EMERGING FARMER MOVEMENTS AND ALTERNATIVE LAND ACCESS
INITIATIVES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

by

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Abstract

In British Columbia (BC), Canada, the number of young farm operators is declining while the average age of farm operators is at a historic high. A rising population, urbanization and natural resource and industrial development in BC continue to place pressure on the province’s limited agricultural land base. BC also has the most expensive farmland in Canada, driven by the valuation of farmland for non-agricultural uses. It is predicted that there will be a significant transfer of farmland in the coming decades; how the land will be transferred and to whom is of fundamental concern to the trajectory of agriculture in this province. In response to farmland access challenges, young and beginning farmer networks and alternative land access initiatives have emerged in BC. In this thesis I explore these emerging young and beginning farmer and land access initiatives through the lens of the agrarian question and food sovereignty. This research was part of a collaborative community-based project and employed a survey and ethnographic methods. I argue that there is an emerging movement of young and beginning farmers in BC entering agriculture from non-farming backgrounds seeking to redress the impacts of the corporate food regime through the practice of locally oriented, ecological farming. Narratives employed by new farmer movements share discursive commonalities with the theory of repeasantization and food sovereignty movements. I provide a characterization of the diversity of alternative land access models practiced by farmers in BC and the motivations for their establishment. My analysis of these models suggests that the potential for furthering community-led land reform efforts in BC is inhibited by the high cost of land, tenure insecurity, societal attitudes favouring individual ownership, and high transaction costs. There is a need for an attitudinal and policy shift towards the management of farmland as a public good rather than a market commodity in order to support new farmer establishment, community-based land management, and the continuity of locally oriented agriculture. I conclude with policy recommendations to support new farm entrants and farmland access in British Columbia.
Preface

The research reported on in my thesis is part of the larger community-based and collaborative Farmland Access Research Project co-led by Principal Investigator Dr. Hannah Wittman (Director, Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, Associate Professor of Food, Nutrition and Health, Faculty of Land and Food Systems at the University of British Columbia) and Heather Pritchard, Farm Programs Director at Farm Folk City Folk.

My thesis research was a contribution to the existing project and was designed and executed with support from Dr. Hannah Wittman and Heather Pritchard. For my thesis research I designed, administered and analyzed an online survey; I organized, conducted, and analyzed 22 semi-structured interviews; I analyzed the transcripts of 12 interviews previously conducted by Dr. Hannah Wittman; I analyzed Statistics Canada data accessed through the Canadian Socio-economic Information and Management System Database; I carried out participant observation at public events. All of the activities I performed (design, execution, analysis, writing) were part of the research collaboration, built from the previous work of the research team, and were conducted with guidance from research team members.

The Ethics Certificate (H13-00045) was obtained from the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board.
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<td>AAFC</td>
<td>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada</td>
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<td>ALR</td>
<td>Agricultural Land Reserve</td>
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<td>BC</td>
<td>British Columbia</td>
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<td>BCYF</td>
<td>British Columbia Young Farmers</td>
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<td>CANSIM</td>
<td>Canadian Socio-economic Information and Management System Database</td>
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<td>CFP</td>
<td>Community Farms Program</td>
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<td>CLT</td>
<td>Community Land Trust</td>
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<td>FFCF</td>
<td>Farm Folk City Folk</td>
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<td>NFU</td>
<td>National Farmers Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMAFRA</td>
<td>Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOIL</td>
<td>Stewards of Irreplaceable Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>The Land Conservancy of BC</td>
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<tr>
<td>UBC</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Food and agriculture movements are growing around the globe in response to the social, ecological, and economic sustainability challenges stemming from the current corporate food regime (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). There is significant mobilization around food issues occurring in Canada and British Columbia (BC), with a rising number of civil society-led food initiatives seeking to create alternatives or transform the dominant food regime. In Canada, 2,314 local food initiatives were documented in 2009 with 18% of these located in BC (Canadian Co-operative Association, 2009). Provincial and national food system networks have also formed, enabling a means for collective action amongst localized food initiatives (Levkoe, 2014).

Similarly, the food sovereignty movement emerged from rural social mobilization in the global South to resist and create alternatives to the imposition of neoliberal, corporate modes of agriculture. Food sovereignty asserts the rights of producers to define their own food and agricultural systems and the responsibility of the state to protect those rights (McMichael, 2014; Wittman, 2011). The principles of food sovereignty have increasingly become a framework for action adopted by food system initiatives and networks in Canada and BC (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014).

There is public support and a rising demand for locally grown food in BC. In a study of farmers markets in BC it was found that between 2006 and 2012 there was a rise in the number of farmers markets and rise in the numbers of people attending. Farmers market sales across BC rose 147% from 2006 – 2012 (Connell, 2012). A 2014 survey reported that 92% of BC residents believe local food production and the reduction of dependency on food imports is very important, and reported that respondents considered “food and farming” to be the second most important land use in the province after “natural fresh water systems” (McAllister Opinion Research, 2014). A democratically-controlled local food system founded on local agriculture is a key component of food system sustainability and food sovereignty (Food Secure Canada, 2011; Wittman & Barbolet, 2011). Yet, despite the growth of local food system initiatives and public support for local agriculture, both farmers and farmland are under significant pressure in BC, as is the case across North America (Campbell, 2006; Ikerd, 2008). The continuity of small to medium scale, locally oriented, ecologically sound, and socially embedded farms is foundational.
to the advancement of a sustainable food system. It is also in a state of crisis across North America, stemming from the pressures of industrialization and corporatization of agriculture (Ikerd, 2008).

Despite civil society mobilization and public support for local agriculture in BC, Canadian agriculture is continuing down a path of increased industrialization and liberalization. The sector is undergoing rapid farm consolidation and rural decline, numbers of farms and farmers are dropping, and farm incomes are depressed (Qualman, 2011). The Canadian government’s agricultural policy is founded on the maximization of exports and the advancement of highly capitalized, corporately integrated, globally competitive, industrial modes of production (Kneen, 2010). Qualman (2011) characterizes Canadian agricultural policy as “advancing agriculture by destroying farms.” Similarly, BC’s provincial policy emphasizes commodity export expansion and global market competitiveness. BC’s current agrifoods strategy includes three priority areas: “1) Focus on high-quality, high-value products, 2) Expand domestic and international markets, 3) Enhance the agrifood sector’s competitiveness” (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). Both federal agricultural policy in Canada and provincial agricultural policy in BC advance increasing neoliberalization and global integration of the agricultural sector within the dominant corporate food regime. It is within this context that food and farming initiatives are emerging and striving to reorient the trajectory of the Canadian food and agriculture system.

Farmland loss to development and a declining number of entrants into agriculture are challenges faced across Canada. In BC agricultural land continues to be lost to development and held in speculation. Non-farm uses of farmland and speculative holding of land in BC result in reduced availability of land for farming and rising land values. The cost of farmland, in the regions in which the majority of agricultural production is located, has risen far above its agricultural value and is not affordable to farmers (CR-FAIR, 2012; Mullinix, Fallick, & Dorward, 2013; Wittman & Barbolet, 2011). Alongside growing farmland access challenges in the province, there has been an ongoing decline in the number of young farmers (under 35), tending towards a situation in which there is an insufficient number of upcoming farmers to replace an aging farming population in BC (Beaulieu, 2014). The advancement of a local sustainable agricultural sector requires a protected and accessible agricultural land base and farmers to work the land. In
response to a declining next generation of farmers and farmland access challenges, young and beginning farmer networks and alternative land access initiatives have emerged in Canada and the US. In this thesis I explore emerging young and beginning farmer and land access initiatives in British Columbia through the lens of the agrarian question and food sovereignty.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: Food Sovereignty and The Agrarian Question

2.1 Food Sovereignty

The food sovereignty concept arose in the early 1990s from La Via Campesina (LVC), the international movement of peasants, farmers, rural workers, fishers and Indigenous people that formed in response to the destructive impacts of the corporate food regime on their livelihoods (La Via Campesina, 2011). La Via Campesina is part of a global food movement, involving a wide diversity of civil society organizations aiming to bring about change to the dominant food regime. Food sovereignty movements demand radical structural changes to the neoliberal, corporate food regime to address the root causes of the food system crisis (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011).

Food regimes are an analytic tool used to describe the global political and economic structures that shape and transform relations of food production and consumption over periods of time (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989). The corporate food regime (1980s – present) is characterized by the neoliberalization of agriculture, industrialization of agricultural production, economies of scale, institutionalization of inequitable international trade regulations, institutionalization of policies that favour agribusiness, dismantling of national farm protection policies, concentration of corporate control, concentration of land ownership, privatization of common resources, and the dispossession and displacement of people from the productive resources (McMichael, 2012).

Food sovereignty calls for a reorientation of agriculture towards equitable and ecologically sound production that supports the livelihoods of producers and the wellbeing of surrounding communities. One of the core demands of the food sovereignty movement is equitable access to, and control over, the productive resource base including land by those working the land (Borras, 2008; McMichael, 2014; Wittman, 2011). LVC states that food sovereignty “ensures that the
rights to use and manage lands, territories, water, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those who produce food and not of the corporate sector” (La Via Campesina, 2011). In recent years the concept and discourse of food sovereignty has become increasingly used by food activists and initiatives in the global North (Fairbairn, 2011; Kneen, 2010; Wittman, Desmarais, & Wiebe, 2011). For example, the People’s Food Policy project was a collaborative grassroots initiative in Canada that developed a proposed alternative food policy for Canada. The policy is founded on the principles of food sovereignty; food system localization, sustainable agriculture, access to and control over land and natural resources by communities and the people working the land are central pillars of the policy (Food Secure Canada, 2011).

2.2 Classic Agrarian Question
The classic agrarian question is an analytic framework used to understand capitalist development in agriculture and the associated transformations in the structures and relations of agricultural production. The agrarian question originated from Marx’s analysis of the transition from pre-capitalist peasant modes of agricultural production to modern capitalist social relations and was further theorized and applied by Engels, Lenin and Kautsky in the early 1900s. Three issues central to the classic agrarian question are: 1) the role of agriculture and the peasantry in capital accumulation and the emergence of capitalist economies, 2) the predicted disappearance or transformation of the peasantry/family farmers in the transition to capitalist modes of production, and 3) the political role of peasants during the transition to capitalism or socialism (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010a; Bernstein, 2002). For Kautsky, the agrarian question was concerned with both the future of smallholder agriculture and an assessment of how agriculture is being transformed by capitalist modes of production. Kautsky defined the agrarian question as ‘whether, and how, capital is seizing hold of agriculture, revolutionising it, making old forms of production and property untenable and creating the necessity for new ones’ (Kautsky, 1899/1988). In the contemporary era of neo-liberal globalization, agriculture continues to undergo significant transformation and renewed formulations of the agrarian question are being employed to understand ongoing processes of change (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009).

The classic agrarian question holds that capital accumulation and development, both in the countryside and for a national economy, requires the transition from a largely subsistence
peasant farming economy to capitalist farming founded on class differentiation, wage labour, industrialization, and property ownership. Peasants/family farming will disappear/be subsumed into capitalist relations of agricultural production or urban labour. In turn, a failed or incomplete agrarian transition, in which peasant relations remain, has been argued to inhibit successful national capitalist development and industrialization in developing countries (Lerche, 2013). The classical form of the agrarian question has been widely debated and alternative formulations relevant to the contemporary context have emerged (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009; 2010b; Bernstein, 2006; McMichael, 1997; 2014). In contemporary debates, the agrarian question has both been declared no longer relevant and, conversely, as having renewed relevance (in alternative formulations) in the era of contemporary capitalism and neoliberal globalization (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010b).

The term peasant has many meanings historically, in its contemporary use, and across languages (Edelman, 2013). In the agrarian question literature a commonly used definition is: “an agricultural worker whose livelihoods is based primarily on having access to land that is either owned or rented, and who uses principally their own labour and the labour of other family members to work that land” (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009, p. 3). Van der Ploeg’s (2008) theory of repeasantization challenges definitions of peasant as a pre-modern static category by defining it as a continuum and a shifting condition. Central to the peasant condition is striving for autonomy within a context of increasing marginalization through the practice of socially embedded and ecological farming practices (van der Ploeg, 2008). In contemporary formulations, peasant is often used interchangeably with family farmer or smallholder, especially within the language of the food sovereignty movement (Edelman, 2013). In the context of the food sovereignty movement, the term peasant represents a self-ascribed social category or identity marker around which mobilization occurs. According to La Via Campesina (2009):

A peasant is a man or woman of the land, who has a direct and special relationship with the land and nature through the production of food and/or other agricultural production. Peasants work the land themselves, rely above all on family labour and other small-scale forms of organizing labour. Peasants are traditionally embedded in their local communities and they take care of local landscapes and of agro-ecological systems.
In my thesis I apply themes from the literature on the agrarian question and rural peasant/food sovereignty movements to contribute to an analysis of emerging farmer networks and land access initiatives in BC. I do not contend that family farmers in BC are peasants and/or self-identify as peasants. There are however commonalities between peasant farmers, family farmers (and other rural producers) in how they are affected by the corporate food regime, and a resulting common base for action across divergent, place-based contexts (van der Ploeg, 2013).

2.3 Contemporary Relevance of the Agrarian Question

There are two lines of argumentation suggesting that the agrarian question is no longer relevant: 1) there is no longer a peasantry and 2) the peasantry/family farming has survived successful transitions to capitalism. The first line of argumentation asserts that peasantries disappeared during the second half of the 20th century as a result of the rise of global capitalism and the subsuming of developing nations and agriculture into global capitalist relations of production and consumption. The claim that the peasantry is an ‘anachronism’ has been widely contested (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009; 2010b; McMichael, 2013; van der Ploeg, 2008). Almost half of the world’s population still lives and works in rural areas, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) suggests the survival of more than 500 million family farms (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2014). La Via Campesina currently represents an estimated 200 million self-identified peasants and small-farmers around the world and its 2008 Declaration of Rights of Peasants states that “almost half of the people in the world are peasants” (La Via Campesina, 2009). In light of growing social movements representing peasants defending their livelihoods in opposition to capitalism and neoliberalism, the argument that the agrarian question is irrelevant because there is no longer a peasantry does not hold.

Both globally and in Canada, family farming, which is argued to defy capitalist organization and corporatization in a way that parallels aspects of peasant farming, remains the dominant organizational structure in agriculture (Brookfield, 2008; Graeub et al., 2015; van der Ploeg, 2013). A recent analysis of agricultural census data from 98 countries and 7 territories found that family farms accounted for 98% of farms, and managed 53% of total agricultural land (Graeub et al., 2015). According to Statistics Canada, a family farm refers to a census family with a farm
operator living on a farm; 1 98% of farms in BC are “family owned and operated” (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). However in BC, the farming population constitutes only 1.5% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2012a).

In light of family farms as the predominant organizational structure for agriculture in capitalist economies, Brookfield argues that “it is time that the old agrarian question was inverted to ask how and why family farming survives, and why it will continue to do so” (2008, p.108). The persistence of family farms in developed regions has been attributed in particular to reliance on family rather than wage labour and reliance on pluri-activity, which refers to diversification of income streams on and/or off-farm (Brookfield, 2008; Machum, 2005; Schmitt, 1991; van der Ploeg, 2013). Public subsidies in the form of government program payments to farms and supply management for selected commodities also contribute to the economic stability and persistence of farm operations in BC (Schmitz, 2008).

Family farms are often positioned in contrast to corporate farms. Studies in both Canada and Australia, however, have shown that while family farms persist as an operational arrangement, a key path to structural change and corporatization is within the family farm unit itself, thereby calling into question the distinction between family and corporate farming and the interpretations of the persistence of the family farm in developed economies (Magnan, 2011; Pritchard, Burch, & Lawrence, 2007). In an analysis of Australian agriculture, Pritchard et al. (2007) summarize the debate over family farming in a way that reflects the agrarian question in a contemporary, developed nation context, applicable to British Columbia:

For the past two decades there has been much debate about the future of family farming. The basic question on which this debate has turned is whether current pressures on family farm systems should be understood as symptomatic of a terminal condition, in which

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1 Census family “refers to a married couple (with or without children of either and/or both spouses), a common-law couple (with or without children of either and/or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child. A couple may be of opposite sex or same sex.” “Farm operator refers to those persons responsible for the management decisions made in the operation of the census farm.” Three farm operators could be reported per farm. “A census farm has been defined as an agricultural operation that produces at least one of the following products intended for sale: crops; livestock; poultry; animal products; or other agricultural products.” Note that this is inclusive of “a variety of farms, from those operated by people who choose farming for lifestyle reasons, to those who farm for economic reasons, with or without off-farm work,” (Statistics Canada, 2012b).
farmers are replaced progressively by corporate ownership; or whether family farms will persist as a social formation, albeit increasingly subsumed by off-farm interests (Pritchard et al., 2007, p. 75).

The 2011 Canadian Census of Agriculture highlighted continued structural changes in agriculture including trends towards fewer larger farms, less farmers, growth in high revenue class farms, decline in low revenue class farms, and increasing incorporation of farms. The National Farmers Union of Canada (NFU) states that, “The farm model of the past 100 years (numerous, relatively stable and autonomous family farm operations interdependent with, and interlinked to, communities) is being dismantled at an accelerating rate” (NFU, 2010). The NFU argues that producer autonomy and food sovereignty are being eroded by corporate land purchases, increasing vertical integration, corporate input financing, and growing debt accumulation. These are processes that shift the locus of control and decision making over the means and modes of production from the farmer to other entities – corporations and financial institutions (Holtslander, 2015; NFU, 2010). Though family farms persist as the dominant operating arrangement, significant transformation continues to occur. The persistence, disappearance and/or transformation of independent family farms in relation to global capitalism and neoliberalism and associated implications - the agrarian question - remain dynamic and pertinent issues in BC and Canada.

The renewed relevance and reformulation of the agrarian question was prompted by heightened food and agricultural crises in the 21st century (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010b). Contemporary agrarian questions break from the classical formulation in three significant ways: 1) a shift from a focus on agrarian transition at the nation-state to the global food system, 2) the rejection of linear developmentalist/modernization narratives impinging upon a ‘successful’ transition to capitalism and the disappearance of a ‘backwards’ peasantry, 3) critiques of capital as the locus of change and an assertion of the agency of peasants/farmers. There is debate over contemporary reformulations of the agrarian question with differing emphasis placed on issues of land, dispossession, labour, migration, gender, ethnicity, ecology, and peasant resistance (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2009; Araghi, 2009). My analysis of BC’s agricultural sector focuses on issues of land access, farmer attrition and emerging farmer movements and is situated within the
framework of an agrarian question of resistance in the corporate food regime (McMichael, 2013) and an agrarian question of land (Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Araghi, 2000; 2009; McMichael, 2014).

2.4 AGRARIAN QUESTION OF RESISTANCE IN THE CORPORATE FOOD REGIME

The original agrarian question has been critiqued for its singular focus on the transformation of the peasantry by capital, its failure to recognize the agency of the peasantry, and for espousing a narrative in which the peasantry inevitably disappears or is progressively more marginalized as capitalist development progresses (McMichael, 2009). The concept of food sovereignty has emerged in response to food system crises precipitated by the corporate food regime, and Wittman argues that “food sovereignty can be regarded as a new, alternative paradigm and driver of change challenging the current food regime, in its efforts to re-embed economic, environmental, and equity-related concerns around agricultural production, consumption, and trade” (2011, p.90). Food sovereignty movements reassert the agency of peasants and farmers and seek to both resist and transform the dominant neoliberal capitalist trajectory.

In light of a wave of farmer mobilization and renewal, McMichael, like Brookfield, inverts the agrarian question. However, rather than simply theorizing the persistence of family farming/peasants, he goes further and both posits and seeks to understand a re-emergence of peasants in the context of the corporate food regime of the 21st century. McMichael (2013, p. 81) states, “Whereas the original agrarian question concerned the rate of disappearance of the traditional peasant, the current agrarian question concerns the reappearance of a “new peasantry” with the potential to farm sustainably.” This formulation problematizes the linear modernization narrative of the classic agrarian question and capitalist development that theorizes the disappearance of peasants and family farms as global capitalist relations advance. Modernization and development narratives maintain that societies or nations undergo a series of progressive changes from pre-modern to modern, where modern is historically equated to Western social, political and economic norms. In the case of agrarian change, modernization and development constitute the replacement of inefficient peasant/small family farm modes of production with industrialized, efficient modes of production and capitalist relations. Hence Brookfield (2008) problematizes this projection by arguing that family farms persist in advanced capitalist relations and McMichael (2013) problematizes the projection by arguing that the
corporate food regime is in crisis which has precipitated a reappearance of a new peasantry taking up sustainable farming practices.

van der Ploeg develops a characterization of present day peasantries and argues that renewed repeasantization is a necessary trajectory to redress the current food system crisis. The peasant condition is “the struggle for autonomy that takes place in a context characterized by dependency relations, marginalization and deprivation” (2008, p.23). Autonomous units of production are self-organizing spaces shaped by local social and ecological relations, in contrast to the ordering of production units by the economic and political institutions of the corporate food regime (van der Ploeg, 2008). Central to the struggle for autonomy is the assertion of access to and control over the resource base, social and ecological farming practices, and a reduction of dependency relations. Dependency relations stem from high levels of upstream and downstream market integration that result in loss of producer control over the management of the productive resource base and susceptibility to volatile market dynamics. Access to and control over the land is fundamental to peasant and farmer struggles and is reflected in both the principles of repeasantization and food sovereignty (Borras & Franco, 2012; van der Ploeg, 2008).

