



SMALL AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS VIABILITY SCAN

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PROJECT SCOPE

- Purpose of the study was to determine how Parkland County can support small agriculture operations.
- Funding for this study was provided by the Coal Communities Transition Fund
- Serecon Consulting was selected to complete the study



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- There are over 15,000 acres on 3,015 agricultural small holdings parcels

Table 1. Parkland County Small Holding Parcel Summary

| Land Use District | Count | Total Acres |
|-------------------|-------|-------------|
| AGG | 1,590 | 9,548.4 |
| AGR | 191 | 951.5 |
| ANC | 180 | 1,150.9 |
| AGI | 0 | 0.0 |
| CR (Prime Ag) | 1054 | 3643.8 |
| Total | 3,015 | 15,294.6 |

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Table 2. Appropriate Agricultural Small Holding Business Type within each Category

| Production | Value-Add | Ag-tourism | Ag-Service |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| U-picks* | Local Food Product* Aggregation | Equestrian Venues* | Equestrian Boarding* |
| Market Gardens* | Abattoir* | Agricultural-themed event venue* | Veterinarian |
| Specialty Livestock (not pets)* | On Farm food Packaging* | Agricultural-themed Activity Provider* | Ag-Input Supplier |
| Tree Nurseries/Garden Centre* | On Farm Processing/Packaging* | Agri-tourism Accommodation | |
| Cut Flowers* | Cannabis Processing (non-hemp) | Agricultural-themed Eating Establishment* | |
| Cannabis Cultivation (non- hemp) | | | |
| Medicinal Herb* | | | |
| Ministock - Insect Farming | | | |
| Fungiculture | | | |
| Aquaculture | | | |

*Business types currently active in Parkland County as of December 2020

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Of the 54 existing small holding businesses identified, the average parcel size was 54.5 acres and 20 of them operate on Country Residential parcels.

Different categories of small agriculture business have significant differences in critical success factors.

Significant seasonal and year-round employment is generated by all categories of small ag holdings.

Of the small holding businesses assessed, only agriculture input suppliers have significant contributions to municipal tax revenue.



CONCLUSIONS



- The agricultural land base in its current form has sufficient opportunities for small holding appropriate businesses.
- Small holdings support significant employment and increasing secondary economic benefits for the agriculture industry.
- Proximity to market and amenities is critical for agri-tourism businesses.
- Soil quality is more important than proximity to market for small ag businesses engaged in primary production.
- There are minimal regulatory barriers to small holding businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Utilize existing small holdings and other agricultural land base to encourage growth in the emerging agri-food sector.
- Support emerging intensive food producers by encouraging alternative land access strategies and supporting market access for agritourism operations in targeted locations.
- Amend the LUB to remove small regulatory barriers.
- Consider agricultural easements as country residential leakage mitigation for small holding subdivision applications.



QUESTIONS?

