic development and stewardship of B.C.'s coastal marine environment. Finally, the government formed the Advisory Council on Finfish Aquaculture that includes First Nations representatives to ensure it gets the best advice possible about finfish aquaculture.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to work on these important issues.

Question 5:

Today's BC Liberals believe that the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is key to supporting and sustaining food production in BC, our farming sector and those who work in it. A BC Liberal government will have clear goals for the ALR, including:

- Helping farmers grow their businesses and earn a better living;
- Supporting farming families in continuing to produce food on our fertile land; and
- Ensuring the Commission has the necessary tools to continue making independent land decisions with the best interests of agriculture in mind.

Since 2001, more than 31,000 net-new hectares have been added into the ALR. And supports to the Agricultural Land Commission have increased, with \$4.5 million in annual funding - a 50% rise over 2012.

The ALR will remain a priority for Today's BC Liberals, ensuring a sustainable land base for food production into the future. That's why our 2017 platform commits to putting an additional 91,000 hectares of agricultural land into production by 2020.

Question 6:

Today's BC Liberals have long been recognized as global climate action leaders, proving that you can reduce GHG emissions while continuing to grow the economy and create jobs for BC families. Our Climate Leadership Plan defines 21 new strategic actions to further reduce emissions.

We are committed to working with the agriculture and agrifood sector to improve the resilience of agricultural production in a changing climate, including:

- Funding programs and projects to help BC farmers prepare for emergencies and changing weather conditions.
- Working with industry on adaptation and has invested significantly in climate adaptation programming. This includes working with local governments, industry and others to develop and implement regional agricultural adaptation strategies.
- Launching the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative in 2008 to develop tools and resources to enhance the ability of the BC agriculture sector to adapt to climate change.

Along with the federal government, the BC Liberal government has invested approximately \$3 million to help farmers and ranchers across the province prepare and adapt to changing climate and weather conditions. More than 40 projects have been funded, addressing climate-related risks such as drought, excess moisture, flooding, pests, diseases, and wildfires.

In partnership with the federal government, the BC Liberal government has developed an Agricultural Water Demand Model to determine how much water the agriculture industry needs today and in the future for a number of regions including Metro Vancouver. The model results can be used by each of the regions to develop their watershed plans and water reserves for agriculture.

There is more work to be done to achieve the 2050 emission targets. Today's BC Liberals are committed to working collaboratively in support of climate adaptation and mitigation.

Question 7:

Today's BC Liberals believe that everyone has a role to play in helping reduce waste by recycling, reusing and composting. Every tonne of food waste reduced prevents four tonnes of greenhouse gases from being emitted. Recognizing this, we made B.C. the first provincial jurisdiction to take a leadership role on addressing food waste by incorporating reduction targets in the Province's Climate Leadership Plan (CLP). The CLP calls for an organics diversion from landfills target of 90% and a food waste prevention target of 30%.

These targets will also help our province achieve the municipal solid waste disposal target of 350 kilograms per person by 2020. In 2014, the disposal rate was 520 kilograms per person, down from 579 kilograms per person in 2010.

The BC Liberal government is also leading the way in helping BC communities reduce food waste. Recognizing the need for community-based solutions, the Province published the Residential Food Waste Prevention Toolkit last year to assist local governments and community organizations implementing strategies to reduce food waste.

And the BC Liberal government introduced the Provincial Farmers' Food Donation Tax Credit, a non-refundable income tax credit that encourages farmers and farming corporations to donate surplus agricultural products that they produce – such as fresh vegetables, meat, grain and dairy – to local food banks and charities. Our 2017 platform commits to make this tax credit permanent.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to focus on innovative solutions to reducing food waste.

Question 8:

Today's BC Liberals believe the use of all pesticides needs to be science based and when they are used, it needs to be appropriate and with care.

In our 2017 platform, we have committed to banning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides in B.C. to protect honeybee populations.

Today's BC Liberals will rely on the best available science and make human health and the environment the priority.

Question 9:

Today's BC Liberals are focussed on controlling government spending, keeping taxes low, and creating jobs through a strong, diverse economy. Because of this foundation - Canada's strongest economy and best job creation - we can look after the people we love and invest in the things that matter to British Columbians, like health care, education, and supports for those who need a helping hand.

And we get to leave an even better province for our children and grandchildren – with the freedom to make their own choices.

The agrifood and seafood sectors plays a big part in this vision. In 2015, we launched an ambitious plan to increase revenues to \$15 billion per year by 2020 under the BC Agrifood and Seafood Strategic Growth Plan – and we're making good progress towards that goal.

Today's BC Liberal government has completed 11 commitments in the Plan, including:

- Implementing changes outlined in Moving Forward to 2020 ALR and ALC
- Creating a 25% tax credit on the value of farmed food donated to non-profit organizations, like food banks
- Completing an International Market Development Strategy



Good progress continues to be made on the remaining commitments.

Our 2017 platform commits to make permanent the B.C. Farmers' Food Donation Tax Credit, double the Grow Local program, and increase the Buy Local program by \$1 million starting in 2019.

Agrifood and seafood play a vital role in BC's food supply security and economy. Today's BC Liberals will continue to support industry and the many people who work in the sector.