Repeasantization entails both the quantitative increase in numbers of peasant farmers and the qualitative changes towards peasant modes of production and increased autonomy. Depeasantization is movement in the other direction, and occurs through the dispossession of people from the land as well as through processes that increases dependency relations including vertical integration of primary production, financial indebtedness, input dependent models of agriculture, and the patenting of plants, animals and genetic material (Araghi, 2009; McMichael, 2012; van der Ploeg, 2008). van der Ploeg (2008) presents case studies to argue that a renewed process of repeasantization is occurring in both developed and developing nations. In parallel to McMichael’s agrarian question of resistance, van der Ploeg (2008) argues that “imperial food regimes amplify marginalization and exclusion to levels hitherto unknown that stimulate and strengthen the process of repeasantization” (p. 257).
2.5 Neo-liberal Enclosure and Agrarian Question of Land

Land reform is central to the agrarian question, to analyses of agrarian change, to rural social movements and to food sovereignty movements. The establishment of private property through the enclosures of land was fundamental to agrarian transition and the development of capitalism in England, and subsequently globally (Araghi, 2009; Wood, 2000). Enclosure refers to the “extinction of common or customary use-rights on which many people depended for their livelihood” (Wood, 2000, p.33). The original land enclosures led to the dispossession of peasants and Indigenous peoples from their land and their means of (re)production, to rural class differentiation, and the creation of landless peasant wage-labourers integrated into urban wage labour (Wood, 2000). Contemporary enclosures are a continuation of the capital accumulation and depeasantization processes that emerged during the original enclosures and have continued to occur into the 21st century (Araghi, 2009).

In using the term enclosure, it is essential to acknowledge that significant amounts of land in BC, including land zoned for farming, is unceded First Nations’ land and/or the traditional food producing, hunting and gathering territories of First Nations. In discussing processes of land enclosure and land access in BC agriculture, it is important to recognize the colonial history of agricultural settlement in BC and Canada. The agrarian transition in Europe was a driver of colonialism in Canada, and the establishment of agriculture contributed to the enclosure of Indigenous lands and the ongoing displacement of Indigenous peoples. Farmland protection and access initiatives in the context of settler agriculture in BC (and North America) must work to engage a decolonial framework and support Indigenous struggles for land and food sovereignty occurring across the province.

Araghi (2009) argues that the current period of neoliberal globalization has led to a continuation of ‘enclosure-induced displacement’ of farmers and indigenous peoples globally through the deregulation of land markets, rise of agro-export regimes, dismantling of state protections for agriculture, institutionalization of neo-liberal policies by the World Trade Organization, and unequal global competition between North and South. Akram-Lodhi (2007, p.1446) argues that:
Neoliberal enclosure can be differentiated from previous enclosures in that its objective is not to establish capitalist social property relations but rather to deepen the already prevailing set of capitalist social property relations by diminishing the relative power of peasants and workers in favour of the dominant class.

Like the first wave of enclosure, subsequent waves of enclosure have led to massive dispossession and displacement of people from the land and/or the loss of control over land and means of production by those working the land (Araghi, 2009; Araghi 2000; Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Wood, 2000). Consequently, dispossession from the land and the struggle over land are central aspects of the agrarian question in the current context (Araghi, 2009; McMichael, 2013). McMichael asks, “who shall farm the land and to what socio-ecological end?” (2013, p.65). This question is very pertinent to the North American context. The US is undergoing similar demographic trends as Canadian agriculture with respect to age distribution of farmers and it is estimated that up to 70% of US farmland will transfer hands in the next two decades (Ruhf, 2013). In the BC context, the cost of farmland has risen above its agricultural value in selected regions of the province due to development pressure, non-farm uses, and speculation. This is resulting in a situation in which it is prohibitive for farmers to purchase farmland (Condon, Mullinix, Fallick, & Harcourt, 2010; Mullinix et al., 2013; Wittman & Barbolet, 2011). The predicted transfer of land at a value that is not affordable to those who would farm the land makes the question of how farmland will transfer, to who and what it will be used for highly pertinent in BC.

A rise in the related processes of land grabbing and the financialization of land were precipitated by the 2008 economic crisis and are drivers of neoliberal land enclosure. Land grabbing refers to the “large-scale acquisition of land or land related rights and resources by corporate (business, non-profit or public) entities,” (White et al., 2012). The occurrence and scale of land grabs are increasing across the globe including in Canada and by Canadian corporations in other countries (GRAIN, 2010; NFU, 2010; White et al., 2012). Financialization of land refers to the integration of farmland into financial circuits and to the valuation of farmland as an asset divorced from its productive use. The financialization of land is facilitated both by the financial sector, seeking pure investment, and by agricultural corporations seeking the financial return from the land asset
as well as from production or rent (Fairbairn, 2014; McMichael, 2012). Involved actors veil these two processes in a narrative of addressing food security in the face of crisis through an influx of capital into struggling agricultural economies, while simultaneously extolling land as a safe and profitable financial investment for shareholders (Fairbairn, 2011; 2014; McMichael, 2012; White, Borras, Hall, Scoones, & Wolford, 2012). The recent growth in farmland acquisitions and investments was first precipitated by the collapse of the dot-com bubble and then further precipitated by the 2008 economic and food crisis, resulting in exacerbated conflicts over land (Rosset & Martinez-Torres, 2012).

Large-scale farmland acquisitions are predominantly occurring in the global South; however are also occurring in Canada and the United States along with a growth in financialization of land (Fairbairn, 2014). Fairbairn argues that it is undeniable that farmland has become a desirable asset for investors and documents the multiple and unprecedented mechanisms by which farmland is becoming ‘financialized’ in North America (2014). Similarly, Sommerville and Magnan (2015) document the emergence of new vehicles of investment in farmland in the Canadian prairies and the National Farmers Union documented six Canadian farmland investment funds and four corporations currently involved in large scale farmland acquisitions and vertical integration in Canada (Holtslander, 2015). The following quotes from two Canadian farmland investment corporations illustrate the phenomenon and accompanying narratives.

Agcapita believes farmland is a safe investment, that supply is shrinking and that unprecedented demand for "food, feed and fuel" will continue to move crop prices higher over the long-term. Agcapita allows investors to add professionally managed farmland to their portfolios (Agcapita, 2015).

At Bonnefield, we invest in and hold farmland for long-term capital appreciation and income. We offer qualified investors the opportunity to hold Canadian farmland through pooled limited partnerships (Bonnefield, n.d.).

White et al. (2012) characterized land grabbing as “regressive land reform” in which land is taken from the poor by the rich and in many cases brokered by the state. Impacts of corporate
land acquisitions documented to date include an increased concentration of land (and wealth),
dispossession of people from the land, a rise in tenant farmers/labourers, a shift towards
industrial production modes, and inflation of land prices (Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Fairbairn, 2014;
McMichael, 2012; White et al., 2012). The impacts of financialization similarly include rising
cost of land, the transition of ownership away from the farmer, increasing ‘short-termism’ due to
the nature of land speculation and the need to sell to realize financial gains (Fairbairn, 2014).
Short-term access has been linked to cases of reduced investment in sustainable agricultural
practices (Fairbairn, 2014). Both corporatization and financialization lead towards industrialized
modes of production.

In a retrospective analysis of 51 studies on the impacts of industrial farming on indicators of
socio-economic, community and ecological wellbeing, Lobao and Stofferah (2008) found 57%
reported primarily detrimental impacts, 25% found some detrimental impacts, and 18% found no
negative impacts. Some positive impact was found in 22% of cases and was limited solely to
socio-economic indicators (Lobao & Stofferahn, 2008). Proponents of corporatization and
industrialization as a solution to the food crisis co-opt food security discourses, but the reality is
that while a majority of land is concentrated in the hands of the wealthy few, the majority of food
eaten globally is produced by the hands of many on far less land (GRAIN, 2014). Sommerville
(2013) argues that while there is insufficient information to conclude on the outcomes of these
emerging investment schemes in Canadian agriculture, there is no doubt that they will alter the
patterns of farmland ownership and the trajectory of agricultural development and hence should be of
profound public interest (Sommerville, 2013).

2.6 LAND SOVEREIGNTY, PEOPLES’ ENCLOSURE AND COMMUNITY-LED LAND REFORM
The food sovereignty movement has taken a stance against land grabbing, and against both the
corporatization and financialization of land, resources and food. Redistributive land reform and
equitable access to land have always been at the core of rural social movements and remains so
as new waves of enclosure and corporatization deepen unequal capitalist property relations to the
detriment of small producers and rural peoples (Borras, 2008).
Within the food sovereignty frame, and in response to increasing pressures on the land, Borras and Franco (2012) developed the concept of land sovereignty. “Land Sovereignty is the right of working peoples to have effective access to, use of, and control over the land and the benefits of its use and occupation, where land is understood as resource, territory, and landscape” (Borras and Franco, 2012, p. 6). Notable in this definition is the absence of reference to land ownership and rather an emphasis on effective access. Land sovereignty entails both a peoples’ counter enclosure, the defensive struggle against corporate and/or state backed enclosure, and the peoples’ enclosure campaign, the proactive assertion of working people’s control over land and the means of production. A land sovereignty framework comprises a plurality of approaches including communal, public, and/or private property, rather than privileging a singular property rights system. One approach to advance land sovereignty is through community-led land reform in which community groups and non-governmental organizations advance redistributive land reform initiatives (Borras and Franco, 2012). Community-led land reform has been described as “a melding of land reform, community-based natural resource management and innovative local development” (Bryden and Geisler, 2007, p. 24).

Agricultural land reform is not on the cultural or political agenda in North America. However, as the distribution of land and wealth becomes increasingly concentrated and farmland becomes increasingly inaccessible, the notion of land reform gains relevance. Alternative farmland access initiatives are emerging in BC and across North America, and are being led by farmers, communities, and non-governmental organizations (Gorsuch & Scott, 2010; Highby, Ruhf, & Woloschuk, 2004; Ruhf, 2013). These initiatives employ a diversity of non-ownership or shared ownership mechanisms that are distinct from traditional private individual ownership of farmland. Parallel to the land sovereignty concept, alternative land access initiatives advocate for the advancement of effective access or “practical ownership” separated from holding title to the land (Highby et al., 2004). These alternative land access, or non-ownership models, of farmland are examples of community-led agricultural land reform in the North American context.

The community land trust (CLT) model first described by Swann (1972) is a model that reflects the principles of community-led land reform and has been applied to agriculture and other sectors. CLTs are a legal mechanism through which land is held in trust by a non-profit
organization for the use and benefit of the community. CLTs are founded on the principle that land is not an asset for the individual private good, but a resource for community well being, and explicitly aim to remove land from the market. CLTs are not to be confounded with communal ownership, but rather a diversity of practical models for holding and accessing land founded on the principle of equitable resource allocation and ‘ownership for the common good’ (Swann, 1972).

Farmland trust organizations, are non-profit societies, that employ the principles of CLT’s specifically to the management of working agricultural lands. They are a tool that have become widely used in the United States and are beginning to be implemented in Canada (Gorsuch & Scott, 2010). The American Farmland Trust has been in operation for 35 years and has protected over five million acres of working farm and ranchland in the US since 1980 (24 million acres of farmland has been developed in the US over the same time period) (American Farmland Trust, 2015). In Canada and BC, farmland trusts are less prevalent than the US; however, conservation/nature trusts are growing with more than 30 operating in BC. There are several small farmland trusts operating across Canada including local trusts in BC, a provincial level farmland trust in Ontario, and current initiatives aiming to expand farmland trust work in British Columbia (FarmFolk CityFolk, 2014; Gorsuch & Scott, 2010). Farmland trusts seek to remove farmland from the real estate market, manage land and resources to the benefit of surrounding community, and provide secure access to those working the land. CLTs and farmland trust organizations are practical tools founded on principles that parallel the concepts of a peoples’ enclosure and food sovereignty.

As farmland becomes increasingly economically inaccessible and new farm entrants diminish, alternative farmland tenure and access models and mechanisms are being employed by farmers and supported by farmer organizations. This is evidenced in a growing number of farm organizations advancing these solutions. For example, the University of Vermont’s New Farmer Program provides resources on “alternative land tenure” options for new farmers; Land for Good in New England has a mission to “develop, promote and support diversity and innovation around farmland tenure”; the Community Farms Program in BC supports the development of land cooperatives and community farms in parallel with the CLT principles described above; an
organization in BC called Linking Land and Farmers “provides land access resources for both landowners and land seekers in British Columbia...[and]...provide resources for a range of land tenure models...”; and the Agrarian Trust was launched in 2013 in the US to “support land access for next generation farmers” by developing a model to “hold and transfer land to regional land organizations, and ensure its sustainable and productive stewardship for generations to come”; (Agrarian Trust, n.d.; FarmFolk CityFolk, 2014; Land For Good, 2015; Linking Land and Farmers, n.d.; University of Vermont, 2015). In response to the farmland protection and access challenges stemming from current market driven management of farmland, civil and voluntary society driven initiatives are advancing a diversity of alternative models and mechanisms to hold farmland, protect farmland, access farmland and support next generations of farmers on the land. They exemplify the potential of a divergent trajectory to processes of neoliberal enclosure and farmer attrition characteristic of the corporate food regime.

Chapter 3: Research Purpose and Methodology

3.1 Research Purpose

Beginning farmer networks and alternative farmland access initiatives are a relatively recent phenomenon in British Columbia and are emerging at a time when the number of farms, farmers and particularly young farmers are declining across Canada. Beginning farmer networks and their participants in BC have yet to be characterized and this research aims to contribute to rectifying that knowledge gap as well to contribute to understanding emerging beginning farmer movements in BC within the broader context of global food sovereignty movements. There is also limited research to date on the scope and characteristics of alternative land access initiatives and this research aims to contribute to better understanding and characterizing the array of models and mechanism of alternative land access that are emerging from farmers and civil society organizations in BC.

The agrarian question has taken on renewed relevance and been reformulated in the context of the corporate food regime and food sovereignty movements. However, current formulations of the agrarian question have not been widely applied to the Canadian context and not specifically to British Columbia for understanding ongoing agrarian transformation and farmer mobilization. My thesis employs current formulations of the agrarian question and the concept of
repeasantization to analyze structural changes in BC’s agricultural sector and emerging farmer mobilization. In my analysis of alternative land access initiatives in BC, I draw from the concepts of neoliberal land enclosure, peoples’ enclosure, and community-led land reform. This research contributes to understanding agrarian change and emerging farmer driven mobilization in the context of a developed capitalist economy through the frame of current formulations of the agrarian question. The research also contributes to further understanding food sovereignty as a placed based praxis situated within a global movement through the use of BC as a case study (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014). The trends identified in this thesis with respect to farmer attrition and issues of land access are occurring across and beyond Canada, and the findings from the BC case study contribute more broadly to understanding the processes of structural transformation in agriculture, farmer mobilization, land reform, and the advancement of food sovereignty in a developed nation context.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How are the patterns of farm demographics, land ownership, tenure arrangements, and farm operating arrangements in BC changing and what is the significance of these changes?
2. What are the characteristics of young and beginning farmers and of the farm operations they aspire to establish in BC?
3. To what extent is land access a barrier to the establishment of young and beginning farmers in BC?
4. What are the characteristics of alternative models and mechanisms of farmland access practiced in BC and why are they being employed?
5. How do alternative models of land access and tenure address barriers to land access faced by farmers?
6. Is there a trend towards repeasantization and community-led land reform occurring as part of an emerging food sovereignty movement in British Columbia?

In my thesis I argue that BC’s agricultural sector is continuing to undergo processes of transformation with implications for the future of agricultural production and land tenure. I then
argue that there is an emerging movement of beginning and young farmers in BC, that as an expression of resistance and positing of an alternative agricultural paradigm, share discursive commonalities with the theory of repeasantization and food sovereignty movements. I provide a characterization of a diversity of alternative land access models that are being employed by farmers in BC and discuss the motivations for farmers to engage and the challenges experienced with alternative access models. The analysis of these models suggests that the potential for furthering community-led land reform in BC is inhibited by the high cost of land, tenure insecurity, societal attitudes favouring individual ownership, and high transaction costs. While both beginning farmer movements and alternative land access initiatives present an important departure from the current capitalist neoliberal agricultural trajectory, they are constrained by the structures they are attempting to alter. Consequently, there is a need for an attitudinal and policy shift towards the management of farmland as a public good rather than a market commodity in order to support new farmer establishment, community-based land management, and the continuity of locally oriented agriculture in BC. I conclude with policy recommendations for the BC context.

3.3 Methodology
The research design was based in the extended case method (Burawoy, 1998) and drew from a mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2003). Both the extended case method and mixed methods blend qualitative and quantitative forms of inquiry and methods of data collection in a single study. The extended case study is underpinned by a theoretical framing and a mixed methods approach is underpinned by a pragmatic perspective concerned with solutions and applicability of the research to addressing a problem (Burawoy, 1998; Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2009; Saldana, 2011).

The extended case method “deploys participant observation to locate everyday life in its extra-local and historical context” (Burawoy, 1998, p.4). Participant observation involves the active participation in and study of people, activities, interactions, social processes in the place in which they occur. The extended case study method is characterized by a reflexive model of science premised on the researcher’s participation in the community studied and embraces researcher engagement and dialogue with participants (Burawoy, 1998; Wadham & Warren, 2014).
extended case study method begins with and builds on existing social theory. It locates social processes studied at the micro-level within social and structural forces occurring at the macro-level (Burawoy, 1998).

The province of British Columbia was the case study site. My thesis research was conducted between 2012 – 2014 as part of an ongoing collaborative research project that was initiated in 2008 by the Principal Investigator Dr. Hannah Wittman (Faculty of Land and Food Systems, University of British Columbia). The Farmland Access Research Project is a community-based participatory research project which aims to contribute to understanding and providing solutions for sustainable, community-based farmland management for local food production in British Columbia. The research project is in partnership with the Community Farms Program of the Vancouver based non-profit Farm Folk City Folk. The Community Farm Program “encourage[s] alternative forms of land ownership to ensure our agricultural lands remain in production in perpetuity” (FarmFolk CityFolk, 2014). The community partner has valuable expertise in the research areas and is an essential link for connecting with community stakeholders.

I joined the research team in 2011 and in collaboration with project team members, I conducted a survey, a portion of the interviews, and participant observation that I am reporting on in my thesis. I also analyzed documents, field notes, and a series of interviews conducted by other team members between 2008-2012 with participants in the Community Farms Program. The Community Farms Program coordinator provided feedback on research questions, aided in the recruitment of participants for interviews, and aided in communication of findings to community stakeholders.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Census Data Analysis

The Canadian Socio-economic Information and Management System Database (CANSIM) was used to access Statistics Canada 2011 census of agriculture data. The analysis focused on data relating to number of farms, land tenure, operating arrangements, income, and farm operators. Raw data (aggregated for BC) from the CANSIM database was downloaded, sorted, and assessed for trends over time in Excel using descriptive analysis.
**Young and Beginning Farmer Survey**

An online survey was developed to characterize farmland demand, barriers to establishment, and land access preferences of young and beginning farmers associated with farmer networks in BC. The target population for the survey was prospective, beginning and young farmers. Prospective farmers were defined as people planning to become a farm operator in the next 5 years, and beginner farmers were defined as having less than 10 years farming experience. Young was defined as under 35 years old in accordance with Census age categories.

Groups of potential participants were identified through their affiliation with young/beginning farmer networks and beginning farmer support organizations. Respondents were recruited through listserves and/or social media of these networks and organizations. The survey link was made accessible to all members of the selected networks and individuals then had the choice to participate or not. The survey link was made permanently available on the website of the Young Agrarians and the BC Young Farmers (BCYF) networks. Young Agrarians and BCYF are networks that connect and provide resources to support the establishment of young and beginning farmers across BC and aided in the distribution of the survey link. The survey link was further distributed through other relevant farmer networks, newsletters, social media and in person at events. The survey link was opened 231 times and 94 survey responses were included in the analysis; 59 prospective farmers and 35 beginner farmers in British Columbia.

The survey instrument (Appendix A) was developed for this study. Background research available via documents and websites on organizations and programs to support beginning farmers informed the content of questions on barriers experienced by and resource needs of beginning farmers. Questions, content and formatting was further informed by a beginning farmer survey conducted by the National Young Farmers Coalition in the United States and one conducted by the FarmON Alliance in Ontario (Knibb, 2011; Shute et al., 2011). In addition to review by members of the research team, the Young Agrarians coordinator provided feedback on the survey instrument. Survey questions included: 1) closed questions seeking descriptive information on demographics and production systems, 2) Likert-type scaled rating questions regarding attitudinal information and 3) open ended questions regarding experiences and attitudes. The survey was administered using online survey software over the course of 6 months.
(June 2013 – January 2014). Survey responses were analyzed in Excel. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data and the open-ended questions were analyzed for common themes.

**Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews with farmers engaging in alternative models of land access and expert interviews with representatives of relevant organizations supporting beginning farmer establishment and/or land access were conducted. Interview participants were selected on the basis of their engagement in non-traditional, or alternative land access models, albeit loosely applied to avoid limiting the scope of the models documented. Expert interviews were conducted with representatives of organizations providing services to support the establishment of young and beginning farmers and/or alternative land access models. A list of 55 active, 1 inactive, and 7 in-formation alternative land access farms in BC was compiled by the research team based on field work and online research. We suggest that the number documented is an underestimate as not all farms interact with networks, organizations, or have a web presence. Interview participants were selected from the list with the aim of capturing the diversity of models being practiced and regional representation (Table 1).

