MAILING ADDRESS



12666-72 Ave, Surrey, BC Canada V3W 2M8 P: 604-599-2000 www.kpu.ca/isfs

February 17, 2021

Director Margo Wagner, Chair Cariboo Regional District 180 North 3rd Avenue, Suite D Williams Lake, BC V2G 2A4

Dear Director Wagner,

Re: Letter of Endorsement for Organic Extension Service

The Institute for Sustainable Food Systems (ISFS) is an applied research and extension unit at Kwantlen Polytechnic University that investigates and supports regional food systems. Our applied research focuses on the potential of regional food systems in terms of agriculture and food, economics, community health, policy, and environmental integrity. Our extension programming provides information and support for farmers, communities, business, policymakers, and others. You can find more information about our work on our website: https://www.kpu.ca/isfs.

Our Institute is conducting a feasibility study, funded by the BC Ministry of Agriculture, for the development and implementation of an organic agriculture and food system extension service in BC. Our goal is to bring forth a comprehensive Organic Sector Extension Service development, implementation, operations, and funding plan for BC. We believe a coordinated province-wide organic extension service can contribute to the agricultural and economic development priorities of the Cariboo Regional District. Programs, resources, and connections would be available to support the sustainability and viability of farms and food businesses in your region. The extension service will be accessible to and inclusive of all farmers and processors, regardless of organic certification status or inclination.

Attached is a 1-page graphic summary of the proposed service's goals and structure. At this juncture the 'plan' is a work in progress as we continue to consult with food system actors, including regional government staff. We would be pleased to share the final report with you upon its completion.

Our invitation to the Regional District is to consider providing a letter of endorsement in concept for the organic extension service. In the letter you may choose to elaborate on your region's agricultural and economic development priorities that must be addressed by an organic extension service. In addition, we invite you to indicate if there might be a willingness from the regional district to consider a tangible financial contribution to support such a service, and what amount might be feasible. Of course such indication confers no obligation. The letter of endorsement will be included in our final report to strengthen the case for the provincial government to join with stakeholders to establish this service in the near future.

Thank you for your consideration.

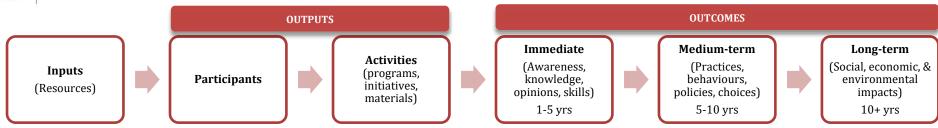
Kent Mulling

Sincerely,

Kent Mullinix, PhD.

Director

BC Organic Sector Extension Project



(Resources)	Participants	initiatives, materials)	knowledge, opinions, skills) 1-5 yrs	behaviours, policies, choices) 5-10 yrs	environmental impacts) 10+ yrs
People Network of regional extension agents Access to subject matter experts Coordination Shared priorities and agenda Information sharing Infrastructure Regional sites for applied research, demonstrations, and hands-on learning Financial Sustained core funding Cost-recovery programs	Target audiences: Farmers, ranchers, food businesses currently engaged or interested in organic agriculture and food Indigenous Nations and communities Public and consumers Potential collaborators: Target audiences engaged as partners Post-secondary institutions Industry groups NGOs Government	Strategic initiatives Multi-year programs to address identified community and sector priorities Educational Activities e.g. workshops, events, field demonstrations, webinars Problem solving e.g. advising, 1-on-1 info exchange Access to info/tools e.g. online hub, enterprise budgets, videos, apps	Increase in: For producers/processors: Regionally appropriate, evidence based knowledge, information, and skills about organic and regenerative agriculture and food Understanding of organic regulations and ease of certification process For Indigenous communities: Access to culturally appropriate, accessible information and support regarding organic and regenerative agriculture to meet community food objectives For public: Increased awareness and understanding about organic agriculture and food	Increase in: Sector development: Adoption of organic & regenerative agricultural practices New entrants to organic and regenerative farming Certified organic farms and processors Economic development: Profitability and viability of organic/regenerative farms and businesses Supply of organic ingredients for the processing market Other: Consumer awareness, demand, and advocacy for organic food Policy and institutional support for organic agriculture and food	A thriving and resilient agriculture sector in BC where organic & regenerative practices are widely adopted. Organic and regenerative agriculture is major contributor to economic development, climate change mitigation, environmental stewardship, and food security.