Interviews were conducted over two time periods (2008-2009 and 2013-2014) and analyzed as a single set. The first set of interviews was conducted by Hannah Wittman in coordination with Heather Pritchard and the second set was conducted by Jessica Dennis building from the first set of findings, in coordination and with support from the research team. I reviewed the first set of (2008-2009) interview questions conducted to inform the development of the second set and consistency between data collection. The first set specifically targeted community farms. The research team broadened the second set of interviews to include a diversity of alternative access models beyond community farms in order to reflect model diversity observed through ethnographic work.

The interview sample constitutes a total of 25 farms and 7 experts (Table 1). Interviews were approximately one hour in length and employed open-ended questions. Semi-structured interview guides were prepared in advance and questions were formulated around a set of
common themes, but tailored to suit the distinct farm operations and organizations. The interviews with farmers were constructed to gather data on model characteristics, production characteristics, motivation for practicing an alternative arrangement, and challenges working in alternative arrangements. Interviews were all recorded and transcribed and coded for thematic analysis. For interviews conducted with farmers, data was coded based on the pre-established categories of ‘model,’ ‘motivations,’ and ‘challenges.’ Data coded as model was descriptive information used to characterize the models and develop an alternative access typology. Within the motivations category the following themes emerged ‘model purpose,’ ‘new farmer motivations,’ ‘established farmer motivations,’ ‘public benefits.’ Within ‘challenges’ emerged the following themes, ‘tenure issues,’ ‘cost of land,’ ‘human dynamics,’ and ‘attitude towards ownership.’ Additionally ‘romanticization of farming’ and ‘human-scale’ production emerged as themes. Expert interview questions were constructed to obtain data on the motivations for establishment of the organization or program, the mission, success/outcomes, and challenges of the organization or program.

Table 1: Summary of primary data collection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Structured Interviews</td>
<td>12 Farmers</td>
<td>2008 – 2009*</td>
<td>Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Structured Interviews</td>
<td>15 Farmers**</td>
<td>June 2013 – February 2014</td>
<td>Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland, Southern Gulf Islands, Okanagan, East &amp; West Kootenays, Skeena-Bulkley Valley &amp; Fraser Fort George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Survey</td>
<td>59 Prospective farmers</td>
<td>June 2013 – January 2014</td>
<td>Province wide responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>17 events/ workshops/ gatherings</td>
<td>January 2013 – June 2014</td>
<td>Vancouver Island, Okanagan, Lower Mainland, Southern Gulf Islands, East Kootenays</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These 12 interviews were conducted by Dr. Hannah Wittman and community partners. The transcripts were included in my analysis.

**Two of the interviews conducted in 2013/14 were with members of models also interviewed in 2008/09, therefore for farmer interviews n=25.

**Participant Observation**

As a means to complement survey and interview data I attended events, workshops and/or gatherings geared towards young and beginning farmers and/or farmland access to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and needs of young and beginning farmers and the approaches to
land access being devised by farmers and community. I participated in and collected field notes from 17 events across different regions of the province over the course of 2013-14 (Table 1).

Limitations
The survey respondents and interview participants were not selected from a known population and hence are not statistically representative of the total young and beginning farmer population or population of farmers using alternative access methods in BC. There is a self-selection bias resulting from the survey recruitment method. Ethnic identification of survey respondents differed from that of BC’s farming population, as discussed in section 5.2. Survey respondents were predominantly from non-farming backgrounds and hence the findings capture the characteristics of one subset of beginning farmers in BC. It is acknowledged that this group is just one stream of beginning farmers, and that young multi-generational farmers entering agriculture through kinship relations within existing family farms and immigrant farmers to BC are not adequately captured in this study.

Chapter 4: Demographic and Structural Trends in BC Agriculture

4.1 Farm Numbers and Size
The Canadian agriculture sector as a whole has experienced a decline in number of farms and farm operators,\(^2\) a relatively stable total agricultural land base, and an increase in average farm size over time. This is a clear indication of farm consolidation (Statistics Canada, 2012c). The farming population constitutes a small proportion of the total population at 1.5% in BC compared to 2% in Canada in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2012c). BC is unique in that the number of farms and farm operators in the province has been relatively stable over the past 30 years (Statistics Canada, 2012h). BC is also unique in that it has a significantly higher proportion of farms with small land holdings (67% under 70 acres) than Canada as a whole (22% under 70 acres) (Statistics Canada, 2012k). This is due, in part, to BC’s temperate climate and mountainous topography, distinct from other parts of Canada, affecting farm distribution, farm size and crop suitability. It is noteworthy that though BC has had a relatively stable number of

\(^2\) “Refers to those persons responsible for the management decisions made in the operation of the census farm,” and there can be up to three operators per census farm (Statistics Canada, 2012b).
farms over time, BC has a very high proportion of small farms compared to Canada and there may be rural estates and hobby farms captured in the data for numbers of BC farms (Statistics Canada, 2012k). With respect to the distribution of farm size, there has been an increase in small (<70 acres) and large (>1600 acres) and a decline in the mid-sized farms across Canada and in BC (Statistics Canada, 2012k). In BC, as is the case across Canada, the most suitable areas for agriculture (in terms of soil capability and climate) are also those areas most desirable for human settlement and hence the most productive farming regions coincide with population centres in BC (Figure 1). Urban population growth along with associated economic development activities and land use competition exert significant economic pressure on BC’s limited arable land (5% of land base), both in term of its retention, use, and market valuation near urban centres (Campbell, 2006).

![Figure 1](https://example.com/figure1.png)

**Figure 1**: The map of British Columbia on the left shows the distribution of farmland in the Agricultural Land Reserve (reproduced from the Agricultural Land Commission, 2014) and the map on the right shows population distribution in 2006 (reproduced from Statistics Canada, Population Density, British Columbia, 2006). The concentration of BC’s population overlaps with the agricultural land base (Agricultural Land Commission, 2014; Statistics Canada, 2006).

### 4.2 Age of Farm Operators

The average age of farm operators has been increasing and is at a historic high with 54% of the farming population in BC over 55 years of age and the proportion of farmers under the age of 35 has declined to 5.4% (Figure 2) (Statistics Canada, 2012j). In the BC population as a whole, 25.4% of the population is aged 15 to 34 (15 is considered working age) and 29.6% is over 55
years of age (Statistics Canada, 2012e). There are limitations to using census data for understanding farm demographics as it is only inclusive of farm operators and does not capture all people working in agriculture. For instance, based on National Household Survey data from 2011, of the total workers employed on farms, 25% are under the age of 35 in contrast to the 5.4% of farm operators (Statistics Canada, 2011). While census data does not capture all young people in agriculture, there is a clear increase in the number of farm operators over 55 and decrease in farmer operators under 35, indicative of an insufficient number of incoming farm operators to replace outgoing farmers. Statistics Canada concluded, “the trends of fewer operators, fewer young operators and fewer farms showed no signs of reversing and may indicate more consolidation and significant turnover in farm assets in the future” (Beaulieu, 2015, p.9). It is expected that there will be an unprecedented turnover in farm land across North America in the next decades which could have very significant impacts on the structure of farms and the sector (Ruhf, 2013). In BC, with 54% of farmers over 55, it is likely that half of the farming population will retire in the next two decades.

Figure 2: Distribution of farm operators across three age categories and average age of farmers in BC (Statistics Canada, 2012j).
4.3 Land Access

The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial zoning policy established in 1973 that protects farmland by controlling non-agricultural land uses. The total area of agricultural land in the ALR, has not diminished since 1973. Yet, there has been a loss in certain regions through government-approved exclusions (141,328 ha removed between 1974-2010) of farmland to allow for development (Agricultural Land Commission, 2010). The farmland that has been excluded from the ALR is prime agricultural land, concentrated in proximity to urban centres, and is being replaced by lower quality land (with respect to production potential) and reduced market access (Campbell, 2006). Moreover, a significant portion of farmland in the ALR is not currently used for agriculture. Based on the 2011 census data the total area of land farmed in British Columbia equated to 55% of land in the ALR (Agricultural Land Commission, 2014; Statistics Canada, 2012h). The ALR policy has restrictions on land use but does not have any mechanism to ensure that land is used for farming. As a result there is a significant amount of land owned by non-farm operators and used for non-farm purposes. Natural areas account for the largest portion of non-farmed ALR lands, however there are also significant amounts of anthropogenic non-farm uses of ALR land including residential, golf courses and transportation as documented in provincial land use inventories (Province of British Columbia, 2015). In 2014, the government of BC amended the legislation (Bill 24) governing the ALR, dividing the province into two ALR zones with different regulations. Non-farm use restrictions were reduced in Zone 2, which contains 90% of ALR land and already faces contestations over oil, gas, hydroelectric, mineral developments, and most recently afforestation for carbon credits by a foreign manufacturing company. Purchasing land for afforestation has been suggested by several observers as another form of speculative land holding under the pretext of corporate social responsibility (Holtslander, 2015; Hume, 2015).

Non-farm development and speculative holdings of farmland for development contribute to an inflated cost of farmland above its agricultural value. An evaluation of hobby farms/rural residences on ALR land on lower Vancouver Island found that they drive up the cost of farmland in the range of $61,700 to $162,200/ha (Stobbe, Cotteleeer, & van Kooten, 2009). In BC, farmland receives a reduced property tax rate compared to residential rates. The income
generated from farming to meet farm tax status is not very high\(^3\) and can be met by hobby farmers or if farmland is leased and the farmer generates the required income, the property tax benefit is conferred to the land owner. Farm tax status provides a perverse financial incentive for hobby farms/rural residential use of farmland (Stobbe et al., 2009).

Farmland values rose in Canada by 19.5% in 2012 and 22.1% in 2013 (the highest documented annual rise) and 14.3% in 2014 (FCC, 2015). The average cost of cropland in British Columbia nearly doubled between 2005 and 2007 reaching $31,600/acre (7.3 times the national average) and has since experienced smaller fluctuations with a 4.2% increase in 2014 (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2009; Farm Credit Canada, 2015). Land cost in BC is dramatically different across regions with an average value for cropland in the Lower Mainland of $49,500/acre while the average per acre was below $2,000 in central BC (Cariboo-Prince George region) and Northern BC in 2007 (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2009). Farmland values have been reported to reach over $100,000/acre in the Lower Mainland and Southern Vancouver Island, a clear indication of non-farm valuation and unaffordable for farming (CR-FAIR, 2012; Mullinix et al., 2013).

Census data on farmland tenure shows a rising proportion of land that is rented by farmers and a declining proportion of land that is owned by farmers in BC and across Canada (Figure 3) (Statistics Canada, 2012h). The 2011 census report attributes this shift in land tenure to rising land prices, increasingly capital intensive agriculture, increasing numbers of retired farmers remaining on the land, and to non-farmers/investment funds investing in agricultural land (Statistics Canada, 2012c). The rising cost of farmland and non-farm uses of farmland are prohibitive to farmland ownership and farm utilization. Changing patterns of land ownership, from being owned by the producer to being owned by a non-farmer (private, absentee and/or corporate land owners) and rented to farmers, has important implications for the structuring of the agricultural sector and associated control over (and derived benefits from) the means of production.

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\(^3\) Farm Tax Status and associated reduced property tax rates require generation of $10,000 in agricultural sales on land less than 1.98 acres; requires $2,500 in sales on land between 1.98 acres and 10 acres; and parcels larger than 10 acres require sales of $2,500 plus 5% of the actual value of any farm land in excess of 10 acres (BC Assessment, 2015).
Figure 3: Percent of the total area of farmland in British Columbia that is owned and that is rented as reported every 5 years in census data between 1976 and 2011, (Statistics Canada, 2012h).

4.4 Operating arrangements

Canada and BC have seen a decline in the proportion of sole proprietorships and an increase in partnerships and incorporated farms (Table 2) (Statistics Canada, 2012i). The BC Ministry of Agriculture states that, “Most B.C. farms - 98 per cent - are family owned and operated” (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). This statement fails to convey the fact that though family owned farms persist, farm operating arrangements are changing over time. Sole proprietorship is on the decline while partnerships and corporations are rising. Partnerships can be informal or a legal contract and are often between family members (spouses and or parent and child). They offer financial benefits when transferring the farm business and assets. The biggest change in operating arrangements has been in partnerships and this arrangement reflects a continuity of family farm operations and a means for intergenerational transfer (OMAFRA, 2009). Non-family farm corporations still occupy a minimal proportion of farms in BC (2%); however, incorporated family farms have grown to 14.5% of farms in BC. The primary motivation for a farm business to incorporate is the reduced corporate tax rate compared to the personal income tax rate and protection offered through limited liability of shareholders (OMAFRA, 2009). Incorporation of a farm business becomes beneficial when annual net farm income reaches the range of $100,000 – $200,000. Incorporated farm businesses (family and non-family) occupy a majority proportion of high revenue class farms (> $500,000) in Canada (Figure 4) (Statistics Canada, 2012c).
Nationally, rates of farm incorporation correlate with increasing farm size (Magnan, 2012). Large scale, high revenue class farms are rising in Canada and BC and changing operating arrangements correlate with this trend.

Table 2: Distribution of farms across operating arrangements in British Columbia, 1976 to 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Arrangements</th>
<th>Percentage Distribution of Total Farms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sole Proprietorship/Family Farm</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Corporation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-family Corporation*</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*‘Other arrangements’ is defined in the census questionnaire as anything that is not in the provided census categories.

Figure 4: “Operating arrangements by gross farm receipts class, Canada, 2011” reproduced from Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Agriculture Highlights and Analysis – Snapshot of Canadian Agriculture, 2011. Reproduced and distributed on an "as is" basis with the permission of Statistics Canada. (Statistics Canada, 2012c).
Family farms are typically represented in a positive light while corporate agriculture is vilified in alternative food movement discourse. The demise of the family farm and the rise of corporate agriculture is argued to be at the core of the North American agricultural crisis (Ikerd, 2008). The rise of incorporated family farms problematizes this dichotomy of family farming and corporate agriculture and problematizes the use of the category family farm. In an analysis of parallel trends in Saskatchewan (1.2% non-family corporations and 12.1% family corporations), Magnan (2012, p.166) argues that “this trend suggests that one path to corporatization in the prairie farm sector leads through increasingly large and complex family-owned enterprises.”

A dominant feature in the definition of family farms and the theorization of their persistence is the reliance on family labour (Brookfield, 2008; van der Ploeg, 2008; 2013). Yet, according to Statistics Canada, “the proportion of wages paid to family members continued to decrease in comparison with wages paid to non-family members” (Statistics Canada, 2012c). There has been a rise in reliance on temporary foreign agricultural workers across Canada. In 2012, 6,045 temporary foreign workers were hired by farms in BC - a nearly 7 fold increase from the 895 hired in 2005 (ESDC, 2014). Migrant farm workers experience precarious and unjust working conditions in BC and Canada (Weiler, 2014). The growing reliance on Temporary Foreign Migrant Workers in BC and Canada draws from the growing “reserve army of migrant labour” stemming from the dispossession of farmers in the global South (Araghi, 2000) and has been largely absent from conversations regarding the attrition of farmers in BC. Food movements in Canada and the US have been heavily criticized for failing to address the injustices of migrant farmworkers. There is certainly a disconnect between initiatives seeking to address challenges faced by beginning Canadian farmers and the experiences of migrant farmworkers increasingly being relied on by Canadian farmers (Kneen, 2010; Weiler, 2014). Lastly, not included in statistics data is the growth in farm apprenticeships which are providing a source of unpaid labour to farms, particularly small organic farms, many of whom cannot afford to pay wages (Weiler, 2014). Family owned farms persist but with significant changes in their operating labour requirements.
4.5 Farm Revenue and Income

Census data on total net farm income in BC agriculture indicates that while total gross income has risen over time, expenses have also risen, resulting in stagnating and at times negative (2006 – 2011) total net farm income\(^4\) (Statistics Canada, 2012f). Total outstanding farm debt has risen steadily for over two decades in BC and there is a continued prevalence of reliance on off-farm income across revenue classes (52.6% of farm operators in BC) (Statistics Canada, 2012c). The proportion of farms in high revenue classes (over $500,000) is rising in both BC and Canada. In Canada the number of “million dollar” farms rose from 3.2% in 2005 to 4.7% in 2010. This 4.7% of farms represented 49.1% of gross farm receipts for 2010, representing a significant concentration of wealth (Statistics Canada, 2012c). Alongside a concentration of wealth, an increase in large farms tends towards an industrialized, capital intensive, export oriented mode of production. In the lower revenue classes in BC it was found that there was an average negative farm operating income, implying that the farming operation is being subsidized by off farm income (Figure 5) (Statistics Canada, 2012g). When the average net farm income is separated into revenue classes under $100,000 and classes over $100,000, the incomes of higher revenue class farms are on the rise while the income of the lower revenue classes are, on average, negative (Figure 6) (Statistics Canada, 2012g). This is indicative of challenges to the economic viability of small farms in BC. It also suggests a continuing differentiation of farms based on income and a trend towards a bifurcated sector.

\(^4\) Total net income = Cash receipts – expenses (net cash income) + Income in-kind – depreciations (realized net income) +/- value of inventory change. Total net income measures the financial flows and stock changes of farm businesses and is used as indicator of the state of the agricultural industry (AAFC & Statistics Canada, 2000).
Figure 5: Average annual off-farm income and average net operating income of farm operators by revenue class, incorporated and unincorporated sectors, in British Columbia (Statistics Canada, 2012g).

Figure 6: Average annual net operating income of farm operators divided into under $100,000 revenue classes and over $100,000 revenue classes (Statistics Canada, 2012g).

4.6 Provincial Agrifood Policy

The BC government is actively promoting agricultural export expansion, market competitiveness, and technological innovation in the agrifood sector, as reflected in BC’s 2012-2017 Agrifoods Strategy and funding allocation. In the strategy the Ministry of Agriculture
announced the projected growth of the agrifoods sector from 11 to 14 billion dollars by 2017 (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). However less than a quarter of the value of the agrifoods sector is attributed to farming, with the remaining activity in food and beverage processing (Province of British Columbia, 2014). The federal-provincial Growing Forward 2 Agreement covers the period of 2013 – 2018 and provides funding opportunities to the agricultural sector in BC. The two primary programs initiated under this agreement were the Agri-Foods Innovation program for the “commercialization and/or adoption of innovative products, technologies and practices” and the Agri-Foods Export Program “to increase export sales and expand international market access through participation in international market development activities,” (IAF, 2015).

Policies favouring export-oriented agriculture are reflected economically and ecologically in land use changes. For example, the value of crop, livestock, and food manufacturing imports and exports have all steadily increased over the past decade based on yearly trade data (Government of Canada, 2014). The proportion of food imported into BC has increased over time from 3% in 1946 to approximately 50% in 2012 (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012; Ostry, 2010). The value of agricultural exports rose 11% in 2013 reaching 1.8 billion out of 2.8 billion generated in agricultural revenue. Between 2006 and 2011, the greatest changes in agricultural land use were reported in blueberries (+77% increase in acreage), cranberries (+61%), sweet cherries (+30%), grain and oilseeds (+23%), and grapes (+18%) (Statistics Canada, 2012d). These are all crops for which the BC government is actively promoting access to foreign markets (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). High value export crops are replacing diversified production for domestic consumption. An increase in agricultural revenue through export expansion can be considered an economic success and is held to be so by the Canadian government. However, in an analysis of Canadian export data and realized farm income data, Qualman (2011) argues that the value generated through export expansion is being captured along the agrifood supply chain (upstream and downstream) rather than by primary producers.

Alongside the increasing emphasis on exports, an increased consumer demand for local food in BC is recognized in the Agrifoods Strategy, which includes domestic market growth as a priority area. Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC has implemented a Buy Local Program funding stream to promote local market demand for BC agrifoods. The Agrifoods Strategy identifies
“keeping existing farmland in production” as a priority action area (BC Ministry of Agriculture, 2012). However, the recent changes to the ALR (Bill 24) which weaken farmland protection contradict the objective to keep existing farmland in production.

4.7 PROCESSES OF TRANSFORMATION IN BC AGRICULTURE

Processes of enclosure have been essential to capitalist development and the accumulation of wealth and neoliberal enclosures are a continuation of these processes (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). The trends presented above suggest that processes of enclosure continue within the BC agricultural sector. This is witnessed in the shifting tenure relations and increasing restrictions to farmland access driven by loss of farmland to development, the tying up of farmland by residential/recreational uses, land use conversion for export crops, and through speculative land holdings (financialization of farmland). Changes to the structure of property rights has important implications for social and economic relations in agriculture. Coming back to the agrarian question of land, in the words of Akram-Lodhi “who controls it, how it is controlled and the purpose for which it is controlled will determine and reflect the distribution of power, property and privilege” (2007, p.1442).

Changing tenure relations and restrictions to land access in agriculture have implications for the development trajectory of farming. The above trends suggest that trajectory is one of deepening capitalism and the accumulation of wealth through the dispossession of workers from access to and/or control over the productive resource base, which, like the original enclosures, is a means to enable further capital accumulation. Considering farmer attrition and the supposition that large amounts of farmland will transfer hands as aging farmers exit over the next two decades, combined with a rise in corporate land acquisitions, development pressures and emergence of farmland financialization, the agrarian question of who controls the land and to what end becomes very pertinent for the future of agriculture in BC and globally (Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Araghi, 2000; McMichael, 2013).

The trends presented on farm operating arrangements, demographics and labour have implications for the debate over the persistence of family farms (fate of the peasantry) central to the classic agrarian question. The findings from BC show an increase in incorporated family
farms, which reflect Magnan’s findings in Saskatchewan and what he calls “new avenues of
corporatization” in agriculture (Magnan, 2011). Sole proprietor and partnerships representative
of traditional family farm units predominate in BC, though there has been a growth in the
proportion of incorporated farms which dominate high revenue classes. This change coincides
with the trend towards a rise in high revenue class (large scale) farms in BC and Canada. Family
farms are predicated on inter-generational transfer, and considering the age distribution of
farmers in BC it is clear that this is not feasible without growth in new entrants to agriculture.
Reliance on family rather than wage labour is theorized to contribute to the persistence of family
farms, however, the trends in labour point towards an increased reliance on paid labour,
including reliance on poorly regulated migrant labour. Farms operated by families remain
prevalent, however the structure of farms in BC are changing over time in the face of pressures
exerted on family farms by the corporate food regime and Canada’s neo-liberal policy regime.

Another process to note is the differentiation and bifurcation of the agricultural sector. There are
increases in small and large farm sizes with a decrease in the mid-sized farm and increasing
differentiation in terms of income. The income of high revenue class farms is rising and there is a
positive relationship between corporatization and revenue class. On the other hand the income of
the low revenue class farms is on average negative with a high reliance on off-farm income.
Akram-Lodhi (2007) argues that the transformation in land access resulting from neoliberal
enclosures tends towards a reconfiguration of a bifurcated agrarian structure characterized by a
growing export oriented capitalist agricultural sector occurring alongside a subsistence oriented
subsector or in the case of BC, alongside a small-scale direct market subsector. Others have
referred to this structural trend as ‘a disappearing agriculture of the middle’ (Lyson, Stevenson,
& Welsh, 2008).

BC’s agriculture sector is undergoing continued processes of transformation. There are a
declining number of young people entering agriculture and/or rise in young people exiting
agriculture and farmers are being displaced by development, farmland loss, and restricted land
access. There is a growth in commodity production for global export, a decline in the proportion
of farmland owned by farmers, widening income differentiation, increasing debt accumulation,
and policies encouraging commercialization and increased reliance on technology. These are all
examples of processes occurring in BC that tend towards depeasantization and reduced farmer autonomy (van der Ploeg, 2008). In contrast there are growing counter-movements in the form of new farmer initiatives that seek to alter the dominant neoliberal, capitalist trajectory of BC’s agricultural sector through the renewal of local ecological agriculture.

Chapter 5: Young and Beginning Farmer Survey Results and Discussion

“People would love to farm, but the context in which they must do that is prohibitive,” (Interview 18, 2013).

5.1 Narratives of Emerging Young and Beginning Farmer Networks

In both Canada and the United States, the declining number of young farmers and an aging farming population are becoming increasingly recognized as problematic by non-governmental organizations and the agricultural sector. This is reflected in a growth in the number of programs and farmer networks with mandates to support young and beginning farmers across North America. Importantly, many of these emerging networks have a specific mandate to support ecological or sustainable farming practices and independent family farms. The Greenhorns network was formed by young farmers in the US in 2007 and has since grown to a network of over 6000 participants across the US (Greenhorns, n.d.). The Greenhorns self-identify as a “new farmers’ movement” and their mission is “to promote, recruit and support new farmers in America.” The Greenhorns seek to specifically support the growth of sustainable agriculture and a renewal of healthy farm and rural culture in the US (Greenhorns, n.d.). The Greenhorns constitute themselves as a politically motivated social movement that mobilized in response to a food system crisis and farmer attrition. They aim to reshape the current unsustainable, corporate food system through the act of farming. The following excerpt from a Greenhorns publication (Bradbury, 2012, p.8) illustrates these points:

We’ve reached a crisis point. The consensus is almost deafening: The food system must change. And who will make that change? Today’s accepted rural narrative is one of crisis, abandonment, and attrition. For the past 30 years, as farms got bigger and prices spiraled ever downward, young people have been leaving agriculture and rural areas, and the rural culture has suffered tremendously for that loss…We are directly involved in the
reconstitution of a local, resilient, and delicious food system...At each step, we must radically reshape the economy in which we farm, and radically challenge the agronomic status quo.

In Canada a national network called The Canadian Young Farmers Forum (CYFF) started in 2007 with provincial branches across the country. Their purpose is to support young farmers, and state that “young farmers are key to the revitalization and growth of the agriculture sector. As the average age of a farmer is increasing (from 48 to 52 between 1996 and 2006), the sector’s capacity to attract and retain young farmers is important” (CYFF, 2012). BC’s provincial branch, the BC Young Farmers’ (BCYF), currently has more than 250 members. They offer events and workshops to support the success of young farmers. BCYF members are predominantly conventional farmers from multi-generational farms who are already farming and represent a diversity of scales and commodities.

The Young Agrarians is a second provincial network for young and beginning farmers in BC, launched in 2012, whose motto is “growing the next generation of farmers and food lovers” (Young Agrarians, 2013). The network has grown significantly both online and on the ground. Participation in events was estimated to have more than tripled between 2012 – 2014 with event participation reaching just over 2000 people in 2014. Young Agrarians is organized by three regional coordinators in BC and is beginning to expand programming into other parts of Canada. These rising levels of engagement in new farmer networks is indicative of a renewal of interest in farming. Like the Greenhorns, the Young Agrarians identify themselves as a social movement aiming to ‘rebuild’ a broken agricultural system through farming and have a mandate to specifically grow locally oriented ecological agriculture.

The Young Agrarians are the movers and shakers of a new agrarian movement: young agriculturalists, farmers, urban farmers, market and community gardeners, community groups and academics, organizations and the public who want to ecologically rebuild, promote and inspire the agriculture of our country (Young Agrarians, 2013).
BCYF differs from the Young Agrarians and Greenhorns networks in that it does not identify itself as a response to a food system crisis, does not seek to re-orient the current agricultural paradigm in BC, represents conventional and commodity farmers, and does not specify a mandate to specifically support sustainable or ecological agriculture in BC (this is not to imply BCYF members do not practice and/or value sustainable farming practices). BCYF and Young Agrarians both seek to address the issue of declining young farmers in BC, but they are perceived by many participants in this study to represent different groups of young farmers. The Young Agrarians network is largely entrants into agriculture from non-farm backgrounds as compared to BCYF membership which is comprised primarily of young farmers from farming backgrounds. Young Agrarians is also a broader network that brings together current farmers, prospective farmers, and supporters or “food lovers,” whereas BCYF membership is predominantly currently operating young farmers.

The Canada wide National New Farmers Coalition formed in 2014 and directly employs the language of food sovereignty. They state, “Canada’s agricultural policies are failing not just farmers, but the Canadian public as well. We need a new, comprehensive approach to agricultural policy: a move away from market fundamentalism and towards food sovereignty” (Fenton, n.d.). Alongside these networks there has also been an emergence of organizations offering various programs to support beginning farmers. For example, there has been a growth in farm apprenticeships and training programs for beginning farmers in BC (KPU, n.d.; SOIL, 2015; UBC Farm, 2015). New/beginning/young farmer networks have emerged across North America including in BC and Canada in the past decade. They have growing participation, expanding geographic scope, and are employing narratives situating themselves as a response to an agricultural and food system crisis.

5.2 Characterizing Young and Beginning Farmers in BC

Demographics

Eighty percent of survey respondents came from a non-farming background (Figure 7). This finding is consistent with findings from a survey conducted in Ontario and in the US (Figure 8), (Knibb, Learmonth, & Gatt, 2012; Shute et al., 2011). Interview respondents from organizations providing training or apprenticeships noted that their participants were primarily young people
(25-35) from non-farming backgrounds. Following over two decades of young farmer attrition there is an interest in farming emerging from young people from non-farming backgrounds. One participant said, “if we are going to have enough farmers we need to train people that don’t come from farms because otherwise the numbers don’t add up” (Interview 31, 2013).

With respect to education and training, 69% of respondents had completed some form of higher education (not necessarily related to agriculture) and 78% had informal agricultural training and farm labour experience (Table 3). Farmer-to-farmer mentoring was indicated the most valued form of training for prospective and beginning farmers. Similarly, a survey in Ontario found that practical workshops, field days and farmer mentoring were the preferred means of learning for farmers (Knibb et al., 2012). In comparison to the other barriers that farmers face, a lack of knowledge or insufficient training was not considered a significant barrier to establishing a farm operation in the BC, however farmer-to-farmer mentoring was considered an extremely or highly valuable resource by 69% and 72% of prospective and beginner farmers respectively. In comparison, university or college agricultural programs were considered an extremely or highly valuable resource by only 19% and 6% of prospective and beginner farmers respectively.
It is interesting to note that knowledge was not considered a barrier to farm establishment but that farmer-to-farmer mentoring was highly valued. This could signify that 1) mentoring and learning opportunities are accessible to farmers in BC and hence this is less of a barrier in relation to other experienced barriers, 2) beginning farmers may think they have a greater understanding and/or have misconception about the level of knowledge and training required to operate a successful farm operation.

Table 3: Type of agricultural education and experience of prospective and beginning farmer survey respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>College or University Degree in an Agricultural Field</th>
<th>Completed Apprenticeship Program</th>
<th>Informal/ Volunteer Farm Experience</th>
<th>Farm Employment Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospective Farmers</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginner Farmers</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People entering agriculture from non-farming backgrounds have particular challenges with land access and agricultural training. Unlike those who enter agriculture through a farm family, these new farm entrants do not gain the hands-on training and skills from being raised on a farm, and instead seek it through volunteering, apprenticing, and/or employment. Entrants from non-farming backgrounds also have the added challenge of not taking over/inheriting the family farm business and land, though may inherit family capital or land that contributes to enabling farm start-up. This corresponds with the fact that cost of land and access to capital were found to be the most significant barriers to establishment in this survey dominated by entrants to agriculture from non-farm backgrounds.

Entrants to the agricultural sector can be broadly situated in three groups – new entrants from non-farming backgrounds, next generation of farm families, and immigrants to Canada – all of which have unique trajectories and challenges. The following survey findings are most representative of one sub-section of beginning and young farmers, the new entrants from non-farming backgrounds. The survey findings along with the interview findings and observations of

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5 Temporary Foreign Agricultural Workers are not in this list as they are not currently provided a pathway to citizenship or the ability to become a farm owner/operators in Canada (Weiler, 2014).
participants attending Young Agrarian events suggest that there is a wave of university educated individuals from non-farming backgrounds, often from urban areas, interested in small-scale ecological farming and contributing to food system change through entering agriculture. This is in contrast to the attrition of young farmers in BC and Canada that has been occurring for over two decades and in contrast to the national decline of farms and farmers overall that has been occurring since the mid-1900s. This phenomenon, if it continues, challenges the trajectory of farm decline in an advanced capitalist economy.

In BC, immigrants constitute 19.8% of the farm population (Statistics Canada, 2012a). The ethnic diversity of participants in this study was not reflective of BC’s farming population. Survey respondents self-identified as 63% White/Caucasian, 21% Canadian, 6% European descents, and 10% as a minority group in Canada. Through interviews and participant observation of young and beginning farmer events and alternative land access events, it was further noted that there was a predominance of white participants. My interactions with BCYF were limited in comparison to Young Agrarian events, though it was noted that the BCYF had a higher proportion of people of colour represented at their annual members event. The potential difference in demographics of participation in BCYF and the more ‘alternative’ initiatives in BC warrants further exploration. The whiteness of alternative food initiatives has been previously documented and problematized in North America (Alkon & McCullen, 2010). Similarly, emerging alternative new farmer movements and initiatives in BC appear to be disproportionately white and neglecting an opportunity to engage an important portion of the agricultural sector in BC.

**Land and Production**

There is a higher demand for farmland in the areas of the province where there is the most competition for land and highest land prices (Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland, Okanagan) (Figures 9, 10, 11). These are also the areas with high populations, high quality soil and climate suitability, market access and generate the highest proportion of farm revenue despite having a minority of the agricultural land base (BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, 2008). On the other hand, there are fewer young people and lower levels of interest in relocating to more remote regions where land is more available and affordable. While land access and cost of land
is less of a barrier in the northern regions of BC, other challenges become more significant such as climate, availability of market channels, low populations, depressed economies, and lack of support networks.

Figure 9: Region in which prospective farmers were seeking land. Prospective farmers could select more than one region. (Image of map retrieved and modified from Province of British Columbia, 2015, www.livesmartbc.ca/community/citizens.html).

Figure 10: Region in which current beginning farmers are farming. (Image of map retrieved and modified from Province of British Columbia, 2015, www.livesmartbc.ca/community/citizens.html).

Figure 11: Distribution of agricultural land, in hectares, in BC’s Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) across the regions of the province for the purpose of comparing demand for land to availability of land (Data Source: BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, 2008).
Small-scale, diversified, ecological production models were favoured amongst a majority of respondents. Seventy-six percent of beginning and young farmer respondents are farming less than 20 acres and 84% of prospective farmer respondents are seeking less than 20 acres of land. However, 89% of current farmer respondents indicated they would like to expand their land base. Diversified production systems were predominant amongst respondents. Seventy-four percent of the current farmers and 100% of prospective farmers indicated, by virtue of selecting multiple production categories, the intent to engage in diversified farming operations. Seventy-eight percent of farmer respondents and 94% of prospective respondents indicated that they do/plan to either generate revenue through non-farming activities on the land or with a second off-farm income. Environmental stewardship was highly valued with 99% of all respondents indicating that it is very important or important on a 5-point scale. Organic practices were indicated to be important but the practice of becoming certified organic by an accredited body less so; 86% of beginning and young farmers strive to follow organic practices, but only 14% are certified organic. Similarly, 98% of prospective farmers indicated that they plan to follow organic practices but only 41% plan to certify. Other production systems cited by participants included permaculture, biodynamics, and agroecology.

A theme that emerged with respect to production practices was that of “human scale” farming. One farmer described their operation as “human intensive farming” (Interview 32, 2013). An organization providing training to beginning farmers described their program as geared towards “non-capital intensive, human-scale, environmentally sound” farming practices (Interview 31, 2013). Similarly, the Richmond Farm School states that they promote “human-scale systems that provide sustainability to local farms” (KPU, 2015), and with respect to a community farming initiative a participant said, “there is a human scale to that level of agriculture, a human intensity” (Interview 25, 2013). Human-scale agricultural production and conventional industrial production have been characterized as competing paradigms (Condon et al., 2010). Human scale low-capital agriculture stands in contrast to an industrial scale, capital-intensive agricultural paradigm. It is also an approach to establishment that circumvents the need for high levels of capital and/or credit, which was identified by survey respondents as a barrier to establishment.
Motivations

Lifestyle, contributing to social change, and contributing to the production of good quality/healthy food were the most often cited reasons by survey respondents for choosing to farm. Business opportunity was the least cited reason (Figure 12). This suggests that the drivers for people choosing to enter into farming are based in personal and social values rather than economic. This finding shares commonalities with the narratives of organizations such as the Greenhorns and Young Agrarians that emphasize the social and personal values associated with farming over the business opportunities to be realized through a career in agriculture.

![Motivations expressed by survey respondents for choosing to farm. Theme categories were identified from open-ended responses and the number of people who expressed the theme as a motivator is shown on the x-axis. Many expressed more than one motivation, (n = 79).](image)

5.3 Beginning Farmer Barriers To Establishment

Cost of land, access to capital (which is tied to cost of land) and the lack of currently available farmland were the three most significant barriers for this group of prospective, young and beginning farmers (Table 4). Cost of land and access to capital were the only two barriers that a majority of respondents indicated to be extremely or highly significant. My findings are congruent with that of the National Young Farmers Coalition’s survey of over 1000 young and beginning ecological farmers in the US (Shute et al., 2011). The impact of speculation, rising cost of farmland, and non-farm uses of farmland on young and beginning farmers in BC is evident; new farm entrants face systemic barriers to entry particularly with respect to land access.
Table 4: Most significant barriers to farm establishment for beginning farmers in BC.

Respondents were asked to rate the significance of barriers to establishment based on their experiences on a 7-point labeled scale. The barriers are listed in order of most to least significant and the percentage in brackets denotes the number of respondents who considered the barrier as ‘extremely’ or ‘highly’ significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prospective Farmers (n=51)</th>
<th>Current Young/Beginning Farmers (n=34)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cost of land (78%)</td>
<td>1. Cost of land (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lack of capital (65%)</td>
<td>2. Lack of capital (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of farmland that is currently available (45%)</td>
<td>3. Lack of farmland that is currently available (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lack of the appropriate type of farmland available (45%)</td>
<td>4. Access to credit (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Access to credit (44%)</td>
<td>5. Low profitability in the agricultural sector (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Negotiation of favourable land access agreement (28%)</td>
<td>6. Lack of the appropriate type of farmland (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Prohibitive zoning/government regulations (27%)</td>
<td>7. Lack of farmland in your region (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Low profitability in the agricultural sector (24%)</td>
<td>8. Negotiation of favourable land access agreement (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Lack of farmland in your region (20%)</td>
<td>9. Prohibitive zoning/government regulations (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Lack of markets/distribution channels (20%)</td>
<td>10. Lack of community or social support (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Lack of community or social support (14%)</td>
<td>11. Lack of knowledge or insufficient training (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Lack of training/resources for beginning farmers (10%)</td>
<td>12. Lack of markets/distribution channels (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Lack of knowledge or insufficient training (6%)</td>
<td>13. Lack of training/resources for beginning farmers (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interview and participant observation indicated that the severity of land access as a barrier is experienced differently in more rural areas. A representative from a farmer organization in North-Central BC expressed that land is available and affordable ($800-$1000/acre) and land access was not the primary barrier. Similarly, in the East Kootenay region participants indicated that there is land available and the bigger barrier is the lack of people to farm the land and the lack of infrastructure and cultural capital to attract young people to the region. A participant in North-Central BC said, “We have the land but all of the other pieces are missing,” and “there is a lot of conversations about how we need to create more jobs but the reality is that we need to create more people” (Interview 15, 2013). An East Kootenay’s participant said, “…we need stronger rural farming culture and we need to build that, and part of that is needing young people to see that small town living is attractive and viable. I think that sometimes these questions of land access come from people who won’t move to where it is easier” (Interview 31, 2013).

Among the study participants, most want to farm where land is limited and expensive. At the same time, the regions where land is available and at a lower cost are experiencing population decline, particularly of young people, and economic depression. Land access is a highly significant barrier to new farm entrants (as well as existing farmers) however it is important to
recognize regional variability, in particular the challenges of rural economic and population decline.

Lack of farmland currently available was indicated to be a more significant barrier than lack of farmland present in the respondent’s region (Table 4). This is congruent with the issue of non-farm uses and speculative holdings of farmland that reduce availability to farmers. In all regions where interviews were conducted non-farm uses of ALR were expressed to be a problem. Low profitability in the agricultural sector and access to market channels received low scores. The low score for access to market channels reflects the regional distribution of respondents (Figures 9,10). Profitability of small-scale agriculture is a challenge in BC (see Ch. 4) yet was expressed to be extremely or highly significant by only 24% and 33% of prospective and beginning farmers respectively. The survey question focused on barriers to establishment and the respondents are at beginning stages of their career which may explain the lower significance attributed to profitability in this study.

5.4 ROMANTICIZATION OF FARMING

The growth in new farmer networks indicates a resurgence of interest in farming, but as one interview participant asked “there is growing interest, but is there follow through?” (Interview 24, 2013). The issue of the romanticization of farming and whether the interest translates into an on the ground resurgence of farming/increase in young farmers emerged as a theme illustrated by the following quotes:

…there are so many people just in love with the concept of growing their own food and living in the bush but they don’t have a clue what it is…There is a big gap between the dream and the reality and the ability to bridge that gap is huge (Interview 17, 2013).

There is a lot of interest [in internships] – people say they want to do it – but when it comes to uptake there is not a lot (Interview 15, 2013).

There are people who want to farm, and people who think they want to farm and there is the reality of what that lifestyle actually looks like (Interview 19, 2013).
The BC Ministry of Agriculture states that within 5 years of starting 70% of small farm businesses have either closed or changed dramatically and only 30% of new farming operations are successful past 5 years. Farming is a high risk business with low returns for small farms (Robbins, 2013). Support programs and services for beginning farmers addressing the barriers to establishment are key to the translation of interest into successful farming operations. Many of the networks, programs and initiatives included in this study were relatively recently formed and evaluation of program outcomes and whether interest in farming is translating into lasting farm operations is needed.

5.5 Farmer Renewal in BC

In BC new young and beginning farmer networks and programs have emerged with growing participation. Renewed interest in farming and entry into agriculture from non-farming populations shares commonalities with van der Ploeg’s theory of repeasantization and with McMichael’s agrarian question concerning the “reappearance of a ‘new peasantry’ with the potential to farm sustainably” (McMichael, 2013; van der Ploeg, 2008). Repeasantization stands in contrast to the predicted elimination and/or subsuming of the peasantry/family farmers into capitalist agriculture or urban labour. van der Ploeg’s main thesis is that there is an unprecedented agrarian crisis and that it is “only through the widespread and possibly renewed repeasantization that this international and multidimensional crisis might be redressed and averted” (2008, p.11). This thesis is directly reflected in the narratives employed by emerging farmer movements in North America including the Young Agrarian network in BC.

Repeasantization also specifically refers to a mode of production, and there are analogies between the survey findings characterizing beginning farmers and the framing of networks and programs in BC and van der Ploeg’s theory of repeasantization (van der Ploeg, 2008; 2013). These include the valuation of ecological production, diversification and pluri-activity, farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange, human-scale production methods, seeking alternatives to capital and credit intensive start up to avoid debt dependency, accessing alternative direct marketing channels, and rural renewal (van der Ploeg, 2008; 2013). These principles were reflected both in survey responses and the narratives of new farmer networks. For example, a majority of survey respondents identified engagement with diversified production and pluri-activity; respondents
highly valued stewardship practices and employed ecologically oriented production practices; and farmer-to-farmer mentoring was highly valued resource and the preferred means of gaining knowledge and training. In a study on the discourse of rural social movements, Rosset and Martinez-Torres (2012) argue that the interest, practice and discourse of agroecology are a means to build autonomy and contest the reconfiguration of agricultural relations of production in the context of land grabbing and corporatization. Similarly, new farmer networks construct their actions as contesting and striving to reconfigure the dominant, failed, corporate food regime through ecological farming practices.

While there is a convergence in the discourses of peasant movements and food sovereignty in the global South and emerging farmer movements in BC and the North, there is also important divergence. The majority of survey respondents in BC were White, university educated, with an ability to take on unpaid volunteer/apprenticeships which may be construed as characteristic of a particular level of privilege. The entry of non-farmers into agriculture in BC is being made as an individual choice, whereas rural peasant movements in the global South emerged in response to dispossession, which was in many instances violent, and in defense of livelihoods, rather than a choice to farm. The most frequently cited motivation of survey respondents for choosing to farm was for the lifestyle, which has very different connotations than peasants and farmers mobilizing to defend basic human rights and their livelihood.

Lifestyle was the most frequently cited motivation, though in many cases overlapped with other motivations. The second and third most cited motivations were to contribute to social change and sustainable food production. These goals do reflect a political and social justice outlook in line with food sovereignty movements. While farming as a lifestyle may entail a level of privilege, it is also an outlook that places value on the act of small-scale ecological farming, which diverges from farming as a corporate endeavor based on profits that devalues the labour and creates increasing distance between people and nature through scale and mechanization. The romanticization of farming by new entrants risks reproducing streams of agrarianism that advance a largely uncritical (colonial, gendered, classist, heteronormative) philosophy of the noble farmer and inherent moral valuation of farming. Agrarianism is particularly evident in the narratives of the Greenhorns movement who refer back to nationalistic Jeffersonian ideals of the
independent American farmer, with statements such as “farming is an expression of patriotism and hope” (Bradbury, 2012, p.10; von Tscharner Fleming, 2013). This romanticization overshadows the colonial history of farming in North America, the challenging reality faced by many farm operators, and the precarious and unjust labour conditions of migrant farm workers whose experience working in Canada is one of constrained basic freedoms (Weiler, 2014). Emerging farmer movements and alternative food initiatives aiming to raise the profile of farmers and the value of farm work in BC is occurring alongside a rise in immigrant and migrant farm workers whose labour is deeply de-valued. Uncritical romanticization of farming and narratives of noble family farmers in food movements risks rendering invisible the racialized and unjust labour conditions upon which the Canadian farm sector increasingly relies.

Food sovereignty is a global movement with diverse local expressions. It is important to both understand how food sovereignty is expressed in a particular place as well as how resistance and struggles across difference and place interact with and shape each other (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014). The emergence of new farmers in BC is an expression of resistance and a positing of an alternative agricultural paradigm that shares discursive commonalities with global peasant and food sovereignty movements. Food sovereignty movements in Canada have been characterized as a convergence of actors and initiatives across the food system and as a framework that problematizes both production and consumption (Kneen, 2010). Emerging young and beginning farmer movements are one part in this broad convergence with a self-imposed mandate to rebuild a sustainable food system through supporting and growing new, localized, ecological farmers.

Chapter 6: Alternative Land Access Models Results and Discussion

_There is so much value on farms and the destruction of the community farm by factory farms is tragic. We need to make alternative solutions to these problems and here it is – it is in front of us – but we have to show people how to do it, how do get more people involved._ (Interview 29, 2013)

_New rural and urban initiatives for farmland access, farm protection and sustainable, equitable food systems are springing up across the US. They provide hope that another food system is_
possible. But do they have the potential to confront the modern agrarian transition? (Holt-Giménez, 2014)

6.1 Community Farms and Alternative Land Access in BC

The Community Farms Program (CFP) emerged from a collaboration between The Land Conservancy of BC (TLC) and Farm Folk City Folk (FFCF). TLC is a provincial land trust organization established in 1997 with a mandate to conserve natural areas. FFCF is a non-profit organization with the purpose of supporting local, sustainable food systems in BC. In 2006 TLC expanded its mandate to include the preservation of working farmland. The development and implementation of TLC’s farmland program was a collaborative effort with FFCF and led to the development of the Community Farms Program. TLC’s agricultural program involved the direct acquisition of farmland and management of long-term leases with farmers, as well as the development of resources for farmland trust work in the province. As a result of financial struggles and organizational restructuring, in 2012 TLC discontinued their farmland acquisition program. The CFP and associated network of community farms continues to operate as a program of FFCF. A community farm is defined by the CFP as:

A multi-functional farm where the land is held ‘in trust’ for community rather than owned privately. A community group or co-operative governs the land use agreements, and agricultural uses of the land are shared by a community of farmers. The primary focus of a community farm is local food production using sustainable agricultural practices (FFCF, 2014).

The goals of the CFP are to 1) support the advancement of models of “shared farming on shared land” and alternative land ownership, 2) to contribute to the protection of working agricultural and food-producing lands, 3) to support farmland access for new farmers, and 4) to advance sustainable, community-led and socially embedded models of farmland ownership, access, governance and production in BC. The CFP does this through the development and provision of resources, through staff consultations with farmers, through the creation of farmer-to-farmer
support opportunities, and through hosting an annual roundtable for community farmers (FFCF, 2014)

Alternative land access is more broadly defined as land access mechanisms that are distinct from a traditional individual/family owner-operator model or independently negotiated lease between private landowner and individual/owner operator. While not all of the arrangements analyzed here involve community or cooperatives on the land itself, they all involve people coming together and the constitution of land, farming and food as a common good, which is a key principle of community farms, community-led land reform and food sovereignty. For instance, models in which land owners provide land without a fee to farmers or in which a municipality devotes public land to farming involves community or public support for the purpose of contributing to local food production and acts to bring farming and food into the public sphere. Hence while the term “community farm” is used in a specific way as defined by the CFP, alternative land access broadly encompass a variety of models (including community farms) involving community collaboration to achieve local food production.

6.2 Characterization of Alternative Land Access Models

Quantity, Regional Distribution and Date of Formation

As of 2015, the research team documented and determined the geographic location of 55 active farms and/or land-based communities with a farming component using an alternative land access model in BC (Figure 13). Their dates of formation are from 1972 to 2014, with an increased growth between 2000-2014 (Figure 14). In addition to the 55 active farms, seven examples of operations in the process of formation, and one farm that was initiated but did not succeed was documented. Of the 12 farms characterized in 2008-09, 11 remain in operation presently. One failed and was sold by TLC to a private land owner. The occurrence of models are concentrated in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island-Coast regions, both of which characterized by high capability farmland, growing urban populations, development pressures, and extremely high

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6 This action is atypical and contrary to the mandates of trusts and is a result of financial difficulties incurred by TLC. In their words, “After exploring every option available under existing conditions to achieve our larger organizational goals, on October 7, 2013, TLC filed for protection under the Companies Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) to definitively resolve the organization’s long-standing financial problems.” TLC sought and received court approval to sell selected properties, one of which was a farm property. The large majority of properties remained protected by TLC and/or have been transferred to a partner conservation organization (TLC, 2015).
farmland values (over $100,000/acre) (CR-FAIR, 2012; Mullinix et al., 2013).

Figure 13: Regional distribution of the 55 alternative farmland access models documented. (Image of map retrieved and modified from Province of British Columbia, 2015, www.livesmartbc.ca/community/citizens.html)

Figure 14: Number of active alternative land access farms over time. The points are the cumulative number of active examples documented, illustrating a period of increased growth between 2000 - 2014.
Typology of Alternative Land Access Models

The typology scheme developed by the research team for this study characterizes the models based on four key components. In practice, these four components are combined in different ways, and are reflected in the diversity of models practiced in BC (Table 5). For instance, in one case the land was owned by a land trust organization, accessed by a single farmer through a long-term lease, and operated as an individual farm business. In another case the land was owned by a cooperative of farmers and community members (multi-stakeholder cooperative), accessed through a lease by a farm workers co-operative, and farmed as a cooperative business. A workers cooperative is a cooperative in which the members who own and democratically control the business are the workers, in this case the farmers. A third case was that of land owned by a municipality and leased to and managed by a non-profit society as an incubator model providing short-term leases to beginning farmers. In a final example, land was privately owned, it was accessed and managed by an informal workers cooperative of which the owner participated. A formal cooperative is one that is legally incorporated under the BC Co-operative Association Act. Informal co-operative refers to a group of people running their farm using a co-operative structure and principles but without having incorporated. In the last case the owner privately owns land but made that land accessible to others through managing the farm as a workers cooperative. Cooperatives are owned and democratically operated by their members and each member has equal decision making power regardless of level of financial investment. Co-ops differ from other businesses in that their purpose is to meet the needs of members rather than produce profit for shareholders and they are governed by one member-one vote principle. Co-ops are designed to provide services that meet the needs of, and are controlled by, members and communities (BC Co-operative Association, 2011).
### Table 5: Typology of alternative farmland access models in BC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Model Components</th>
<th>Mechanisms Documented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Land ownership:** the entity that acquires and holds land (covenants may be placed on land).* | - Land trust  
- Public land (municipal or provincial government owned land)  
- Land cooperative  
- Non-profit society (other than a land trust)  
- Individual/Private |
| **Land access:** the means by which the land is made available for use. | - Ownership  
- Short-term lease  
- Long-term lease  
- Informal/memorandum of understanding (MOU)  
- Cropshare  
- Hired operator  
- Program participants (e.g. apprentices, practicum students, community volunteers, incubator farm participants, etc.) |
| **Operating arrangements/management:** the entity or structure through which land based activities are organized and managed. | - Formal co-operative  
- Informal co-operative  
- Non-profit society  
- University institution  
- Individual enterprise  
- Multiple independent farm enterprises on shared land |
| **Primary purpose:** the dominant objective achieved through implementation of alternative land access model. | - Commercial farm operation  
- Social and community services  
- Intentional community |

*Land owners may place a covenant on the land. Covenants are legally binding agreements attached to and passed with the land title that restrict or require a certain land use. They can be held by societies or government in BC and can be placed on private land, public land, land held by a non-profit society or trust organization.

### Land Ownership

The way in which farmland is held and made accessible for farming, referred to as land tenure, is fundamental to understanding how and to what extent these models contribute solutions to farmland access challenges as well as their potential for advancing community-led land reform and food sovereignty. The means of and motive for land acquisition and the means through which it is held is of key importance to implementing any type of land access model. An important aspect of alternative land access is that it provides a means for farmland to be accessed without ownership, however the initial implementation requires a mechanism through which the land can be acquired, held and made accessible. There are five ways in which the land was held:

1. **Cooperative land ownership (7 cases documented):** Land is cooperatively owned by a group of farmers or cooperatively owned by farmers and non-farming community members. In our sample there were cases in which land was individually acquired and then transferred to a cooperative structure and there were cases in which land acquisition was achieved
through the formation of a cooperative which sold shares to farming and non-farming community to raise funds to purchase the land. In the cases of cooperative land ownership, the farm operation was either operated as a farmworkers cooperative or as multiple independent farm businesses working on the shared land. Cooperative land acquisition reduces the cost of land to the individual and cooperative operating arrangements allow for the sharing of capital costs, knowledge, marketing, and support networks for farmers.

2. **Land Trusts (7 cases documented):** A land trust is a not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to protect land for a particular value and/or to prevent undesirable land use changes. Farmland trusts have a mandate to protect and manage agricultural lands for the purpose of maintaining an actively farmed agricultural land base. Land protection is achieved either through land ownership (acquisition or donation) by the trust and/or through a covenant held by the trust and attached to the land title. Land owned by a land trust is removed from the real estate market and is thereby no longer subject to development pressures and speculation. Farmland held in trust is made available to farmer(s) through long-term secure lease agreements (Gorsuch and Scott, 2010).

A covenant is a legally binding agreement that is attached to and transfers with the land title of privately owned land, that typically restricts undesirable activities to protect a particular value. Covenants are widely used to protect farmland in the United States and are beginning to be used in other parts of Canada (e.g. Ontario Farmland Trust) to protect farmland from development and reduce speculation (Gorsuch and Scott, 2010). British Columbia is unique in that it has a provincial agricultural zoning policy, the ALR, that like a covenant, already restricts certain activities on the land. A restrictive covenant may be redundant in the BC context and faces regulatory limitations in that they need to be approved by the provincial Agricultural Land Commission if on ALR land. Affirmative agricultural covenants, which would require that farmland be used for farming, are possible but not widely used. The Land Conservancy of BC operated a farm program between 2006-2012. There are currently four small localized trust organizations specific to farmland in BC. Our sample included 7 cases of farms operating on land owned by a land trust. In our sample, there was one documented case of a covenant on the land protecting natural and agricultural uses, and two cases seeking
to establish a covenant. There are examples of covenants being used on farmland, particularly ranchland, to protect the ecological value, but covenants are not currently a mechanism actively advanced in BC to protect the farming value of farmland.

3. **Society Ownership (7 cases documented):** Farmland is owned by a non-profit society other than a farmland trust organization. In these cases the non-profit society purchases the land and manages the agricultural and land based activities to fulfill a social, educational, or community development mandate. While commercial farming is not the primary purpose of these operations, they are production farms, operating on agricultural lands and contributing food to both program participants and surrounding community.

4. **Public Land (9 cases documented):** Land held by municipal or provincial government is made available for agriculture. Municipalities can own, purchase and/or accept gifts of land, and as such have the potential to act as a land bank similar to a non-profit trust. Land is accessed by a lease or license agreement between the government and farmer(s) or is leased to a non-profit society which either manages the land itself or sub-leases to farmers. The provincial and municipal governments in BC own significant farmland and there are many examples of a direct lease or license between government and independent farm business which are not captured in this data set. In particular significant amounts of provincial Crown land are used for grazing by ranchers. Our data set focused on those examples in which there was an integrative or community farming aspect to the operation.

5. **Private Ownership (25 cases documented):**
   I. Several community and cooperative farms operated on land that is privately owned by an individual owner. These included both cases where the owner was part of the cooperative and cases were the landowner was not involved and was making land available via a lease or handshake agreement. In these cases, the land is privately held but managed as a community or cooperative farm, *(10 cases documented).*
   II. Cases of privately owned lands made available to individual farmer(s) through handshake agreements or memorandums of understanding, typically unpaid or in exchange for produce. This is increasingly common in urban and peri-urban areas between
residential/rural-residential landowners and farmers. This model consists of multiple private landowners collectively contributing land access (without monetary compensation) to a farm business to support local farming and food in their communities, (11 cases documented).

III. Individual acquisition of land through private ownership but with the intention of transferring that land to a form of cooperative ownership, (4 cases documented).

Production and Marketing
The area of farms studied ranged from approximately one acre for urban land sharing cases to the largest being over 400 acres with about 100 acres in production. All of the 25 farms studied expressed the importance of land stewardship and ecological sustainability. Aside from the small urban farm models using residential lands, all other farms studied had land maintained as natural areas for wildlife and conservation purposes. All of the farmers interviewed expressed the importance of using ecologically sound farming methods. All of the farms studied had highly diversified enterprises with varying combinations of mixed field crops, fruit trees, greenhouses, livestock, grains, and/or hay. Fifteen of the 25 farms studied generated revenue from value added products and/or through activities on the land (e.g. summer camps for children, workshops, music festivals). All of the farms studied marketed their products locally; directly through farm markets, farm gate sales, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, or indirectly through restaurants or retailers. There was a mix of farms that relied on hired seasonal labourers and those with no paid labour.

All of the farms studied utilized some level of unpaid labour from informal volunteer sessions to structured apprenticeships. The theorization of the resilience of family farms is in part tied to a reliance on the non-wage labour of family members. Similarly, community farms are relying on non-wage labour relations derived from the wider community rather than family members. While a reliance on unpaid volunteer or apprentice labour could be interpreted as a lack of economic viability of these farms, it can alternatively be interpreted as a relationship and exchange that has value outside of the structure of capitalist wage relations.
Primary Purpose

While all of the cases documented involved access to and management of farmland, commercial farming was not the primary purpose in all cases. Three overarching primary purposes (though not exclusive) were identified (Figure 15).

![Figure 15: Distribution of the 55 alternative models documented across the three categories of primary purpose.](image)

The social and community services category encompasses operations in which agriculture and farmland access are used as a means to achieve a social or community mandate. These include therapeutic communities which provide meaningful work for people with disabilities, land based training, skills development and job readiness programs, agricultural and sustainability education, and land based community engagement programs. As an example, one of the documented cases had a primary mandate of land based training and skills development for First Nations communities. In this model farmland was purchased by a non-profit society with a community economic development mandate, it is managed by the society and accessed by program participants from the community. It is an active production farm; however, the key goals are health, empowerment through reconnection with the land, skills development, and community control over food provisioning (farming, gathering, processing) rather than commercial agriculture. Two therapeutic farming communities documented involved farmland owned and managed by a non-profit society. In these cases, farming activities and the creation of value-added products provide meaningful work to participants with mental or physical disabilities.
The intentional community category includes cases in which forming a land-based community was the main motivation for implementing an alternative land access model. Farming is one of diverse activities practiced on the land to support the community. One participant said of their community, “It’s basically a philosophy of life and how to live, and then all the farming and interests we have or like to do, and that we would like to derive our sustenance from here, comes as a result of that” (Interview 14, 2013). Five intentional community cases were studied and of those five, two were largely inward focused with low public connection and the other three strived to integrate with surrounding community through creating volunteer opportunities, workshops, and hosting events on the land. The cases in which social services or intentional community were the primary purpose, utilized agricultural production as a mechanism through which to deliver social activities and/or create community on the land. Many of these cases also sold agricultural products commercially to surrounding community to generate revenue.

The primary purpose of 58% of the cases was commercial agricultural production (Figure 15). In these cases operating a commercial farm enterprise to generate all or a portion of the farmer(s)’s livelihood is the primary purpose. However, these cases diverge from the production paradigm in that production is integrated with a diversity of social and ecological values beyond income generation.

6.3 Farmers’ Motivations for Practicing Alternative Land Access

Land Access for New Entrants

In the case of new farm entrants the high cost of land and cost of start-up were primary motivations for accessing land through an alternative arrangement. Some beginning farmer participants stated that buying land was “never even a consideration” and other participants had actively looked for and considered purchasing land but found themselves unable to do so as a result of financial constraints. The generally lower start-up costs associated with joining an established cooperative farming model or using small plot/land sharing models was also highlighted as a motivation by beginning farmers. Shared farming models allow for shared equipment and infrastructure and the small plot/land sharing models documented are designed to be low capital-input operations. They are labour intensive, ‘human-scale,’ rather than capital intensive.
In one case studied, a farmer began their operation through joining a land cooperative and then leasing land from the co-op. In this case joining the land cooperative involved a one-time investment of a $5,000 share. The farmer subsequently pays a rental fee of approximately $6,200/year for a 15 acre section of the land, housing on the land, electricity, water, and access to outbuildings. This case is located in the Fraser Valley region of BC, where farmland is very expensive and in 2014 farmland sales ranged from $41,000 – $63,000/acre of bare farmland (REMAX, 2014). In another case, a beginning farmer, after completing an apprenticeship program, accessed land to begin a farm enterprise on public land managed cooperatively by a non-profit society. In this case the farmer pays $500 rent per year for one acre of land with access to shared infrastructure such as washing and packing stations, but without housing on the land. This farmer expressed that purchasing land was never an option and said, “I’ve just given up on the idea that I have to own land to have long term access to land. I think there is ways of having long term access without owning land…ya, I don’t have a lot of money” (Interview 22, 2013). This case was on lower Vancouver Island where the cost of farmland has been reported to range from $70,000 to $100,000 per acre (CR-FAIR, 2012). With respect to benefits derived from joining an established farm operation, this beginning farmer described it as a “turnkey operation,” elaborating that “shared marketing, and the infrastructure that was already here was super helpful and the access to markets that was already established was great” (Interview 22, 2013). Beginning farmers are turning to alternative land access models in response to barriers to entry, and in particular in response to the prohibitive cost of farmland in BC and lack of capital as reflected in the survey findings (see Section 5.3).

**Intergenerational Succession**

Farm succession and ensuring the continuity of agriculture on the land were primary motivators for engaging in an alternative land tenure model for established farmers and farmland owners. In our interview sample there were two cases in which farmers without a next generation to take over the farm donated their land, one to a land trust and another to the municipality. There were also three cases in which a land owner sold below market price to a group of farmers or a society, out of a desire to see farming continue on the land. In one example a non-profit society that purchased land for a training center said that the land was purchased for a “very reasonable cost” and that the owner was “delighted to see it go to the community” (Interview 13, 2013). In
another case the outgoing farmers turned down several offers from developers and conventional growers in order to wait for a community cooperative to raise sufficient funds to purchase the farm and continue local organic production on the land.

There were also examples in which a private land owner purchased farmland and has or is transitioning the ownership into cooperative ownership. The land owner was motivated by the perspective that land should be a shared resource and in cases where people did not have children to take over farming the land, the desire to see the farm and land transition between generations. The examples of donations of privately held land and of individuals buying land to establish a cooperative model are clear demonstrations of the valuation of farmland as a community good, rather than a market commodity. One private land owner who had begun the process of transferring the land from private to cooperative ownership expressed that the land has greater potential than an individual could realize and the motivation for establishing a land co-op was to provide “access to land and land based resources” to members (Interview 30, 2014).

In terms of farm succession and ensuring the continuity of agriculture, it is not simply the transfer of land and supporting the entry of new farmers, but the transfer of knowledge and practices and supporting outgoing farmers, that is motivating the implementation of alternative access models. This was evidenced in the relationships observed in cases where the outgoing farmers remained living on the land in retirement while incoming farmers took over the farming operation. It is an opportunity for an outgoing farmer to retire without selling the land and for the ‘retired’ farmers to remain involved in the farm. This in turn creates an opportunity for knowledge and practices to be passed on to another generation of farmers and for the outgoing farmer to be supported on the land. A farmer in their 80s who had been on their land since the 1940s said:

What most farmers do is they have a very big capital investment [the land] and have very good equity in it. Well how can you get out of it? The easiest way is to sell it. So if you don’t sell it, we are looking at a way that we can pass it on to the next generation, they continue to farm and yet we still get something for our investment. It is part of our retirement package, without having to stop (Interview 29, 2013).
Another farmer whose children were not committed to taking over the farm, was transitioning from individual ownership to a cooperative. The participant said, “I see it as a way that I can go into my old age gracefully, that I will continue to eat really good food and be able to be involved in the farm” (Interview 01, 2008).

A situation in which 80% of respondents are from non-farming backgrounds and 54% of farmers in BC are over 55 and nearing retirement suggests an opportunity to facilitate non-traditional farm access models via novel transfer and succession mechanisms. Community farms and alternative land access models are a means of facilitating succession between un-related individuals. This is a departure from a traditional family farm transition to a community farm transition in which land and farming practices are shared and passed within the community more broadly rather than the traditional family unit. This is both practical in terms of passing on farms, but also illustrates an attitude that values farmland and farming as a community asset.

**Tenure Security & Ecological Investment**

Long-term land access and tenure security is necessary for farmers to be able to invest in the land, infrastructure, their farm operation, and their livelihood over time. It is also foundational to land stewardship and sustainable agricultural practices which are reliant on the management of/working with long term ecological processes (for example soil building). In contrast, high-input farming may enable a return to a farmer over a short-term land rental, but does not provide the ability for a farmer to invest in their business, the land, or the surrounding community. As discussed previously (Section 4.3), the proportion of rented to owned farmland is increasing in BC and across Canada. The issue of short-term access was identified as a problem with the financialization of farmland which is based on the turnover of land to achieve a return on investment (Fairbairn, 2014).

Study participants expressed that farmland for rent is available and affordable in many regions, however the problem is that it is short-term, unsecure arrangements. A representative working to start a farmland trust said, “the biggest problem facing young farmers in this area, they are working someone else’s land, they get kicked off after 2 – 3 years, tenure isn’t solid and they are all working under MOU, no leases” (Interview 11, 2013). A long-term lease requires a
mechanism for land to be held over the long term and of the alternative access models land trusts, land cooperatives and public land holdings create this potential. In one case, a land trust acquired farmland and then provided a 99 year lease to a farm cooperative. In another example a land trust provided farmers with a 10 year lease with the option to renew. In a third case, the provincial government provided a 30 year lease to a land trust which then sub-leased to a farmer. The lack of secure, long term land-tenure arrangements available to farmers is an issue that the Community Farms Program and farmland trusts in particular seek to address, yet remained a key challenge. The cases of long-term leases to farmers were limited.

**Public Benefits & Community Engagement**

A key aspect of community farms is the re-integration of community and agriculture and the connection of people to food, land and one-another. The cases in which agriculture and land based programming is used to achieve a social mandate, as discussed above, are clear examples of public goods and amenities being achieved through community integrated agriculture operated by the voluntary sector. Of the 15 alternative land access cases interviewed in which commercial farming was the primary mandate, all of them interacted with the surrounding community in a diversity of ways. At a minimum they all sold locally through direct interaction with their customers and hosted volunteers whether informally or formally. Provision of food to their community and the creation of a route through which people can interact more directly with their food system was identified by participants as key benefit to the surrounding community. Other community engagement activities included running workshops on the land, providing educational tours or programs for school and university students, hosting farm apprentices, donating to food banks, and hosting festivals, feasts and celebrations on the land. Community farming models both bring food and farming into the public sphere and contribute to reinvigorating a public sphere through food and farming. Participants noted that surrounding communities viewed the farms as an asset in terms of providing food, creating opportunities to participate in food production, and positive community interactions.

Something I say to people is feel attached to this farm, feel like it is your farm as well, you are part of this, come out as much as you want to help because you are going to see the changes, how the farm improves. So we are offering a chance for people to take care
of their own food security. And people are so stoked on what we are doing, excited and it’s a positive we are offering, a positive news story…I would say we have probably had over 120 volunteers out at the farm this summer (Interview 29, 2013).

Several participants also expressed that providing an alternative model of farming and living was in itself a positive contribution that others could learn and be inspired from.

We are a model of a way to live lightly, I could get really involved in politics but it seems to be more effective to just model a way that people can live. Particularly with the apprenticeship – you are sending people out who have seen a model of one way to live who then take it to another place (Interview 01, 2008).

In contrast to the community benefits described above, interview participants clearly expressed that non-farm uses and/or absentee ownership of farmland by private individuals or corporations are occurring in their communities and are detrimental not only to the local production potential but to the community more broadly.

They build these nice houses, they come for a holiday and they leave, and so if they buy up the property next to them, which is prime farming, so they don’t have a neighbour – what kind of contribution are these people making to society? None. As an absentee citizen, it is so frustrating especially when it is prime farmland…let people farm the land, make it productive, contribute to the life of the region. You can afford to own this land but we can’t afford to let it sit there and not give us anything (Interview 13, 2013).

Community farms in BC manage agricultural land to contribute to local food production and to a diversity of social, economic and cultural amenities derived from the land for the benefit of surrounding community. These models are a clear divergence from the dominant market driven approach to farmland as a commodity and to the production paradigm of agriculture centered on efficiency, capital accumulation, and private gain. Community farms in British Columbia are an example of agrarian citizenship in practice. Alternative land access and community farming are practices which contest the attachment of citizenship, political rights, agrarian values, and action
with individual land ownership. These farming models are advancing notions of farmland stewardship and food production practices that involve and integrate farming and non-farming members of society and allow for agricultural and rural political participation separated from land ownership (Wittman, 2009a; 2009b). They stand in direct contrast to land, resource and knowledge enclosures through privatization of land, to depeasanatization and displacement of farmers and rural communities. Farmers and communities are implementing structures through which farmland is managed for public goods, community involvement, and are founded upon the sharing of land, resources and knowledge.

6.4 Farmland Access Support Organizations and Approaches
Alongside the emergence of a growing diversity of land access models used by farmers, there are new organizations that have emerged with a mandate to support land access for farmers who are advancing alternative models of land access. Representatives from five organizations providing land based training and/or land access services to farmers were interviewed. One organization was formed in 1994 and the other four were formed post 2009. The motivations for the establishment of these five organizations all indicated the following three concerns, albeit with differing emphasis: 1) declining young and beginning farmers and/or aging current farm population, 2) barriers to land access for new farm entrants (including cost, non-farm uses, speculation, farmland loss), 3) need for resources and training services to support the establishment of beginning and young farmers. Three tools advanced by support organizations that have become increasingly prevalent over the past decade in BC (and Canada) are apprenticeships/land based training programs, incubator farms, and land linking programs.

Apprenticeships involve land access and training provided by individual farm operators in exchange for work. In BC there is an organization called Stewards of Irreplaceable Lands (SOIL) which matches apprentices with farmers. In 2015 there were 72 farms across the province taking on apprentices (SOIL, 2015). In the case of a training program land access is through participation in a program run by an organization. For example the University of British Columbia (UBC) and Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) offer season long practicum programs for new farmers that integrate practical land based training with classroom education.
on production and business. The UBC Farm reported that 50% of the practicum student graduates (2008-2012) subsequently worked in an agricultural field.

Incubator farms are a model in which an organization manages farmland for the purpose of providing short-term (3 – 4 years) land access to beginning farmers to support their development as farm operators. Three cases were documented, two on public land, one of which is managed by a non-profit society and the other managed by a university. The third was on private land and managed privately by farmers. They were all established post 2005. In all cases the managing organization/farmer provided access to shared resources such as equipment and infrastructure as well as training and education to aid the beginning farmers. Apprenticeship, training programs and incubator farms all provide short-term (ranging from 1 farm season up to 4 years) land access to beginning farmers and play a critical role in supporting new entrants and creating a low capital, debt free, supported means to get started in agriculture. One of the organizations operating an incubator program and a farmer operating an apprenticeship and incubator program respectively expressed the following:

"It is about supporting new farmers and honing their production skills, and developing their business plans. We also want to ensure that there is peer-to-peer support, that there is mentorship, additional education opportunities. And then minimizing some of the barriers that new farmers experience – one being land access, two being the support mechanisms, three being some of the overhead costs (Interview 27, 2013).

We think the world is in one serious crisis about food security, this is not just a made up thing, this is really real. If we don’t figure out how to have more young farmers, we’ve got one disaster coming down the pipe (Interview 17, 2013).

Land linking programs consist of a third party organization that facilitates connections between landowners with available farmland and farmers seeking land to farm. Land linking programs are a recent phenomenon and have grown in BC. One was established on Vancouver Island in 1994 and the other three BC programs and two national programs operational in BC were established post 2009. A representative from one of the programs said, “The [program] came out of an
obvious lack of farmers and the cost of land being inhibitors, so we looked at how can we match land up with farmers – linking land” (Interview 18, 2013). The type of access arrangement is determined independently by the landowner and farmer; however, several of the land linking organizations in BC also provide support services for facilitating tenure arrangements such as draft lease agreements. Young Agrarians has hosted seven regional land linking events beginning in 2013 to facilitate in person meetings between farmers and land owners and to provide resources on access agreements. Event participation was in the range of 20 – 50 participants. Land linking tends towards leasing arrangements on privately owned land and there is currently no mechanism to provide tenure security. The organizations supporting land linking programs had few documented examples of successful arrangements at the time of interviews. The programs are relatively new and follow up research is required to adequately assess the outcomes and types of arrangements implemented.

In addition to the above described motivations for land access/beginning farmer organizations, rural support organizations were motivated by rural population declines, especially of young people, and rural economic depression. They expressed a mandate of rural economic development and job creation through the reinvigoration of the agricultural sector. Interest in farming is being generated in and near urban centres with high land competition and cost, while young people are disappearing from rural communities. The organizations in rural regions expressed a lack of awareness of land availability and agricultural opportunities in more rural areas of the province as both a challenge and opportunity. Selected participants also expressed the failure of government to adequately protect farmland and farmers and hence a need for non-profits and individual farmers to intervene.

Apprenticeships, training programs, and incubator farms all provide short-term land access and land linking provides leasing opportunities on privately owned land. There was observed to be a significant number of informal/land sharing models implemented. Twenty-one of 55 cases documented had informal lease arrangements for privately owned land. Land access programs that are structured to provide secure long-term access to farmers for the primary purpose of farming were less prevalent than those cases and programs providing short-term access or cases in which the primary purpose was intentional community or social services. Hence while
alternative land access models and programs are increasingly being practiced, those models providing long-term secure tenure opportunities to farmers are limited. The lack of secure land access opportunities for farmers was identified as a challenge by several of the interview participants running training programs for beginning farmers. One participant stated, “Right now without really knowing how to address land usage this [training programs for beginning farmers] is all kind of a waste of time, because in the end what are they going to do?” (Interview 17, 2013). It is highly beneficial that beginning farmers are able to access training and land on a short-term basis, with support, and without becoming financially in-debt, but once they are ready to start an operation secure land access remains a challenge.

Caution should be taken to avoid advancing land access strategies that merely circumvent and potentially reproduce rather than contribute solutions to the root problem. A dynamic in which farmland is being purchased and concentrated in the hands of a non-farming private landholding class and leased out to landless farmers is undesirable. Creating alternatives to that relationship is the premise of land reform. A fundamental principle of food sovereignty is that the productive resource base is controlled by, and to the benefit of, workers and surrounding community. Short-term arrangements, informal land access, and land linking (which tends towards leasing of privately held farmland) do not inhibit non-farmer ownership of farmland, do not prevent land speculation, and do not contribute to shifting patterns of farmland ownership towards community/publicly held and managed farmland. Land linking programs and short-term, informal access models serve the purpose of getting farmers on land and increasing farmland utilization, however in the long run these initiatives are not contributing to altering problematic land holding dynamics. Programs based on accessing farmland owned by non-farming land holders are relying on a dynamic which is contributing to unavailable and/or rising cost of farmland in BC and to which agrarian land reform aims to alter.

6.5 Challenges & Barriers to Implementation of Alternative Land Access Models

Cost of Land

Purchase of farmland is constrained by its exorbitant cost. The number of cases involving outright purchase of land to establish were limited. The cost of land is a barrier to those alternative access models that involve land acquisition, and which are those with potential to
contribute to land reform through removing land from the real estate market. “Farmland is not affordable. And when you look at all those alternative models - cooperatives and stuff like that - we need lessons on getting the land before we can really pull that stuff off” (Interview 18, 2013).

Of the 25 alternative access farms that constituted the interview sample, 10 were on individual privately owned land and 15 involved an alternative to individual private land ownership. Of those 15 alternatively held cases, seven were acquired through outright purchase by an entity other than an individual; two were purchased cooperatively, three were purchased by a society, one was purchased by a land trust, and one was purchased by a municipality. The private purchase of land by an individual with access to capital followed by a subsequent transfer and/or stated intent to transfer to cooperative management was a more common practice (6 of 25 interviewed cases) than the establishment of a cooperative through a cooperative land purchase (2 of 25 interviewed cases). The two cases from the interview sample in which land was purchased cooperatively were purchased by a group of community members, including the farmers on the land and non-farming members. The inclusion of non-farming community members was key to leveraging the required funds for land acquisition. With respect to land acquisition, a farmer working on cooperatively owned land said, “we fully recognize that the only reason that we are able to do this is because other people have put money behind the co-op” (Interview 04, 2008).

In the cases of societies and trusts purchasing land, funds were garnered through grants and private donations accessible to charitable organizations. The only documented cases in which community land acquisition through outright purchase was successful (not including private purchase and title transfer) required funds acquisition from beyond the farmers/people working on the land, either through community member shares, grants and/or fundraising.

The cost of land in BC is problematic for farmland trust organizations. The one provincial trust that had a farmland acquisition program in BC entered receivership to avoid bankruptcy as a result of acquiring land faster than it was able to leverage the funds to finance the land holdings. As a result the organization has cancelled its farmland acquisition program and sold one farm property in addition to other assets. This reinforces concerns regarding the long-term security of
land holdings by non-profit trusts (see Hanson and Felix, 2009). There are four small, locally focused farmland trust organizations in BC. Three of them do not currently own land (one leases and manages a public property and the other two aspire to acquire land). The fourth holds a farm property that was received by the trust organization as a result of an amenity contribution by a developer. An amenity contribution refers to the provision of an asset by a developer to the community in exchange for a zoning change approval by local government. Farmland trusts are a model with the potential to remove land from the real estate market and facilitate long term leases with farmers. However the cost of farmland in BC is a barrier to the advancement of farmland trust activities in BC. Donations of land are an important way that trusts can acquire land without having to purchase, however BC currently lacks a stable farmland trust organization in which the public has confidence to accept potential donations.

The cost of land in BC is a limitation to the advancement of alternative access models that involve land acquisition. Strategies to effectively acquire farmland and remove it from the real estate market require broad community investment beyond the farmers themselves. The potential of community-based agricultural land reform is beyond the scope of farmers and the agricultural sector alone and requires broader public involvement if it is to be successful.

**Attitudes Toward Alternative Land Access**

Despite these challenges to individual land purchases, prospective farmers indicated a strong preference for private land ownership (Figure 16). Of the current farmers who did not own their own land at the time of the survey and prospective farmers who indicated that they are currently seeking a leasing arrangement, 93% and 100% respectively indicated that they hope to own land in the future. The survey results indicate a preference for individual ownership, yet at the same time found a willingness amongst prospective farmers to engage in alternative land access arrangements if the opportunity was available to them (Table 6). There was a higher rate of willingness for models inclusive of tenure security (e.g. cooperative ownership) and lower willingness in those with low tenure security (e.g. hired operator) (Table 6).
Figure 16: Prospective farmer respondents top three preferred land access arrangements as indicated through a ranking question in the survey.

Table 6: Attitudes towards alternative land access arrangements

Prospective farmers were asked to rate their willingness to accept a list of different types of land access arrangements if the opportunity arose. A 7-point labeled rating scale was used ranging from ‘definitely’ willing to ‘definitely not’ willing to accept the arrangement. The left hand column shows the arrangements listed based on willingness to accept and the percentage in brackets denotes the proportion of respondents who indicated that they were ‘definitely,’ ‘highly willing,’ and ‘likely’ to accept the presented arrangement. The right hand column shows the arrangements listed based on unwillingness to accept where the percentage denotes the proportion of respondents who indicated ‘definitely not,’ ‘very unlikely,’ and ‘unlikely’ to accept the arrangement (n=45).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Willingness Towards Arrangement</th>
<th>Unwillingness Towards Arrangement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cooperative land ownership with other farmers (78%)</td>
<td>1. Hired farm operator by a private land owner (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Farm transfer arrangement with retiring (76%)</td>
<td>2. Access arrangement with residential land owners (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lease on land owned by land trust (67%)</td>
<td>3. Hired farm operator by a non-profit or social enterprise (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Cooperative ownership with farmers and non-farmers (64%)</td>
<td>4. Cropshare arrangement with a land owner (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lease on privately owned land (53%)</td>
<td>5. Lease on land owned by a cooperative of non-farmers (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lease on publicly owned land (49%)</td>
<td>6. Lease on privately owned land (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lease on land owned by a cooperative of non-farmers (47%)</td>
<td>7. Lease on publicly owned (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Hired farm operator by a non-profit or social enterprise (40%)</td>
<td>8. Cooperative land ownership with farmers and non-farmers (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Cropshare arrangement with a land owner (33%)</td>
<td>9. Lease on land owned by a land trust (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Hired farm operator by a private land owner (27%)</td>
<td>10. Farm transfer arrangement with a retiring farmer (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Access arrangement with residential land (22%)</td>
<td>11. Cooperative land ownership with other farmers (13%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through interviews and participant observation farmers expressed that they would like to own land, but that they perceive themselves as unable to do so, and alternative land access is a means to begin farming in spite of the barriers to ownership. At an alternative land access event held in
2014, one young farmer who was in an unstable short-term leasing situation said, “I can’t afford to buy land and I know that my current situation is unstable, but I want to farm now and I can’t just wait around to get started.” A significant number of informal and short-term alternative land access cases were documented, which are those models towards which survey participants indicated a low level of willingness (Table 6). Flexible arrangements can help new farmers start out, however the advancement of non-ownership access models for farmers needs to prioritize those models and mechanisms that offer tenure security.

Some interview participants directly expressed the attitude that land should be a shared resource for community good rather than individual benefit; “…everybody’s mind is set in a world where you need to own real estate and we need to break that mold” (Interview 14, 2013). This attitude towards the holding and management of land for the common good, rather than as a commodity, is clearly expressed by the Community Farms Program and participants. In both interviews with CFP participants and through participation in CFP roundtables, the principles of community-led land reform and agrarian citizenship were clearly articulated. CFP participants are driven by the philosophy that land is a community asset. They are striving to practice that philosophy in their farming operations by using non-ownership and shared access models and by advancing a participatory mode of agriculture involving community on and around the land.

In the cases of informal and short-term land access models, particularly informal sharing, practicality was emphasized over philosophical or political motivations for non-ownership land access. The following was said by a farmer using a land-sharing model who had expressed being unable to purchase land as a result of the high cost.

Ultimately ownership is a farce, that’s true. So that is an important thing to keep in mind but even keeping that in mind, having your own land is great, you can build a building, you can dig a trench. You don’t have to ask anybody – you just walk out you look at it, you do it. The freedom of that is just so alluring and its really tough, but it is just so expensive, if it were inexpensive it would be an easy decision. Obviously I would own land, I am not going to do land sharing if land is relatively inexpensive – forget it (Interview 20, 2013).
The statement corresponds with survey findings suggesting an attitudinal preference for individual ownership amongst beginning farmers but a willingness towards non-ownership models emanating from barriers to land ownership experienced. There are deeply rooted western cultural values associated with private land ownership and private property rights that influence individual attitude (Highby et al., 2004). A shift towards the valuation of farmland as a public good rather than a market commodity will require a shift in attitude and culture alongside institutional and structural changes.

**Tenure Security**

Many of the challenges associated with alternative land access raised by study participants stemmed from a lack of tenure security and the constant potential of needing to move off the land. Farmers working in land sharing situations discussed designing everything they do to be mobile as there was inadequate assurance of permanency sufficient to warrant longer term investment in the site. As one farmer put it, “everything we have been doing here is essentially under the concept of mobility…we can’t really advance ourselves too much until we come up with an agreement at least as to how it looks if we build something and there is a sale, so that we are not cutting ourselves short,” (Interview 19, 2013). Lack of tenure security and the inability to invest in the land are barriers to developing a successful operation over the long term. Alternative access models that have the potential to offer long-term tenure require land acquisition (land cooperatives, land trusts) which is an obstacle to advancement.

Another set of issues that stem from non-ownership and/or inadequate tenure regimes, include who is responsible for improvements to the land, who benefits from improvements to the land, and landowner management impositions. The issue of responsibility, labour and infrastructure costs (e.g. for fencing, irrigation, greenhouses) on the land was found a frequent point of contention between landowners and farmers across all models. Farmers expressed feeling an undue onus on them to invest capital and labour in needed infrastructure on land that they do not own. Land use constraints imposed by landowners were also found a point of tension across models in which the farmers did not own the land. One example was that it was not permitted for farmers to live on site. In another case, heritage building status on site limited farmer abilities to use infrastructure. In another case, a land trust leasing agreement imposed regulations upon the
type of commercial activities permitted on the land which limited success of the operation. A last issue raised with respect to non-ownership arrangements that involved private land ownership was that of imbalanced power dynamics; that the landowner was doing the farmer a favour, who was in turn indebted to them.

Issues with lack of tenure security, lack of clarity, and lack of equity in the division of rights and responsibilities between land owner (individual or organization) were a widespread challenge across the alternative land access models studied, and if not addressed will perpetuate inequity between land holding and working classes in agriculture. Re-conceptualizing ownership such that the ownership of land is distinct from ownership of the farm operation on the land has important practical benefits that address some of the issues with respect to equity and tenure. One of the cases studied demonstrated this separation in practice. A farmer working on land leased from a land cooperative seeking to exit, sold their farm business to an incoming farmer. The infrastructure, investments in the land, and customer base established by the previous farmer were sold to the incoming farmer along with transferring the lease from the land cooperative. The outgoing farmer realized their equity from the incoming farmer in this non-ownership model. Thus there are mechanisms and precedent for addressing challenges around tenure and equity that can be integrated into the implementation alternative access models.

**Relationships and Decision Making**

The most commonly cited challenge of people working within alternative land access models was the interpersonal relationships and dynamics involved. This includes that between landholder and farmer in the case of land sharing/leasing/land linking, the relationship within community/cooperative farming on the land, and the relationship between the farmer(s) accessing the land and the trust/society organization managing the project. The impact of the challenges varied dramatically. In one of the most severe cases a member of a cooperative land community expressed that the human dynamics were inhibiting the advancement of projects on the land, they said, “…we are not doing it because we cannot agree on how to do it” (Interview 26, 2013). Another farmer working in a cooperative had expressed many benefits to working cooperatively, but still found the greatest challenge to be decision making, they said “if it was just one farmer the decision would be very easy to make…whereas a decision among ten people
could take weeks to months and it could get thrown out” (Interview 22, 2013). A farmer in a land-sharing situation said, “It is so important to maintain open lines of communication with the people who own the land and that is actually a drain – it is a real time cost” (Interview 20, 2013). There was consensus amongst study participants that the establishment of clear routes of communication and clear agreements between landholders and farmers and/or between farmers sharing land is fundamental to the success of alternative land access models.

Alternative access models have the potential to reduce capital costs through sharing but they introduce a “transaction cost” in terms of time spent managing human dynamics. However, at the same time the intangible benefits derived from relationships in shared farming models were emphasized by participants as a key benefit of and motivation for engagement.

6.6 Potential and Limitations of a Peoples’ Enclosure
There are a diversity of alternative farmland access initiatives, serving a range of food production, social and community development objectives, being practiced by farmers and communities across BC. There has also been an emergence of voluntary sector led organizations and programs to support land access, especially for beginning farmers. These initiatives are occurring within the context of rising development pressure on farmland, farmland speculation, non-farm uses of farmland, and private investment in farmland in BC. The alternative land access initiatives and support programs examined in this study stand in contrast to the current trajectory of agrarian transition driven by the corporate food regime. They are striving to support and increase new farm entrants, to hold and steward farmland for the use and benefit of surrounding communities, and to create structures enabling engagement rather than the distancing of people, food and ecology. These initiatives share commonalities with the process of a peoples’ enclosure advanced through community-led land reform (Borras & Franco, 2012; van der Ploeg, 2008; Wittman, 2009). Community farms present an important model and practice of an alternative vision to the dominant trajectory of food and agriculture. In consideration of emerging initiatives for farmland access and protection in the US, Holt-Giménez (2014) asks whether they have the potential to confront the modern agrarian transition. The same can be asked of the alternative land access initiatives occurring in BC. Some models studied, particularly the cooperative farms and Community Farms Program, espouse and practice the
principles of community land-reform and a peoples’ enclosure, however the scope of these initiatives is limited.

Processes of enclosure and institutions of private property were foundational to and continue to enable capitalist relations of production and accumulation as well as the separation of producers from the means of production (Araghi, 2000; Wood, 2000). The decommodification of farmland and ownership of land and resources for the common good are key principles of community-led land reform and a peoples’ enclosure (Borras and Franco, 2012). However, within the study sample there was a predominance of models and approaches that operate within the existing private property regime and market based logic governing land ownership, as opposed to those models effectively transforming private property relations. In practice there are both cultural and structural constraints to those models and mechanisms that challenge the current private property based, market driven management of farmland. There are participants involved in alternative land access initiatives motivated to hold and manage land for the common good, but there were also participants using alternative land access models that emphasized the practicality of the models as opposed to a political/philosophical motivation. Private property is a deeply entrenched institution and cultural value and any sort of land reform, including community-led land initiatives will require a cultural and attitudinal shift alongside structural change.

Land cooperatives, community trust farms and land trust organizations are models that have the potential (and goal) to challenge private property regimes, enable land to be held for a common good, and offer long-term tenure security to farmers. Yet, the funds needed to finance the establishment of projects involving farmland acquisition was found to remain a barrier. There are certainly successful cases in BC, though the scaling-up of these initiatives faces significant challenges and are constrained by the structures of the property and food regime they aim to challenge. Recognizing the importance of these models and the leadership of those involved, but pointing to the limitations, Holt-Giménez (2014) states:

While they [alternative land access initiatives] serve as important sociopolitical and environmental leaders, ensuring equitable land access and viable rural livelihoods in the United States is beyond the scope and the pocket book of niche markets. Rather,
structural changes are needed in order for these important efforts to become the norm rather than the alternative. Their future depends on agrarian reform.

The challenge of the cost of land for alternative community-led land reform initiatives stands in contrast to the financial resources available to wealthy individuals, corporations, other extraction industries, and the financial sector to acquire farmland. The purchase of ALR land (by both corporations and wealthy individuals) for recreation, retirement, tourism, speculation and/or development were cited as problematic by participants from all regions of BC. Non-agrarian interests are better able to leverage the resources needed to purchase farmland in the province. Within the current economic context in which land is viewed as a stable and profitable asset, individuals, investors and corporations with the resources to purchase farmland in BC clearly have an economic interest in doing so. This is in contrast to civil-society led initiatives lacking financial resources to service the cost of land. On top of this the BC government is currently weakening farmland protection policies and supporting mining, hydroelectric, oil and gas development, which is in direct conflict with agriculture land use. The current economic and policy environments of British Columbia present serious challenges for the advancement of community-led agricultural land reform.

Food sovereignty movements and the renewed valuation of the agrarian question both emerged out of food system crises exacerbated by the 2008 economic crisis. Processes of land grabbing and financialization of farmland were also further spurred following the 2008 economic crisis. Actors engaged in processes of land grabbing and financialization of farmland are drawing on similar narratives as alternative food movements, positing their actions as a response to a food and farming crisis and contributor to food security (Fairbairn, 2011; 2014; McMichael, 2012; White et al., 2012). Similarly, parallel narratives are being employed with respect to contributing solutions to the crisis of declining farmers and farmland access in Canada by a farmland investment company and the Community Farms Program (Figure 17). Despite the parallel narratives, the responses promote different modes of production and goals, and therefore have very different implications for the trajectory of agriculture in BC. A peoples’ enclosure is arising in response and in tandem to escalating neoliberal enclosures. They are certainly not equal
processes of structural reconfiguration considering the unparalleled power and wealth driving neoliberal land enclosures.

Considering predictions of extensive farmland transfer in coming decades, the agrarian question of how and to whom farmland will transfer is highly relevant. One of the motivations of farmers implementing alternative land access and ownership arrangements is the succession of land and farming practices between generations for the continuity of community-based agriculture. The limitations of civil society and non-profit initiatives to advance community land reform stands in contrast to the financial resources leveraged by wealthy individuals, corporate, financial, and resource extraction sectors for farmland acquisitions and development. To increase the scope and impact of community-led farmland access initiatives and the prospect of land reform in British Columbia, leveraging broad public support (beyond the farming sector), a cultural shift favoring the valuation of farmland and food as a public good, and policy changes addressing the root problems are required.

Figure 17: Parallel narratives employed by a Canadian farmland investment company and the Community Farms Program aimed at supporting farmland access for farming (Bonnefield, n.d.; FarmFolk CityFolk, 2014)
Chapter 7: Conclusion & Policy Recommendations

Food sovereignty emerged from peasant movements in the global South and has more recently been taken up by food movements in the North. Emerging beginning farmer movements and alternative land access initiatives envision and strive to enact a paradigm alternate to the current dominant corporate food regime. A paradigm of agriculture that is rooted in ecologically sound production, that is diversified and multifunctional, embedded in and interactive with surrounding communities, that advocates for local democratic control of land and food, and that integrates food production within wider social goals. New farmer networks aim to implement these principles through promoting ‘human-scale,’ locally oriented, ecological farming. Community farming initiatives aim to enact these principles through the creation of mechanisms that enable socially responsible community controlled and managed farmland.

Farmers are aging and their children are increasingly exiting agriculture. The number of young operators has declined over the past two decades. However, there has been a recent surge of interest in farming from individuals from non-farming backgrounds and an emergence of young and beginning farmer networks and programs to support the growth of new, ecologically focused young farmers in BC. At the same time, farmland in BC is becoming increasingly inaccessible to new and younger farmers and the cost of land is a significant barrier to farm establishment for young and beginning farmers. While alternative mechanisms are enabling farmers to overcome barriers to land access and lack of start-up capital, many of the models being practiced circumvent rather than address the root causes of the fundamental land access issue - excessive and prohibitive cost. Community-led land reform initiatives are constrained by structural factors particularly capital and capacity limitations of the non-profit sector. Nonetheless community-led land access initiatives are creating important examples of alternatives; but their success driving structural change, land reform, faces serious limitations.

Allen et al. (2003) apply Williams and Harvey’s lens of oppositional and alternative social movements to US agrifood initiatives to ask to what degree do agrifood initiatives create structural change versus erode at the edges of the existing system. “People seek to change the structures of their everyday lives—but they must do so from within the circumstances in which they find themselves. This carries the particularities of those circumstances forward, potentially
as unresolved (and even unexamined) problems” (Allen et al., 2003, p.62). Both beginning farmer movements and alternative land access initiatives are constrained by the structures within which they are being enacted and attempting to change. Beginning and young farmer movements and alternative land access initiatives provide an example of an alternative trajectory to the current processes of the corporate food regime and continuing deagrarianization in North America. There is an opportunity to capture and support this growing grassroots momentum into wider food system change through the implementation of policy changes alongside the continuation of voluntary and civil society initiatives. Political action and a shift in cultural attitudes away from the commoditization of land and food towards the (re)valuation of land as a common good and food as a human right, is required to alter the trajectory of the dominant industrial agricultural production paradigm and the corporate food regime. Agricultural policy that protects farmland (and other types of food producing lands and water), supports an active, ecologically sound, localized farming sector, and enables livelihoods for farmers is needed. Policy is required to address root structural problems around farmland ownership, use and cost. Based on the research findings the following are policy and programming recommendations, focused on farmland accessibility and new farm entrants, for British Columbia.

7.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

1. Land Based Agricultural Training Opportunities

*Provide Public Land for Incubator Farms & Training Programs:* In two of the incubator models documented a municipality provided public land which was then managed by a local non-profit society to support new farmer establishment. I recommend that municipalities elsewhere in BC provide public land at no cost to support the establishment of incubator farms and land-based training programs for farming and support programs inclusive of diverse food producing, harvesting, and processing skills. Regionally distributed incubator farms and training programs can be used to help attract young/beginning farmers and revive agricultural production in rural areas that have available land but lack people to farm it. Alongside programs geared towards young/new farm entrants, I further recommend developing programs specific to newcomer farmers and immigrant farm labourers in BC to facilitate opportunities to establish farm businesses (if so desired). FarmStart Ontario and the Agriculture and Land-Based Training
Association (ALBA) in California provide examples of models supporting new immigrants and immigrant farm labourers to become established farm operators (ALBA, n.d.; FarmStart, 2015).

**Advance Jobs in Sustainable Small-Scale Farming:** I recommend that the provincial government use job creation policy measures such as the BC Jobs Plan, BC Skills and Training Plan, and agricultural sector development plans such as Growing Forward 2 to specifically advance and direct resources to sector growth, job training opportunities and job creation in sustainable, locally oriented primary production. I recommend that the provincial government recognize the essential extension role being filled by the voluntary sector in BC and that the government provide financial support to existing organizations providing farmer apprenticeship, training, and incubator programs to augment the delivery of beginning farmer programs. I further recommend that small-scale diversified farming be recognized as a skilled profession and both entrants and private sector farmer trainers/mentors be provided access to financial and support programs made available to youth entering other apprenticeship based trades and job training programs.

**2. Land Use Policies: Integrated Farmland Protection and Access**

**Strengthen Farmland Protection Policies:** The ALR is an essential policy for protecting farmland in BC. Exclusion of prime ALR land must cease and the regulation of non-farm uses must be severely limited. Recent changes to the ALR legislation (Bill 24) dividing the province into two zones and increasing permitted non-farm uses on farmland in the Zone containing 90% of the farmland should be repealed. Local government tools should be leveraged to reinforce the protection of ALR lands and encourage the farm use of those lands. Tools include zoning by-laws, urban containment boundaries, Official Community Plans, regional growth strategies, agriculture and food strategies.

**Establish a Government Supported Foodland Trust:** Develop a provincial and/or municipal land trust through public-voluntary sector cooperation to increase affordable access to farm and foodlands. The land could be held by the government and/or co-held with a non-profit trust and

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7 The term “foodland trust” entails recognizing the diversity of food producing lands and protecting and making land accessible for diverse food production and harvesting systems. The term emerged from Indigenous participants at the 2014 BC Food Systems Network Gathering.
managed by a non-profit society to support incubator farms, to provide access to long-term leases, and to stabilize farmland prices through removal from development pressures. Covenants regarding allowable land usage can be placed on the publicly held land to add further protection from development and guarantee of farm use. I recommend that the provincial and local government consider the use of government and non-profit sector trust co-held covenants and collaborate with voluntary sector land trust initiatives to explore this option. A government partnership would help to overcome limitations that voluntary sector-led land trust initiatives have faced – primarily the cost of land acquisition and holding. To incentivize farmland donations I recommend that the taxation benefits afforded to the land owners donating land for conservation purposes be extended to land owners wishing to donate farmland. I also recommend that public funds be leveraged through a taxation strategy to support farmland acquisition and management in parallel to mechanisms employed by local governments for parkland acquisition and housing trust funds. Lastly, I recommend that farmland and/or community food producing lands (rural and urban) be recognized as a community amenity and that local governments further pursue the acquisition or development of agricultural and food producing lands as amenity contributions provided by developers.

Regulate Non-Farm Use and Speculation: I recommend that the provincial government strike a task force charged with developing and implementing policies at the provincial and municipal levels to limit non-farm use and speculation on ALR lands. Policies for consideration include increasing property taxes to owners of unfarmed agricultural land, raising the minimum revenue generated from farmland to achieve reduced property taxes (Farm Tax Status) in BC, requiring a minimum of a 5 year lease to tenant farmers to achieve Farm Tax Status, regulating against non-occupancy ownership of farmland (foreign or Canadian), and establishing a requirement at the time of purchase for demonstrable agricultural use through a viable farm business plan or completion of a recognized agricultural training program.

3. New Immigrant Farmers

Citizenship for Migrant Farm Workers: In line with previous recommendations stemming from research on the status of migrant farm workers in Canada, I recommend that the Federal government create a pathway to Canadian citizenship for migrant farm workers and their
families (Fairey et al., 2008). In the context of declining farmers and lack of farm labourers in Canada, opportunities should be created for migrant farm workers to transition into independent farm operator positions and/or stable, salaried farm labour positions with the rights afforded Canadian citizens.
References


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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Young and Beginning Farmer Survey Instrument

The survey included an online consent form which is not included as it contains personal names and contact information of the researchers and community partners.

Simple Skipping Information
1. • If 9. Do you come from a farming background? = No then Skip to Page 4
2. • If 7. Do you have any education or training in agriculture? = No then Hide 7a. Please select the type(s) of education or trai...

Demographic Information
1. What is your name? ______________________

2. What are the first 3 digits of your postal code? ______________________

3. What is your age group?
under 24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-65
over 65

4. What is your gender? ______________________

5. What is your ethnic identification? ______________________

6. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
High school
Some college/university
College Certificate
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree
PhD

7. Do you have any education or training in agriculture? (ex. university degree, training program,
internship, on farm volunteering etc.)

Yes  No

7a. Please select the type(s) of education or training you have in agriculture (check all that apply).

- College Certificate
- University Degree
- Some college or university courses
- Linnaea Farm Program
- UBC Farm Apprenticeship Program
- Richmond Farm School Program
- Organic Farming Institute of BC Courses
- Permaculture Design Course
- SOIL Apprenticeship
- Step Up Mentorship Program
- BCYF/CYFF training programs
- WWOOF Volunteer (Willing Workers on Organic Farms)
- Informal on farm learning/volunteering
- 4-H Programs
- Other, please specify... __________________________

8. Have you ever been a hired employee, including seasonal labour, on a farm?

Yes  No

9. Do you come from a farming background?

Where a farming background is defined as having lived on a farm for 5 years or more at some point in your life.

Yes  No

Branching Information

• If 9a. Please select the statement that best reflects... = I do not currently farm and do not plan to then Hide 9b. Does your farm vision, including business stru...

Demographic Information

9a. Please select the statement that best reflects your current situation:

- I farm on my family's land and plan to continue to do so
- I farm on my family's land but would like my own land
- I farm on land that is not my family's land
- I do not currently farm, but plan to take over the family farm
- I do not currently farm, but plan to find my own land
- I do not currently farm and do not plan to

9b. Does your farm vision, including business structure and agricultural practices, differ from your parent's/family's vision? Please describe.
Branching Information

- If 11. Please select the category that best applies to you:
  
  (A farm operator is the person, or one of a group of persons, responsible for the day-to-day management decisions made in the operation of a farm or agricultural operation. The farm operator may or may not be the farm owner.)

  I am currently a farm operator (including co-operators, hired farm operators/farm managers, and urban farm operators)

  I would like to become a farm operator within the next 5 years (including current farm labourers and people not currently farming but wishing to do so)

  I do not intend to become a farm operator within the next 5 years (including current farm labourers, people who do not wish to become farm operators, or people who may want to become farm operators later in life)

Demographic Information

10. Are you a member of, or participant in, farmer, agricultural or food system networks, organizations, or groups?

   Yes
   No

If yes, please specify which ones. ________________________

11. Please select the category that best applies to you:

12. Are you currently seeking land access or planning to seek land access for farming? (including both ownership or non-ownership)

   I am currently seeking land
I plan to seek land in the next 1-2 years
I plan to seek land in the next 3-5 years
I plan to seek land in more than 5 years from now

13. How much land are you/will you be seeking?
   1 acre or less
   1 - 5 acres
   5 - 10 acres
   10 - 20 acres
   20 - 70 acres
   70 - 130 acres
   130 - 180 acres
   More than 180 acres

14. Are you seeking to establish a farm in an urban location?
   Where an urban area refers to a location within city boundaries.
   Yes
   No
   I am open to farming in an urban or rural location

15. In what geographic region(s) are you/will you be seeking land?
   Select all that apply. Please refer to map for region boundaries.
   Vancouver Island-Coast
   Mainland South Coast
   Kootenay
   Thompson-Okanagan
   Cariboo-Central
   Nechako
   North Coast
   Peace River North East
   Anywhere in British Columbia
   Other, please specify... __________________________

16. Are you willing to relocate to find land?
   Yes, only within my current region
   Yes, within the province of BC
   Yes, within Canada
   Yes, within or outside of Canada
   No

17. How important is it that you live on the land you farm?
   Very Important
   Important
   Moderately Important
   Slightly Important
   Not Important
18. What kind of farming activities do you plan to pursue once you have land access? Please select all that apply.
- Dairy cattle and dairy production
- Poultry and egg production
- Beef cattle ranching and farming
- Greenhouse vegetables
- Field Vegetables
- Berry production
- Grapes/vineyard
- Tree fruits and/or nuts
- Grains and/or oilseeds
- Nursery and floriculture production
- Mushroom production
- Seed production
- Other, please specify __________________________

19. How important to you is the integration of environmental stewardship practices into your future farm operation?
(Environmental stewardship includes practices such as crop rotations, habitat conservation, soil conservation, integrated pest management, riparian buffers, bird nesting sites, pollinator forage, crop diversity, etc.)
- Very important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important

20. Do you plan to follow organic standards in your farm operation?
- Yes, I plan to obtain organic certification
- Yes, I plan to follow organic production practices but not obtain certification
- I plan to follow organic practices when possible but may not adhere to standards at all times
- No, I do not feel organic production will be viable for my farm operation
- No, organic production practices are not important to me
- I am not familiar with organic standards and do not know if I will follow them

20a. Do you plan to follow any other established systems of production? If yes, Please specify which one(s).
(For example: biodynamics, permaculture, agroecological)
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Branching Information
• If not 27. In the long term, do you hope to maintain a se... = Yes then Hide 27a. What is your
21. Why do you want to farm?
Please share your motivations or reasons for choosing to farm.

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

22. Are you switching careers to become a farmer?
Yes
No

23. How much of your time do you desire to spend farming?
Year round and full time (5-7 days/week)
Year round and part time (2-3 days/week)
Seasonal and full time (5-7 days/week)
Seasonal and part time (2-3 days/week)
Less than 2 days per week at anytime of the year

24. What is your desired individual annual income from farming activities?
under $10,000/year
$10,000/year - $20,000/year
$20,000/year - $40,000/year
$40,000/year - $70,000/year
$70,000/year -
$100,000/year
more than
$100,000/year

25. Approximately what percentage of your total personal income do you hope to make from farming activities?
100%
75%
50%
25%
less than 25%

26. Do you plan to generate revenue from farm related activities other than primary production?
(For example: value added products, crafts, tourism, workshops, event hosting) Yes
Only if necessary (I would prefer not to)
No
Unsure

27. In the long term, do you hope to maintain a second job (source of off-farm income)
27a. What is your primary motivation for wanting to maintain a second job alongside farming?
   Economic necessity
   Personal Satisfaction
   Both of the above
   Other, please specify... __________________________

28. Beginning farmers face various challenges, or obstacles, in becoming established as farm operators. Please rate the significance of the following obstacles to you as a prospective farmer.

   Not at all significant (0) means that the factor listed does not present a challenge to you in becoming a farm operator
   Extremely significant (6) means that the factor listed is an extreme challenge to you in becoming a farm operator

   Overall lack of farmland (arable land) in your region
   Lack of farmland that is currently available for farmers to purchase or lease
   Lack of the appropriate type of farmland available (parcel size, capability of land, water access, etc)
   Difficulty negotiating favourable land access (tenure) agreement with landowners
   Cost of land ownership Cost of land leasing Lack of capital
   Access to credit or other sources of financing
   Lack of knowledge or insufficient training to begin farming
   Low profitability in the agricultural sector (returns on investment are too low)
   Lack of markets/distribution channels in areas where land is available
   Lack of training and resources for beginning farmers in your area
   Expected income from farming is insufficient to support your desired livelihood goals
   Lack of community or social support in areas where land is available
   Committing to a farming lifestyle conflicts with other life goals
   Prohibitive zoning or other government regulations on land use

28a. Please add any additional obstacles/challenges to prospective farmers that you have/are experiencing, or comments on the above challenges you are facing:
Questions for Prospective Farmers Page 4/5

29. Do you feel that you are sufficiently aware of the programs and resources available to you as a prospective and beginning farmer?
   Yes  No

30. Have you, or do you have plans, to make use of specific community or government resources/programs designed to support the establishment of beginning farmers? (Please specify which ones)
   (ex. loan programs for new farmers, training programs, business planning workshops, land linking, internships, etc.)

31. As a prospective farmer, please rate the importance of the following programs for assisting in the establishment and success of beginning farmers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>Very Slight</th>
<th>Slightly</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Highly</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Informal farm workshops, field days, farm tours  
Farm training and education programs run by an organization (incubator farms, apprenticeship programs, short courses)  
University or college agricultural programs or courses  
Business and strategic planning programs or courses  
Farmer to farmer mentoring programs (connect experienced farmers and new farmers)  
Online educational resources for beginning farmers (guides, webinars, blogs, etc.)  
Land linking programs (to connect landowners and farmers seeking land)  
Land access resources (leasing templates, decision making tools for entering land access agreements)  
Farm transfer/succession planning programs (to facilitate transfer of farm from outgoing to new farmer)  
Regional resource maps (to locate infrastructure, organizations, suppliers, processors, etc. relevant to farmers)  
New farmer networking forums (connect farmers online and in-person for social networking and support)  
Farmland protection programs (land reserves, land banks, land trusts)
Loan Programs for beginning farmers (Canadian Agricultural Loans Act (CALA), Farm Credit Canada Loans)
Alternative financing (crowdfunding, grants, microloans from non-profits, personal lending, etc.)

32. Are there any resources or programs currently lacking in your region that you think are needed to better support beginning farmers? (please specify)

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

33. What actions or program development should be prioritized by non-profit organizations to better enable the successful establishment of beginning farmers?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Branching Information

• If not (34. What type of land access are you currently looking for or planning to look for?)
• (34. What type of land access are you currently looking for or planning to look for?)
• (34. What type of land access are you currently looking for or planning to look for?)
• (34. What type of land access are you currently looking for or planning to look for?)

34. What type of land access are you currently looking for or planning to look for?
Please rank the 3 preferred types of land access that you are seeking, if you are only seeking 1 or 2 types of land access please select your preference(s) and leave remaining choice boxes blank.

Drag and drop white boxes on left onto grey boxes on the right.

1st Choice 2nd Choice 3rd Choice

Private ownership
Cooperative land ownership
Short term lease (less than 5 years)
Long term lease (greater than 5 years)
Lease with option to purchase
Hired farm operator
Other

34a. If you selected 'Other,' please specify the type of land access you are seeking:

________________________________________________________________________________________
35. Do you hope to own your land in the future?
Yes
No

36. If the opportunity arose, what is the likelihood that you would accept the following types of land access arrangements for your farm operation?

Please rate the following land access arrangements based on the likelihood that you would accept such an arrangement, where (0) means that you would definitely not accept the listed arrangement and (6) means that you would definitely accept.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not (0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
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</table>

Cooperative land ownership with other farmers
Cooperative land ownership with farmers and non-farming community members
Lease on land owned by a cooperative of non-farming community members
Lease on privately owned land
Lease on publicly owned land (government, includes parks)
Lease on land owned by an agricultural land trust (not-for-profit organization with a mandate to conserve farmland)
Access arrangement with residential land owners (yards)
Cropshare arrangement with a land owner
Hired farm operator by a private land owner
Hired farm operator by a non-profit or social enterprise
Farm transfer arrangement with a farmer who plans to retire on the land

37. If the opportunity arose, how likely are you to work with one or more other farm operators?

Please rate how likely you are to participate in the following arrangements involving one or more farm operators, where 0 means you would definitely not participate in the type of operating arrangement listed and 6 means that you definitely would participate in the type of arrangement listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not (0)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Individual or family farm (sole proprietorship)
Informal Partnership
Formal Partnership (written agreement
Incorporated family farm business
Incorporation with non-family members
Informal cooperative
Formally registered cooperative
Community farm or ecovillage arrangement (Intentional formation a community to live, farm, and manage land use together)
Hired farm operator/manager (no financial investment in a business)
One or more independent farm businesses sharing infrastructure on the same land
One or more independent farm businesses on separate land marketing cooperatively together

38. Please include any further comments you feel are important to your experience as a prospective farmer.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Page #10

Questions for Current Farmers Page 1/6

12. Please enter the first 3 digits of your farm's postal code. If you farm in multiple locations, please list first 3 postal code digits of all locations.
   (If you farm at many locations, for example backyards of residents, and do not know all postal codes please provide the name of city or region in which you farm.)

13. Did you relocate to your current community to pursue farming?
   Yes
   No

14. How long have you been actively farming?
   Less than 1 year
   1-3 years
   4-7 years
   8-10 years
   More than 10 years

14a. Are you committed to continuing a career in farming over the long term (greater than 10 years)?
   Yes
   No
   Unsure

15. How much land are you farming (in total)?
   Less than 1 acre
   1 - 5 acres
   5 - 10 acres
10 - 20 acres
20 - 70 acres
70 - 130 acres
130 - 180 acres
More than 180 acres

16. Do you hope to expand the amount of farmland you have access to?
No
Yes, by less than 5 acres
Yes, by 5-10 acres
Yes, by 10-20 acres
Yes, by 20-50 acres
Yes, by 50 – 100 acres
Yes, by more than 100 acres

17. Is the land where you farm in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)?
Yes
Some of it
No

18. What general classification best describes the land you are located on?
Rural
Rural residential
Urban or suburban residential
First Nations Reserve
Commercial or Industrial
Institutional (school, hospital, etc.)
Public (government land, parks)

19. What type of production activities do you carry out on your farm? (please check all that apply)
Dairy cattle
Poultry and egg production
Beef cattle ranching and farming
Greenhouse vegetables
Field Vegetables
Berry production
Grapes/vineyard
Tree fruits and/or nuts
Grains and/or oilseeds
Nursery and/or floriculture production
Mushroom production
Seed production
Other, please specify... __________________________

20. How important to you is the integration of environmental stewardship practices into your farm operation?
(Environmental stewardship includes practices such as crop rotations, habitat conservation, soil conservation, integrated pest management, riparian buffers, bird nesting sites, pollinator forage, crop diversity, etc.)

Very important
Important
Moderately important
Slightly important
Not important

21. Do you use organic agricultural practices in your farm operation?
Organic standards refer to the use of practices that at a minimum meet the criteria set out in the Canadian Organic Standards. Yes, I am certified organic
Yes, I follow organic production practices but have not obtained certification
When possible, I follow organic practices when possible but may not adhere to standards at all times
No, but I am interested in transitioning
No, I do not feel organic production would be viable for my farm operation
No, organic production practices are not important to me
I am not familiar with organic standards and do not know if I follow them

21a. Do you follow any other established systems of production? If yes, Please specify which one(s).
(For example: biodynamics, permaculture, agroecological)

_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Questions for Current Farmers Page 2/6

22. Farmers face various challenges, or obstacles, in becoming established as farm operators.
Please rate how significant the following challenges were to you in your experience of becoming an established farmer. Not at all significant (0) means that the factor listed did not present a challenge to you in becoming a farm operator
Extremely significant (6) means that the factor listed was extremely challenging to you in becoming a farm operator
Overall lack of farmland (arable land) in your region

Lack of farmland that is currently available for farmers to purchase or lease
Lack of the appropriate type of farmland available (parcel size, capability of land, water access, etc)
Cost of land (ownership or leasing)
Lack of capital
Access to credit or other sources of financing
Lack of knowledge or insufficient training to begin farming
Difficulty negotiating favourable land access agreement with landowners
Low profitability in the agricultural sector (returns on investment are too low)
Lack of markets/distribution channels in areas where land is available
Lack of training and resources for beginning farmers in your area
Expected income from farming is insufficient to support your desired livelihood goals
Lack of community or social support in areas where land is available
Committing to a farming lifestyle conflicts with other life goals
Prohibitive zoning or other government regulations on land use

22a. Please add any additional obstacles/challenges that you experienced as a beginning farmer or comment on the above challenges:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Page #12

Questions for Current Farmers Page 3/6

23. Do/did you feel that you are/were sufficiently aware of the programs and resources available to you as a beginning farmer?
   Yes  No

24. Have you, or do you have plans, to make use of specific community or government resources/programs designed to support the establishment of beginning farmers? (Please specify which ones)
   (ex. loan programs for new farmers, training programs, business planning workshops, land linking, internships, etc.)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
25. Based on your experience of becoming a farmer, please rate the importance of the following programs for assisting in the establishment and success of beginning farmers.

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Practical farm workshops, field days, farm tours
Farm training and education programs run by an organization (incubator farms, apprenticeship programs, short courses)
University or college agricultural programs or courses
Business and strategic planning programs or courses
Farmer to farmer mentoring programs (connect experienced farmers and new farmers)
Online educational resources for beginning farmers (guides, webinars, blogs, etc.)
Land linking programs to connect landowners and farmers
Land access resources (leasing templates, decision making tools for selecting land access agreements)
Farm transfer/succession planning programs (to facilitate transfer of farm from outgoing to new farmer)
Regional resource maps (to locate infrastructure, organizations, suppliers, processors, etc. relevant to farmers)

New farmer networking forums (connect farmers online and in-person for social networking and support)
Farmland protection programs (land reserves, land banks, land trusts)
Loan Programs for beginning farmers (Canadian Agricultural Loans Act (CALA), Farm Credit Canada Loans)
Alternative financing (crowdfunding, grants, microloans from non-profits, personal lending, etc.)

26. Are there any resources or programs currently lacking in your region that you think are needed to better support beginning farmers? (please specify)
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

27. What actions or program development should be prioritized by non-profit organizations to better enable the successful establishment of beginning farmers?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Branching Information
• If 33. Do you maintain a second job (source of off-fa... = No then Hide 33a. What is your primary motivation for maintaini...
If 33. Do you maintain a second job (source of off-farm income) alongside farming?  
Yes  
No  

33a. What is your primary motivation for maintaining a second job?  
Economic necessity  
Personal Satisfaction
Both of the above
Other, please specify... __________________________

33b. In the long run, do you wish to maintain a second job alongside farming?
Yes
No

Branching Information
• If not 35. What type of land access agreement(s) do you have... contains one of [u'1', u'3', u'4', u'5', u'6', u'7', u'8', u'9', u'10'] then Hide 35a. Do you hope to own land in the future (individual... contains one of [u'0', u'1', u'2', u'5', u'6']]) or (35a. Do you hope to own land in the future (individual... is one of [u'0', u'1']) then Hide 41b. If you own land now, or hope to own land in the future... contains one of [u'0', u'1', u'2', u'5', u'6']]) or (35a. Do you hope to own land in the future (individual... is one of [u'0', u'1']) then Hide 41c. If you own land now, or hope to own land in the future...

Questions for Current Farmers Page 5/6

34. Who owns the land on which you farm?
If you farm multiple pieces of land with different ownership please select all that apply to you.
I or my family own the land
I own the land in partnership with non-family member(s)
Privately owned by an individual land owner
Privately owned by a corporation or company
Cooperatively owned by myself and other farmers
Cooperatively owned by mix of farming and non-farming community members
Cooperatively owned by non-farming community members
Owned by a land trust organization
Owned by the government (public land)
Owned by an institution (ex. hospital, church, school, university)
Owned by a non-profit or charitable organization
Other, please specify... __________________________

35. What type of land access agreement(s) do you have?
If you farm multiple pieces of land with different land access agreements please select all types that apply to you. Private ownership (you own the land)
Access to family owned land
Cooperative ownership
Short term lease (less than 5 years)
Long term lease (longer than 5 years)
Lease with option to purchase
Farm transfer arrangement with a retiring farmer
Crop share arrangement
Informal access arrangement
Hired farm operator/manager
Other, please specify... __________________________

35a. Do you hope to own land in the future (individually or with others)?
Yes, I hope to own all the land that I farm
I hope to own a portion of the land I farm and access more land through non-ownership
No, non-ownership access to farmland works fine for me

36. Which category best describes the operating arrangement (the relationship of farm operators) where you farm?
   Individual or family farm operation
   Informal partnership arrangement
   Formal partnership arrangement
   Informal cooperative
   Formally registered cooperative
   Incorporated farm with family members
   Incorporated farm with non-family members
   Community farm or ecovillage
   One or more independent farm businesses sharing land and infrastructure
   Hired farm operator(s)
   Other, please specify... __________________________

37. Do you engage in cooperative marketing with other farm businesses?
Yes, through a formal marketing cooperative
Yes, through an informal arrangement  No

38. Have you faced any challenges with your land access agreement? If yes please describe.
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

39. Have you faced any challenges with your operating arrangement? If yes please describe.
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Branching Information
• If 41. Do you have access to more land than you are a... = No then Hide 41a. If yes, please rate how likely you are to eng...

  Questions for Current Farmers Page 6/6

40. How did you find the farm land you currently operate on?
Family Land
Word of mouth
By actively approaching land holders
Community posting
Newspaper advertisement
Online (e.g. local websites, Craigslist, etc.)
Through a farmer with whom you worked/apprenticed/volunteered
Through an organization that supports beginning farmers, please specify organization:

Other, please specify... __________________________

41. Do you have access to more land than you are able to farm?
Yes
No

41a. If yes, please rate how likely you are to engage in the following shared land use arrangements on your land.

Where (0) means that would definitely not engage in the listed shared land use arrangement and (6) means that definitely would engage in the listed shared land use arrangement and

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<td>Unlikely, likely</td>
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<td>Very</td>
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<td>Definitely</td>
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Hire a farmer operator to manage extra land
Enter into a partnership arrangement with another farmer
Lease to another farmer Sell it to another farmer
Establish a workers cooperative with other farmer(s)
Establish cooperative land ownership and a workers cooperative with other farmer(s)

41b. If you own land now, or hope to own land in the future, would you consider donating your land to a land trust organization to ensure your land remains farmland in the future?

(A farmland trust is a private, not-for-profit organization with a mission to preserve farmland and ensure it remains available for agricultural uses in the future. Donated farmland is protected by the land trust organization and secure leasing arrangements are established to make the land accessible to current and future farmers.)

Yes, I have already done so
Yes, I would consider doing so
I am interested, but I need more information first
No, I am not interested
Not applicable to my situation

Comments: __________________________
41c. If you own land now, or hope to own land in the future, would you consider establishing a legally binding covenant (easement) on your land to ensure your land remains farmland in the future?

(A farmland trust is a private, not-for-profit organization with a mission to preserve farmland and ensure it remains available for agricultural uses in the future. A covenant or easement is a legally binding agreement, established by the landowner and land trust, attached to the property title that outlines permitted and restricted uses of the land.)

Yes, I have already done so
Yes, I would consider doing so
I am interested, but I need more information first
No, I am not interested
Not applicable to

my situation Comments: ______________________

42. To your knowledge, is there available land for farming in your region?
Yes
No
Unsure

43. Please include any further comments that you feel are important.

_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Page #16

Branching Information
• If not 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I am still considering a future career as a farm operator (in greater than 5 years) then Hide 14. Please rate the significance of the following ...
• If not 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I am still considering a future career as a farm operator (in greater than 5 years) then Hide 14.a Please add any comments or further reasons fo...
• If 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I am still considering a future career as a farm operator (in greater than 5 years) then Hide 14. Did you ever consider, or previously have, a c...
• If 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I am still considering a future career as a farm operator (in greater than 5 years) then Hide 14a. Why did you choose not to continue with a car...
• If not 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I have no intention of becoming a farm operator then Hide 14. Did you ever consider, or previously have, a c...
• If 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I have no intention of becoming a farm operator then Hide 14. Please rate the significance of the following ...
If 13. Please select that which applies to you: = I have no intention of becoming a farm operator then Hide 14a. Please add any comments or further reasons for...

If not 14. Did you ever consider, or previously have, a career as a farm operator? = Yes then Hide 14a. Why did you choose not to continue with a career...

Questions for Farm Supporters Page 1/3

12. What is your current occupation?
______________________

13. Please select that which applies to you:
I am still considering a future career as a farm operator (in greater than 5 years)
I have no intention of becoming a farm operator

14. Did you ever consider, or previously have, a career as a farm operator?
Yes
No

14a. Why did you choose not to continue with a career as farm operator?
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

14. Please rate the significance of the following factors in your decision not to pursue a career as a farm operator for five years or more.
Not at all significant (0) means that the factor listed was not at all significant in your decision not to pursue a farming career
Extremely significant (6) means that the factor listed was extremely significant to your decision not to pursue a farming career

<table>
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<th>Not at all</th>
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Finishing educational degree/program
Currently more passionate about other career options
Lack of farmland available
Cost of land is prohibitive (ownership or leasing)
Lack of capital and/or difficulty accessing credit
Lack of knowledge or insufficient training to become a farmer
Lack of training and resources for beginning farmers
Expected income from farming is insufficient to support desired livelihood goals
Lack of community or social support in areas where land is available
Committing to a farming lifestyle conflicts with other life goals

14.a Please add any comments or further reasons for your decision to wait to pursue a career as a farm operator.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Page #17

Questions for Farm Supporters Page 2/3

15. Are you a member of a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program? (CSA members pay for a season's share of farm produce at the beginning of the season and receive produce weekly over the farm season)
   Yes  No

16. On average, how regularly do you buy from a farmer's market or farm stand (during time when farmer's markets are running)?
   More than once a week
   Once a week
   Once per two weeks
   Once per month
   Less than once a month  Never

17. Do you grow food in a home garden?
   Yes
   No

18. Do you grow food in a community garden?
   Yes
   No

19. Do you do any volunteer work directly with farmers?
   Yes
   No

20. Do you do any volunteer work with farmer based or food security organizations?
   Yes
   No

21. Do you consider yourself to be actively involved in advocacy for food security, local food, and/or environmental conservation?
   Yes  No

22. Have you supported a farming initiative or fundraising campaign through a financial
23. Why do you participate in and/or provide support to farmer or food based networks, organizations, groups?

__________________________________

__________________________________

__________________________________

24. Please rate the importance of the following factors for supporting the conservation of regional farmland and farming.

Where (0) means that the factor listed is not at all important to you and (6) means the factor is extremely important to you.

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27. Please include any further comments you feel are important.

__________________________________

__________________________________

__________________________________

Branching Information

• If not Are you willing to be contacted in the future rega... = Yes then Hide Please provide the contact information for your pr...
Are you willing to be contacted in the future regarding your responses in the survey?
Yes
No

Please provide the contact information for your preferred method of contact (email, phone number or mailing address)

______________________

Please Click the Submit Button Below to Complete the Survey.